

Pirate Songs



Did pirates really sing? You bet they did. Pirates would sing while they worked on ship. Ship duty is grueling work and takes the cooperation of everyone, even pirates. They had specific songs for specific duties.

Long-Haul Songs: Long –haul songs are sung when hauling lines. They are meant to last a long time until all of the lines have been moved. A great example of this sort of song is **Blow the Man Down**.

Capstan Shanties: These were sung when raising the anchor which involved winding the rope along a giant wheeled spoke. The verses are in the pattern of call and response and then the chorus is sung in unison by everyone.

Stamp n-Go Shanties: These great songs were only sung on ships with large crews. Many hands would grab the line and march along the deck singing and stamping out the rhythm with their feet. A great example of this song is **Drunken Sailor**.

Pumping Shanties: Wooden ships leak! There was a special hold in the cargo where the leaked in water would collect. It was called “the bilge Hold.” The bilge

water had to be pumped out often. So why not sing a little ditty to make it all go faster.

For a really great pirate song collection for kids is Pirates of the Caribbean: Swashbuckling Sea Songs. It is one of the best collections I've heard and all are very fun to sing.....especially in the car.



Favorite Pirate Songs

Pirate Ship (and old Camp Song)

When I was One, I sucked my thumb the day I went to sea.
I climbed aboard a pirate ship, and the captain said to me,
We're going this way, that way,
Forward, Backward, over the Irish sea.

A bottle of Sprite took care of my fright,
and that's the life for me!

When I was 2, I tied my shoe... the day I went to sea...

3- Skinned my knee

4- Shut the door

5- Stayed alive

6- Picked up sticks

7- Went to Heaven

8- Had a date

9- Broke my spine

10- I said The End!

A Pirate's Life for Me (Yo Ho)

Yo ho, yo ho, a pirate's life for me.

We pillage plunder, we rifle and loot.

Drink up me 'earties, yo ho.

We kidnap and ravage and don't give a hoot.

Drink up me 'earties, yo ho.

Yo ho, yo ho, a pirate's life for me.

We extort and pilfer, we filch and sack.

Drink up me 'earties, yo ho.

Maraud and embezzle and even highjack.

Drink up me 'earties, yo ho.

Yo ho, yo ho, a pirate's life for me.

We kindle and char and in flame and ignite.

Drink up me 'earties, yo ho.

We burn up the city, we're really a fright.

Drink up me 'earties, yo ho.

We're rascals and scoundrels, we're villians and knaves.

Drink up me 'earties, yo ho.
We're devils and black sheep, we're really bad eggs.
Drink up me 'earties, yo ho.
We're beggars and blighters and ne'er do-well cads,
Drink up me 'earties, yo ho.
Aye, but we're loved by our mommies and dads,
Drink up me 'earties, yo ho.
Yo ho, yo ho, a pirate's life for me.

What Shall We Do With a Drunken Sailor

There are many different versions of the lyrics. Feel free to make up some of your own! Note that "early" is generally pronounced as "earleye."
We like to sing this one while sipping root beer!

Intro

What shall we do with a drunken sailor, (3×)
Early in the morning?

Chorus

Hey Ho (or Hoo-ray/Wey-hey/Heave-ho) and up she rises, (3×)
Early in the morning!

Verses

Stick him in a bag and beat him senseless, (3×)
Early in the morning!

Put him in the brig until he's sober, (3×)
Early in the morning!

Slap him around and call him Suzie, (3×)
Early in the morning!

Put him in bed with the captain's daughter, (3×)
Early in the morning!

You aint seen the captain's daughter, (3×)
Early in the morning!

Keelhaul the man until he's sober, (3×)
Early in the morning!

Put 'im in the crow's nest and watch him fall down, (3×)
Early in the morning!

Put him in the bilge and make him drink it, (3×)
Early in the morning!

Give 'im the hair of the dog that bit him, (3×)

Early in the morning!
Put 'im in the back of the paddywagon, (3×)
Early in the morning!
Take 'im and shake 'im and try an' wake 'im, (3×)
Early in the morning!
Soak 'im in oil till he sprouts a flipper, (3×)
Early in the morning!
Put 'im in charge of an Exxon tanker, (3×)
Early in the morning!
Shave his belly with a rusty razor, (3×)
Early in the morning!
Outro
That's what we'll do with a drunken sailor, (3×)
Early in the morning! (Amen)

Blow the Man Down

Come all ye young fellows that follow the sea,
to my way haye, blow the man down,
And pray pay attention and listen to me,
Give me some time to blow the man down.

I'm a deep water sailor just in from Hong Kong,
to my way haye, blow the man down,
if you'll give me some grog, I'll sing you a song,
Give me some time to blow the man down.

'Twas on a Black Baller I first served my time,
to my way haye, blow the man down,
And on that Black Baller I wasted my prime,
Give me some time to blow the man down.

'Tis when a Black Baller's preparing for sea
to my way haye, blow the man down,
You'd split your sides laughing at the sights that you see.
Give me some time to blow the man down.

With the tinkers and tailors and soljers and all
to my way haye, blow the man down,
That ship for prime seaman on board a Black Ball.
Give me some time to blow the man down.

'Tis when a Black Baller is clear of the land,
to my way haye, blow the man down,
Our Boatswain then gives us the word of command
Give me some time to blow the man down.

"Lay aft," is the cry, "to the break of the Poop!
to my way haye, blow the man down,
Or I'll help you along with the toe of my boot!"
Give me some time to blow the man down.

'Tis larboard and starboard on the deck you will sprawl,
to my way haye, blow the man down,
For "Kicking Jack" Williams commands the Black Ball.
Give me some time to blow the man down.

Pay attention to order, now you one and all,
to my way haye, blow the man down,

For right there above you flies the Black Ball.
Give me some time to blow the man down.

This song was actually written into the book of Treasure Island. We couldn't have a pirate sing along without this gem of a song.



Yo Ho Ho And A Bottle Of Rum

Fifteen men on a dead man's chest
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum
Drink and the devil had done for the rest
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum.

The mate was fixed by the bosun's pike
The bosun brained with a marlinspike
And cookey's throat was marked be like
It had been gripped by fingers ten;
And there they lay, all good dead men
Like break o'day in a boozing ken.
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum.

. Fifteen men of the whole ship's list
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum!
Dead and be damned and the rest gone whist!
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum!
The skipper lay with his nob in gore

Where the scullion's axe his cheek had shore
And the scullion he was stabbed times four
And there they lay, and the soggy skies
Dripped down in up-staring eyes
In murk sunset and foul sunrise
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum.

Fifteen men of 'em stiff and stark
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum!
Ten of the crew had the murder mark!
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum!
Twas a cutlass swipe or an ounce of lead
Or a yawing hole in a battered head
And the scuppers' glut with a rotting red
And there they lay, aye, damn my eyes
Looking up at paradise
All souls bound just contrariwise
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum.

Fifteen men of 'em good and true
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum!
Ev'ry man jack could ha' sailed with Old Pew,
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum!
There was chest on chest of Spanish gold
With a ton of plate in the middle hold
And the cabins riot of stuff untold,
And they lay there that took the plum
With sightless glare and their lips struck dumb
While we shared all by the rule of thumb,
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum!

More was seen through a sternlight screen...
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum
Chartings undoubt where a woman had been
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum.
'Twas a flimsy shift on a bunker cot
With a dirk slit sheer through the bosom spot
And the lace stiff dry in a purplish blot

Oh was she wench or some shudderin' maid
That dared the knife and took the blade
By God! she had stuff for a plucky jade
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum.

Fifteen men on a dead man's chest
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum
Drink and the devil had done for the rest
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum.
We wrapped 'em all in a mains'l tight
With twice ten turns of a hawser's bight
And we heaved 'em over and out of sight,
With a Yo-Heave-Ho! and a fare-you-well
And a sudden plunge in the sullen swell
Ten fathoms deep on the road to hell,
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum!



