



Sea of Thieves<sup>®</sup>  
**CUSTOM SEAS**  
PLAYER'S GUIDE

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# INTRODUCTION



Custom Seas puts you in command of the Sea of Thieves experience, allowing you to change the rules of the game for you and whoever you choose to invite.



Using special menus filled with unique options, you'll assign crews and ships, decide what the consequences will be for players' actions, summon enemies, items or even World Events as you see fit, and be able to frame the resultant mayhem in style using a powerful Free Camera mode. In other words, you hold the keys to the seas...



# SETTING SAIL



Your time spent in Custom Seas, known as a “session”, will begin in the Session Lobby. This is where you’ll establish the fundamental rules of play, and also it’s a great opportunity to invite people to join and assign them to particular crews (though you can always change your mind once things are underway).



Once the session begins, you’ll still have plenty of control thanks to the Command Menu, which is what you’ll use to control proceedings - creating objects and enemies, triggering World Events, teleporting players to particular locations, and more.



As well as joining the lobby, players can join and leave a session in progress. Once it’s begun, the session will continue until the last player has left the game, at which point the session will end and you’ll need to start another next time you want to play.



# SESSION LOBBIES



## STARTING A SESSION

The Session Lobby is similar to the screen you'll see while assembling your crew in High Seas or Safer Seas, but with a few important differences - the first being that you can invite up to 24 players! These players can be assigned to ships of various kinds (up to a maximum of six) as you see fit, giving you the power to cram a crew of two dozen pirates onto a single Sloop if you so desire.



You can invite someone to join your session in the usual ways, but your session will also have a unique Join Code that other players can enter to find and join you. If you're planning a session with a lot of players or one that will be going for a while, this can be a lot more convenient than sending out individual invites.

Note that unlike on High or Safer Seas, your friends won't be able to join your crew without an invite or a Join Code even if there's space, and there's no option for "Open Crew" matchmaking, keeping you in control of who can join the fun.

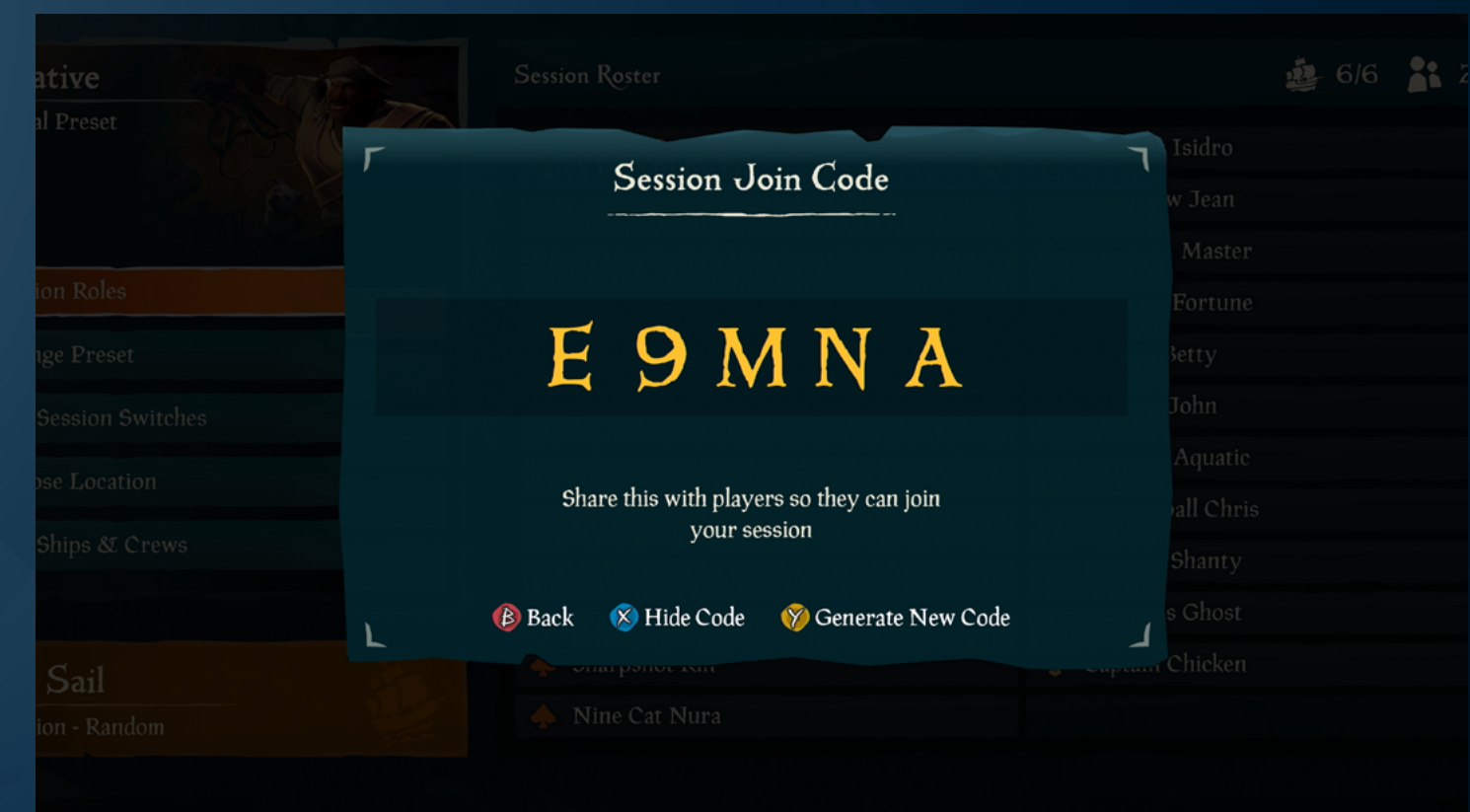
Within the Lobby you can toggle Switches that will enable (or disable) certain game conditions, such as which enemies can appear emergently and whether players can damage one another (more on these below). Players in the lobby will be able to see how you've toggled the various Switches and get an idea of what the rules will be. Switches can't be changed once the session is underway, so make your choices wisely!



The Session Lobby is also where you'll choose whether your session will take place in the usual Sea of Thieves regions, or if you'd prefer to visit certain Legendary Locations that aren't normally accessible, such as Old Sailor Isle.

## JOINING A SESSION

To join a Custom Seas session, either accept a game invite in the usual way, or choose "Join with a Code" within the Custom Seas menu. Entering the five-character code will, assuming there's space, then bring you into the Session Lobby if the session has not yet started, or into the session itself if it has.



# SWITCHES AND PRESETS



Switches change the fundamental gameplay rules of Sea of Thieves. You can forbid damage to players or their ships, enable unlimited ammunition for weapons, pick which creatures and enemies can appear emergently in the world, choose the weapons players will start with and more.



Optionally, you can also choose to enable scoring, which tracks players' actions (like handing in treasure or downing another player) and award - or deduct - silver as a result. Switches are how you'll establish which actions are counted in scoring, and how much silver is awarded/ deducted when they are. An in-game scoreboard will keep track of how much silver players have.



Presets allow you to save out your current configuration of Switches, give them a name, and load them in again for a future session - you'll pick one to use as a starting point when creating a session. You can save up to ten Presets. There are also some Official Presets you can modify, available to use as a starting point for your sessions. These are:



**Adventure** - mimics the High Seas experience.



**Competitive Pirates** - silver will be scored for PvP actions, like killing other pirates.



**Competitive Sandbox** - silver will be scored for PvE actions, like completing World Events.



**Social** - a combat-free experience for socialising and roleplay.



**Creative** - all switches are set to 'off', ready for you to pick and choose your ruleset.



# THE COMMAND MENU



The Command Menu is unique to Custom Seas, and can be used by Session Owners and Session Leaders to access a suite of powerful features that provide fine control over the session. If you want to summon a storm at Ancient Spire Outpost or “fast travel” a player back to their ship, the Command Menu is how you make it happen. You can access the Command Menu via the Game Options screen.



There are also Quick Commands available, which offer speedy access to the tools you’ll want to access frequently (including the Command Menu itself).



# QUICK COMMANDS

Assuming you have permission, you can access Quick Commands while in Custom Seas by bringing up your Item Radial and selecting 'Quick Commands' from there. Here, the following shortcuts are available:

Command Menu - access the full Command Menu and its various features.

Free Camera - access the free camera (see below).

Spawn - access a radial menu of creatures and items to quickly create them at your current location.

Fly - freely move your player around the world.

Quick Sail - take control of a nearby ship and quickly, precisely adjust its location.

When you're finished, you can exit the Quick Commands list and return to the game.

# COMMAND MENU

The following sets of feature are available within the full Command Menu:

Roster and Permissions - manage players, and their roles, within your Session. You can also invite and remove players from here.

Edit Ships and Crews - ships can be added, changed, repaired, resupplied and have pirates assigned to their crew from here.

Spawn Treasures - will items into existence, from treasure chests to hunting spears, at the current location of one or more players. You can map items to the Spawn Radial from here.

Spawn Creatures - as above, but for living (and undead) things such as animals and skeletons.

Scoreboard - if scoring is enabled in the session, proceedings can be started, paused, ended and reset from here. (If scoring is not active, the features will be unavailable.)

World Events - trigger World Events such as Skeleton Forts and Ashen Winds at locations of your choosing.

World Settings - control the time of day, the location of storms and fog.

Fast Travel - move players/ships to specific locations (or to one another).



# SESSION ROLES



The player who first creates a session assumes the role of Session Owner by default. The Session Owner can play the game as normal, but also has control over Switches, access to the Command Menu and Free Camera, and has the ability to manage crews and players.

The Session Owner can also choose to promote other players to the role of Session Leader, allowing them access to certain Session Owner perks (such as crew management or the Free Camera), which can provide useful assistance when trying to run a session with a lot of players.



All other players are known as Session Pirates and play the game as normal.

If the Session Owner leaves the session, the longest-serving Session Leader (or, failing that, the Session Pirate who's been in the session longest) will be promoted to the new Owner.



# SILVER AND SCORING



Silver is a temporary 'currency' in Custom Seas, used as a way of keeping score in the various games and challenges you create. Many common in-game actions, from killing skeletons to handing in treasures, can be made to award (or deduct) silver using Switches.



Switches are also used to decide if scoring is active during the session, if there's a time limit involved (and if so, what it is) and whether scoring begins as soon as the session starts or must be activated manually.

When scoring is active, the Scoreboard can be viewed from the Game Options screen. As well as showing players' silver totals, it (depending on setup) can also list out what actions will affect scoring.

Players with permissions to do so can start, pause and end scoring via the Command Menu, as well as reset players' silver.

Silver does not get saved between sessions and can't be used to buy anything - it's purely a way of keeping score.



# FREE CAMERA



As the name suggests, the Free Camera is a tool that decouples your view from your pirate and allows you to position it freely, allowing for a birds-eye view of a game mode or some truly cinematic angles. As well as options for positioning the camera itself, there are some additional settings available:



**Movement Settings** - adjust the speed of the camera's movement and rotation.



**Focal Settings** - adjust the camera's depth of field, bokeh and more.



**World Settings** - choose what the camera sees and simulate any time of day.

(Note that the Free Camera is not a capture tool - players will need to use other, existing methods to record the results.)



# RESTRICTIONS



The nature of Custom Seas, taking place in a private session, means that a handful of features from High and Safer Seas will not be available:



Players can propose any Voyages that they have unlocked by reaching certain Reputation thresholds with the Trading Companies, but Limited Voyages (IE; Voyages of Luck) will not be accessible.



Players can sail to Voyages but not dive to them, as this would migrate them away from the Custom Seas session.



Likewise, the Hourglass of Fate cannot be used while in Custom Seas.



Similarly, players cannot take part in Tall Tales that require sailing into the Sea of the Damned, as this would also migrate them away from the session.



Under normal circumstances, players cannot make long-term progress (earning gold, Reputation, etc.) during a Custom Seas session. This includes Seasonal Renown; however, Season 20 does include some Seasonal Deeds related to exploring

Custom Seas features, and these will count towards your Seasonal progression when completed.



Players can spend their existing gold, Doubloons and Ancient Coins, using them to buy cosmetics, Emissary licences, Emotes and so on as normal. Anything purchased in Custom Seas will carry over into High/Safer Seas.



Players can also spend money on supplies (IE; cannonball crates from the Merchant Alliance), although the Command Menu may be used to supply crews instead, saving gold.



Features of Captaincy are not available in Custom Seas, including Guild-related features.



Eligible crews can sail as Company Emissaries if they wish, however, they will not make progress in any Emissary Ledgers while doing so.



# SETTING UP AN EXAMPLE GAME



Depending on the rules you invent, some game modes you create will require more setup time than others once the session is launched. While there's no right or wrong way to use Custom Seas, we recommend keeping the following in mind when you're a Session Owner:



Remember that players can join your session at any point after it begins, so you don't need to invite everyone right away. If your game mode requires some time to set up (spawning in treasures, placing ships in specific locations, etc.) then consider doing all of your "prep work" before letting others into the session.

While everyone can play an active role in Custom Seas, you may find it helpful to have someone (either the Session Owner or a Session Leader) act as a "Game Master" of the session rather than taking part as a player. (Players can always take turns at this!) This will allow you to concentrate on spawning enemies, handling scoring, managing crews' supplies between rounds, or keeping a birds-eye view on the game using the Free Camera.



To make the most of Custom Seas, everyone will need to play within the spirit of the rules - no lingering on the Ferry of the Damned or arriving with pockets full of pineapples, and so on. If someone slips up, you can pause scoring and make sure everything's the way it should be to create the best possible game modes.

Here's how you'd go about using Switches and the Command Menu to create a simple game mode:

# SKELETON SNIPE HUNT

PIRATES: 2-4 Players, one GM

**OBJECTIVE:** While staying aboard a galleon, members of a crew compete using long-range weapons and earn silver for taking out skeletons on a nearby island. The player with the most silver when time runs out wins the game!

## STEP BY STEP:

1. As the Session Owner, select the “Creative” Preset to create a Session Lobby.

2. Send game invites / the Join Code to the players who’ll be taking part in the game and assign them, and you, to a single ship (a galleon is recommended regardless of the number of players):

3. Adjust the following Switches:

### PLAYER:

Infinite Ammo - On

Override Loadout - Yes

Primary Weapon - Eye of Reach

Secondary Weapon - Pistol

Crew Proximity Chat - On

### SCORING:

Custom Scoring - On

Time Limit - On

Set Time Limit - 300 seconds

Scoring Method - Player

(Under “Gameplay Scoring Events”) Defeat Creatures / Skeleton - 10

4. When you’re all ready to go, choose ‘Set Sail’ to begin the session.

5. When the session begins, open the Command Menu. Use the Fast Travel feature to send the ship to an island of your choosing (somewhere flat like Mermaid’s Hideaway is ideal) and then Fast Travel all players, including yourself, to the ship.

6. Once at the island, open the Quick Commands list and use “Quick Sail” to position the galleon so one side has a good view of the island for all players.

7. With all other players aboard the galleon ready to begin, have the GM use the Quick Command list and “Fly” to rise high above the island, so they’re not attracting attention.

8. Open the Quick Commands list, select “Spawn”, and assign the kinds of skeleton you want to use as targets to the Spawn Radial. (We suggest regular Bone Skeletons, but you could always throw a Gold Skeleton into the mix as a mini-boss...).

9. Use the Spawn Radial to populate the island with wandering skellies and get ready to replenish their numbers when the game begins.

10. In the “Scoreboard” section of the Command Menu, choose “Start Scoring”. Players will now have a five-minute contest to see who can sharpshoot the most skeletons! Remember to keep spawning in replacements as needed.

**Enjoy your Skeleton Snipe Hunt!**



# RECIPE SHEETS



To find more game examples, why not check out our recipe sheets? Simply click the logos opposite to view their corresponding sheet:



# COMMON TERMS



## SESSION

Your private Custom Seas sandbox, which operates according to the rules you create. Players can leave and join the session freely for as long as it's active, so long as they receive an invite or know the Join Code.

## SESSION LOBBY

The “waiting room” that players can join ahead of the session starting. Here they can view current rules and crews. This is also where the Session Owner assigns players to crews, and sets the rules of play by toggling Switches.

## JOIN CODE

A short combination of characters that serves as a way to join a Custom Seas session if you enter it (and assuming there's space available to do so).

## SWITCHES

These set options that determine how the Sea of Thieves world will function during the session, e.g. whether skeletons can spawn emergently on islands and if players can down one another.

## CREW MANAGEMENT

Tools to invite and remove players and ships from the session, and decide which players are assigned to each crew.

## PRESETS

Pre-defined arrangements of Switches intended to be used as a starting point for customising particular types of session. Players can save up to ten of their own design, or make use of Official Presets that come with Custom Seas.

## FAST TRAVEL

Transport players swiftly to another player, a ship or a specific location.

## SILVER

A ‘currency’ in name only, silver is used to keep track of a player's actions during custom game types.

## SCORING

A system that, when active, will track certain player actions and award (or deduct) silver when they're completed - for example, handing in treasure or downing an enemy.

## SCOREBOARD

A screen unique to Custom Seas that shows how much silver each player currently has and can be used to determine the victor(s) of a custom game type.

## COMMAND MENU

A set of menus unique to Custom Seas that allow those with permission (such as the Session Owner) to instantly spawn objects and enemies, fast-travel players to specific locations, start and stop scoring, and more.

## SPAWN RADIAL

A wheel-shaped menu to which items and creatures can be mapped, allowing anyone with permissions to quickly spawn them into the game world.

## QUICK COMMANDS

A selection of shortcuts offering access to the Command Menu, Spawn Radial, Free Camera and more.

## FREE CAMERA

A roving camera tool that can be separated from a pirate's point of view and moved independently to create cinematic shots or observe a session in progress.

## LEGENDARY LOCATIONS

Environments that are not normally accessible in Sea of Thieves, such as the interior of the Glorious Sea Dog Tavern, which can form the backdrop of a Custom Seas session.

