

Talk like a Pirate!

Print and hand out

Pirate-speak is easy! You already know how to do it. For example, instead of “yes”, say “yarr!” or “aye, me hearty!” Instead of “that’s a very big shark swimming over there” say “that be a right big shark swimmin’ over thar”.

You also don’t mention modern things. If you need to talk about them, use an archaic equivalent. So instead of “I have to catch my taxi at six o’clock”, say “me carriage be comin’ at six o’clock”.

An outrageous pirate accent is optional, but only a land-lubber wouldn’t want to do one.

Pirate Swears

The pirates in this game don’t swear like 21st century people. Their language is PG-rated, and appropriate to a nautical life.

So instead of “goodness” and saltier terms, use: Shiver me timbers, Blow me down, Avast! or similar.

Insults must take the form of “ye [adjective] [verb]”. For example, “ye scurvy dog!”

There’s some examples below. These aren’t exhaustive, but you should stick to the spirit of them. Remember if you get it wrong you could be challenged.

Adjectives

Examples

Health- cleanliness- or corruption-related

Lousy, filthy, rotten, leprous, flea-bitten, scurvy, stinkin’, poxy, weevil-infested, mangy, drunken, bloated, festerin’.

Attacking grace or manners

Artless, churlish, dronin’, feeble, impertinent, lumpish

Impugning moral character

Low-down, cowardly, treacherous, no-good, lyin’, dastardly, fork-tongued, spineless, accursed, knock-kneed, lily-livered, yellow-bellied, villainous.

Arbitrary undignified thing

Flappin’, shriekin’, quiverin’, wobblin’, thrashin’, slitherin’, drowned, squelchin’.

Nouns

Examples

Archaic

Cur, poltroon, blighter, buffoon, oaf, blackguard, dolt, idler, scoundrel, rascalion, guttersnipe, pipsqueak, knave, jackanapes, dog, turncoat.

Undignified nautical or aquatic things

Jellyfish, sea-snake, deck-swab, land-lubber, bilge-rat, barnacle, shark-bait, urchin, bloater, bottom-feeder, sea cucumber, washout, son-of-a-gun, whipping boy.

Note: These examples deliberately avoid gendered and racial insults and those impugning the victim’s mental capacity, even where such insults are quite piratical. Remember this is PG pirate speak!