In the wake of Pytheas

Amongst the pirates, traders and the other inhabitants of the Sea of Swords and The Trackless Sea is a legend about the King of the Seas. Who ruled over a mighty kingdom formed from the unified inhabitants of the islands. The King of the Seas defended his kingdom with the aid of a powerful magical weapon that allowed him to command the power of the very seas.

But there were others that craved his power. They hid in the shadows plotting and waiting for their moment to strike. Finally that moment arrived. The plotters revealed themselves to the King as their plan came to fruition and successfully stole the throne from him. As a final act of defiance the King broke up the magical weapon and scattered the remnants around the kingdom.

As the King spent his remaining days rotting in a dark damp dungeon cell, his once great kingdom too slowly rotted from the inside.

Millennia later the remains of the broken kingdom are facing new threats. Rumours are rife that the King of the Seas has returned. Are the rumours true?
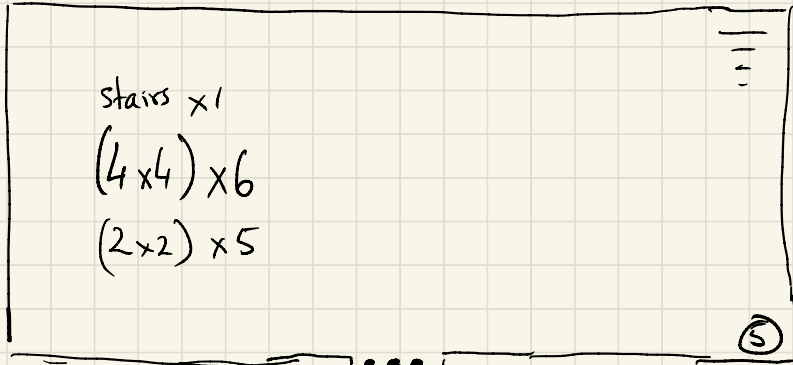
The coastal town of Saltmarsh like other coastal towns on the Sword Coast is very busy this time of year. Anything that floats and is sea worthy is being hired to take travellers to the Festival of the Earthmother on the island of Alaron. People have come from far and distance lands to witness this legendary festival at least once in their life time.

You are a group of 1st level adventurers. You don't know each other. You are all making your way to the festival. Having secured what is most likely the last spaces anywhere, you are all waiting on a small jetty ready to board a small sailing boat.
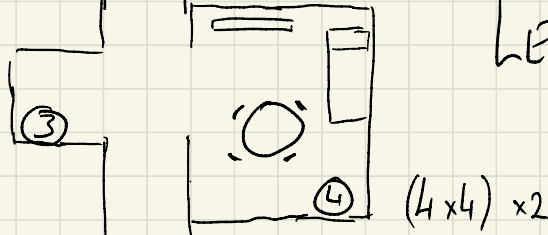
This campaign will be using the Players Handbook, Dungeon Masters Guide, Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide, and The Ghosts of Saltmarsh source book.

Your adventurers can be any combination of races and classes as described within the above source books. Particularly look at the Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide as this does have some exciting additions. Naturally at time of writing and creating characters The Ghosts of Saltmarsh has not been released (late May) I'm not anticipating any additions to the classes and races in this.

1. Beach, cliffs, cave entrance. If too long on beach perception check to see y players notice battle crab

2. Empty dark cave, stairs at the back
3. Guard post, lever in side that raises portcullis — pirate
4. Guard room, table, bunk bed, weapons rack — pirates
5. Spoils storage room, full of boxes, crates — possibly pirates

stairs x1

$(4 \times 4) \times 6$

$(2 \times 2) \times 5$

⑤

⑤

LEVEL 1

③

④ $(4 \times 4) \times 2$

GROUND LEVEL

$(4 \times 4) \times 2$

②
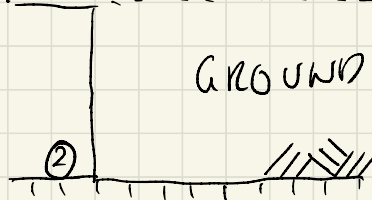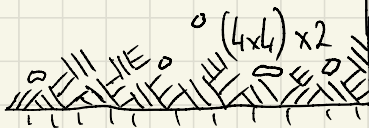
Beach ①

1. Sleeping quarters
2. Armoury
3. Captains office
4. Captains Sleeping
5. Treasury
6. 2nd in Command Sleeping
7. Kitchen
8. Hall/Eating

(4x4)

To 3rd Level

7

same as level 1 biggy

(2x2)

(4x4)

6   8

(4x4)

5

(4x4)
(2x2)

3

(4x4)
(2x2) x5

4

(2x2) x10

(2x2) x2   (4x4) x3

(4x4)

(2x2) x2

2

(2x2) x6

1

to 1st Level

LEVEL 2

$(2 \times 2) \times 6$

T_2

(4×4)
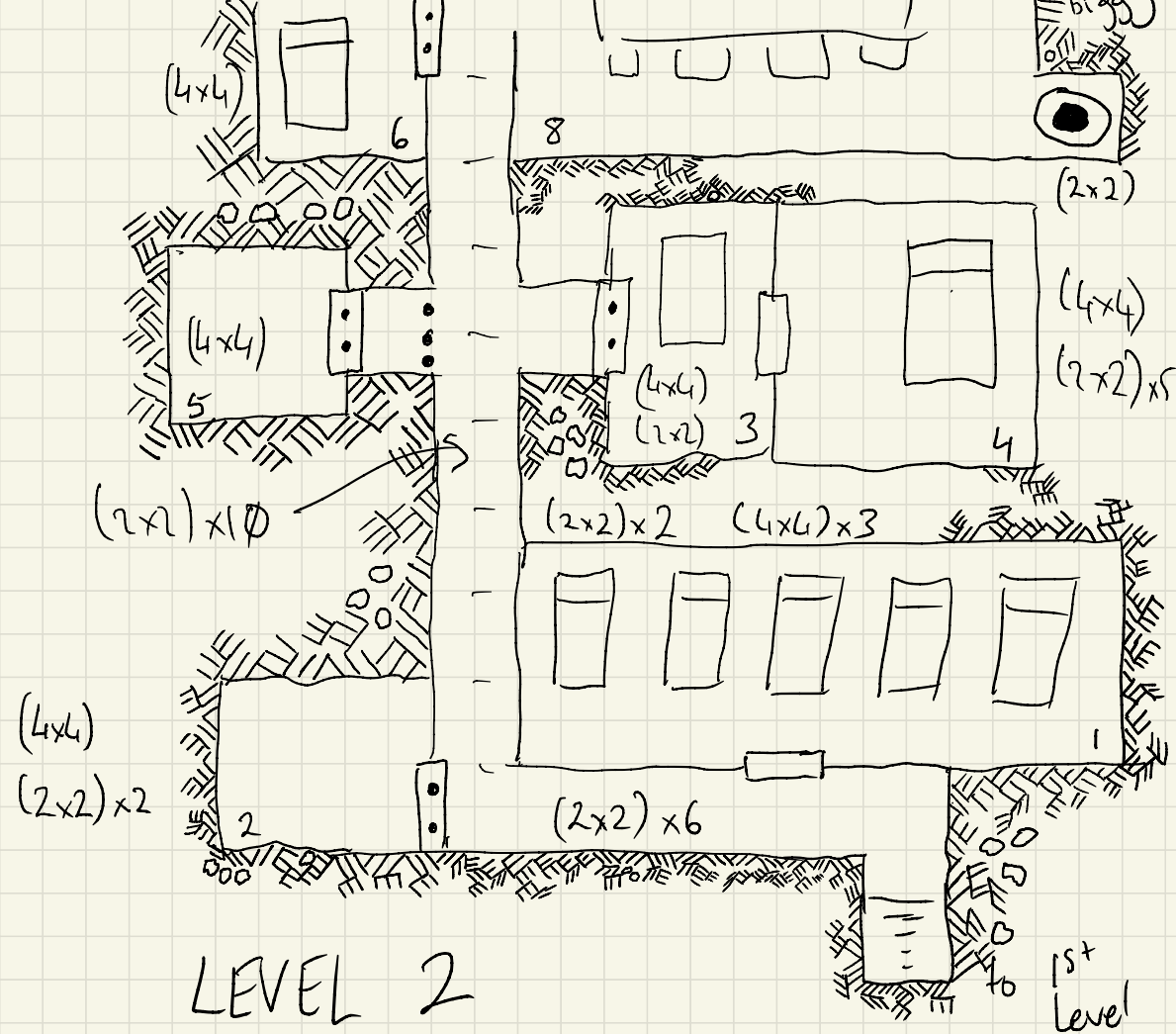
$(2 \times 2) \times 2$
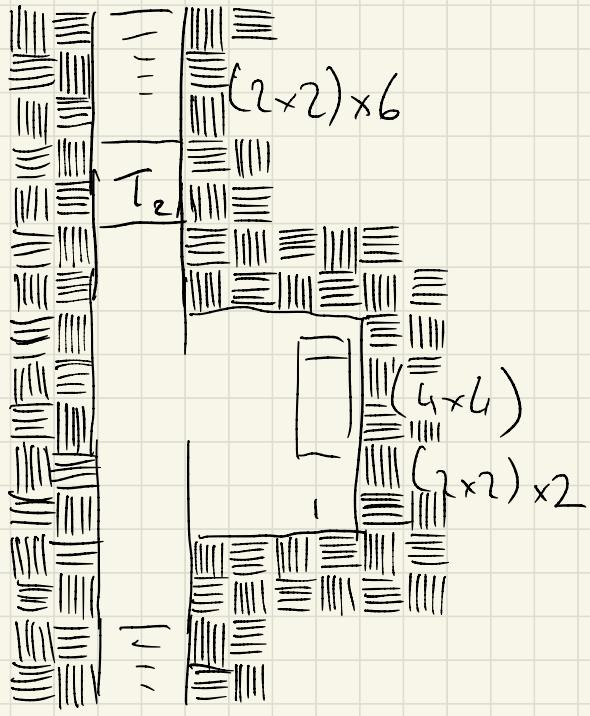
LEVEL 3

1   Guard room pirates
2   Trap

Saltmarsh

"The coastal town of Saltmarsh like other coastal towns on the Sword Coast is very busy this time of year. Anything that floats and is sea worthy is being hired to take travellers to the Festival of the Earthmother on the island of Alaron. People have come from far and distance lands to witness this legendary festival at least once in their life time.

You are a group of adventurers. You don't know each other. You are all making your way to the festival. Having secured what is most likely the last spaces anywhere, you are all waiting on a small wooden jetty ready to board the Dirty Oar. A keelboat owned and sailed by the ships Captain."

Name of boat captain: Chan

Name of ship mate: Dewey

Name of boat: Dirty Oar

The boat captain and his mate are basically Han Solo and Chewie.

However the captain is like Richard Dreyfus in appearance and the mate is like Thor.

Things Chan would say:

"Don't stand there like fish bait, come aboard."

"Stow your stuff over there, and points to the …"

2

"Is this boat fast? It did the Nelanther/Baldur's Gate run in under 5 days."

"As the adventurers stow their gear away, two young lads untie the ropes securing the Dirty Oar to the jetty.

The captain and ship mate, hoist the sail. A breeze catches the sail, slowly the Dirty Oar starts to move away from the jetty."

Have the players introduce their characters to each other as the Dirty Oar leaves port and heads out to the open sea.

On Boat

"A routine soon settles in as your days on the Dirty Oar pass.

The expanse of the sea stretched in every direction to the horizon. The sound of the waves lapping against the Dirty Oar's hull were rhythmic and soothing.

From time to time the day would be punctuated with Dolphins swimming along with the Dirty Oar.

In the distance the fins of a pod of Whales could be spotted."

Allow the players to do some fishing if they want to.

"A dark sky and low, distant rumbling. Tiny flashes of lightning can be seen in the distance, illuminating the horizon. The captain and his mate are running to and fro, preparing bailing buckets and tying safety lines around their waists. Chan makes some suggestions of tasks they can perform to help ready the Dirty Oar for the storm.

Handout the tasks handout to players

Skill Challenge: Batten Down the Hatches!

In this skill challenge, the characters try to prepare the vessel for the storm using the sample actions provided above, or by improvising their own.

In this skill challenge, each character's turn lasts an hour of in-game time, and each character can only take one turn. On their turn, the character can make one ability

check using any ability score and skill proficiency they like, as long as they can explain how this check could reasonably improve the ship's odds of survival.

A character succeeds on their ability check by rolling a 10 or higher, and earn **one success**, and earn an additional success for every 5 points the check exceeds 10. (For example, a roll of 21 earns the character **three successes**.) Note how many successes the party scores in total. Failing a skill check has no immediate consequences, but the characters will want to accrue as many successes in this skill challenge as possible, since every success will make the next skill challenge—weathering the storm—easier to survive.

Any characters that were awake when the skill challenge began—such as characters who do not have to sleep such as elves or warforged—are able to immediately leap into action, and have advantage on their ability check in this challenge. Characters with the Sailor background (or Soldier background, if they were a naval soldier) also have advantage on this check.

Captain notices island, try to head there to safety.

Skill Challenge Based on [DnDBeyond Article](#).

Skill Challenge: The Storm

"A terrible storm darkens the clouds and splits the skies above with lightning. Howling winds tear at the sails and biting rain tears at exposed flesh. The time to prepare is over. The storm has come."

When the hour of preparation is complete, Chan strides towards them and greets the characters tersely. If they scored at least 5 successes in the previous skill challenge, he also gives them his appreciation.

"I must thank you. I don't know how many of you were sailors in this life or a past life, but your quick work may have saved our lives. And your own. Steel yourselves. This storm is about to hit."

"Almost before he can finish saying it, the storm does hit. The waves crash into the starboard bow with enough force to nearly knock everyone on board off their feet. "

Now, the characters must help keep the ship afloat and on course long enough to sail through the storm.

To successfully complete this skill challenge, the characters must make three successful ability checks before earning three failures. They can use any ability score paired with any skill or tool proficiency they wish, but a character cannot use the same ability score or proficiency two turns in a row. The DC of this ability check starts at 19, but is decreased by 1 for each success the party earned in the previous challenge. Additionally, at the start of every turn after the first, the DC increases by 1 as the storm increases in intensity.

If your players seem stuck, or can't think of a good action to take during this skill challenge, you can suggest some course of action, and figure out what a good ability score and proficiency combination would be. A character who wants to make a Strength (Athletics) check could bail water. A character who wants to make a Wisdom (Survival) or Intelligence (Nature) check could advise the helmsman on how to navigate through the storm, and so on.

Success: Just a Little Turbulence

If the characters earn three successes before three failures, the Dirty Oar is slung through the storm by its powerful winds, and somehow manages to slide safely into the beach of the island. The characters reach their destination only a little worse for wear. Some minor repairs need doing.

Failure: Run Aground

If the characters earn three failures before three successes, "*the Dirty Oar is tossed about in the ocean's grip like a ragdoll, until it is flung into a reef about two miles from shore. The force of the ship's bottom dragging against the reef does more than tear through the wood; it also jolts the vessel so violently that it's mast cracks crashing down upon the deck. Then, the retreating wave cracks the ship on its port side, causing the entire vessel to roll onto its side. The next wave picks the ship up and hurls it one hundred yards forward, spinning it upside down and smashing the entire vessel to pieces.*"

Anyone else, including Captain Chan and Dewey, must make a DC 25 Constitution saving throw or fall unconscious. Unconscious creatures—such as the characters—awaken one hour later on the beach. Minimal equipment scattered along it amongst wreckage.

On Beach

A sandy beach with no obvious way off it. Cliffs, cave.

Words to describe cliffs: vertical, towering, precipitous, craggy, jagged, rocky, sheer

If the party spend too long on the beach a battle crab appears.

Do a perception check to see if the party notice the battle crab appearing. DC 14

If they go in the cave, after adjusting to the dark find some stairs at the back of the cave.

Words to describe caves: gloomy, natural, damp, cold, dim, dark and draughty, dark uninviting, dank

Pirates Lair

Level 1 - Storage Level

Corridor:

"As you come out of the stair well you see a well lit corridor. It's not as damp smelling as the cave and the lower half of the stairs. But there is a faint odour still. A head at the end of the corridor is a portcullis blocking anyway forward. About halfway down the corridor looks like there are two entrances or side passages."

Perception check by pirate guard and the party. Depending on how stealthy the party are being. If not being stealthy, the guard sees them. Do they notice the guard?

The guards, fire first, ask questions later.

Guard Alcove:

Single human pirate guard

Lever here that opens the portcullis.

Guard Room:

More pirate guards here

Storage Cave:

"A large cave full of crates and barrels. Obviously the spoils of many raids.

Around the cave are the odd Stalagmite. In a far corner are some more steps leading upwards."

Items found, barrels of mead, beer, salted meat. Crates are full of bottles,

If the players spend too long here, a pirate comes down the stair way.

If the pirate survives first round of combat, runs back to warn rest.

Level 2 - Living Level

Sleeping Quarters:

Pirates asleep here. But not if warned.

Armoury:

Locked door DC:13 DEX Check

weapons racks (short swords, cross bows)

2x Potion of healing

Captains Office:

Locked door DC:13 DEX Check

Lever that opens the portcullis for the treasury.

Desk, map on wall of the area, bit of paper with strange symbol on it. This is the Ironstar dwarf symbol.

Captains Sleeping Quarters:

bed, storage chest (clothes)

Treasury:

Locked portcullis and a locked door DC:15 DEX Check

Treasure chests

> **Contents of chests:**
>
> 700 Copper Coins
>
> 7000 Silver Coins
>
> 2100 Gold Coins
>
> 105 Platinum Coins
>
> 7 Bloodstones (50gp value)
>
> Gold locket with a painted portrait inside (25gp value)
>
> Small gold bracelet (25gp value)
>
> Silver ewer (25gp value)
>
> 2x Copper chalice with silver filigree (25gp value each)
>
> Bag of holding
>
> Potion of healing
>
> Potion of invisibility
>
> 5x Cloak of the Manta Ray
>
> HELM OF UNDERWATER ACTION
>
> CURSED LUCKSTONE

2nd in Command Sleeping Quarters:

Bed, storage chest

Kitchen:

Cook

Hall/Eating:

Tables, well in corner, stairs in far corner

Pirates and 2nd in Command

Level 3 - Guard Outpost

Guard Room:

Lever that disarms the trap.

Pirates

Trap:

NET TRAP
Simple trap (level 1–4, dangerous threat)

Goblins, with their propensity to enslave their enemies, prefer traps that leave intruders intact so the victims can be put to work in the mines or elsewhere.

Trigger. A trip wire strung across a hallway is rigged to a large net. If the trip wire is broken, the net falls on intruders. An iron bell is also rigged to the trip wire. It rings when the trap activates, alerting nearby guards.

Effect. A net covering a 10-foot-by-10-foot area centered on the trip wire falls to the floor as a bell rings. Any creature fully within this area must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained. A creature can use its action to make a DC 10 Strength check to try to free itself or another creature in the net. Dealing 5 slashing damage to the net (AC 10, 20 hp) also frees a creature without harming the creature.

Countermeasures. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the trip wire and the net. A successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools disables the trip wire without causing the net to drop or the bell to ring; failing the check causes the trap to activate.

Abandoned Tomb

This is the tomb from the one shot/taster dungeon by Matt Colville.

The players come out via a secret trap door into the secret tomb on the map.

The sword is still present on the tomb.

If they take the sword the skeletons attack!

For the rest of the map in the rooms are bones/remains of the relevant monsters that had been encountered.

When they emerge from the tomb the session ends.

Encounter 1 - Beach

	AC	HP	Speed	STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	Initiative	Surprise/Passive
Battle Crab	16	25	20ft	+2	+1	0	0	-1	-4		

Encounter 2 - Hall (Level 1)

	AC	HP	Speed	STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	Initiative	Surprise/Passive
Pirate (Guard Post)	12	11	30ft	0	+1	+1	0	0	0		10
Pirate (Guard Room)	12	11	30ft								10
Pirate (Guard Room)	12	11	30ft								10
Pirate (Guard Room)	12	11	30ft								10

Encounter 3 - Storage Room (Level 1)

	AC	HP	Speed	STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	Initiative	Surprise/Passive
Pirate	12	11	30ft	0	+1	+1	0	0	0		10

Encounter 4 - Sleeping Quarters (Level 2)

	AC	HP	Speed	STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	Initiative	Surprise/Passive
Pirate	12	11	30ft	0	+1	+1	0	0	0		10
Pirate orc											

Encounter 5 - Hall (Level 2)

	AC	HP	Speed	STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	Initiative	Surprise/Passive
Pirate (kitchen)	12	11	30ft	0	+1	+1	0	0	0		10
Pirate (Hall)	12	11									10
Pirate Beserker (Hall)	13	20	30ft	+3	+1	+3	-1	0	-1		10
Pirate (Hall)	12	11									10
Pirate Beserker (Hall)	13	20	30ft	+3							10
Pirate Commander	14	28	25ft	+4	-2	+3	0	0	0		12

Encounter 6 - Guard Room (Level 3)

	AC	HP	Speed	STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	Initiative	Surprise/Passive
Pirate	12	11	30ft	0	+1	+1	0	0	0		10
Pirate	12	11	30ft								

Encounter 7 - Secret Tomb (Abandoned Tomb)

	AC	HP	Speed	STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	Initiative	Surprise/Passive
Skelton	13	13	30ft	0	2	2	-2	-1	-3		9
Skelton	13	13	30ft	0	2	2	-2	-1	-3		