

Pirate Tattoos

From the Latin word "pirata" which means marine adventurer, tales of pirates on the open seas and their adventures have long captured our imaginations. Pirate tattoos tend to bring about all of the feelings that go along with the history; feelings of excitement, adventure, danger and even rebellion. Pirates lived life outside the realm of convention and they did not adhere to the laws or governmental rule of any country. They went where they wanted, took what they needed, and did what they pleased. When a pirate's flag was seen, it struck fear into the hearts of prospective victims; many gave up as soon as they saw the flag. Pirates have sparked our imaginations for many centuries. The tales of intrigues, fighting and the sea call forth a strong and fantastic image for many people.

Pirate tattoos are often colorful and bold, such as the stories they so often depict. Many individuals like to use infamous fictional and real life characters in their art, while others prefer to use symbols such as flags, ships, treasure chests, treasure maps and anchors. Most pirate tattoos have a dark nature, but it is also common to find these tattoos adorned with red roses, especially among women. A popular pirate tattoo image consists of a skeleton pirate; this design often depicts the skeleton with an angry grimace, or broad, sinister grin, usually wearing a pirate hat and a bandana. Some will even include a sword clutched in the skeleton's jaw, or even placed upon an anchor. Another popular pirate tattoo design is the image of the pin-up pirate. These female pirates typically wear a sexy, skimpier version of the traditional pirate garb and are often portrayed lounging or straddling familiar nautical objects.

Pirate tattoos are commonly done in the old school style of the first sailor tattoos, with heavy black outlines and bold colors. Old school tattoos typically feature little to no shading and are designed to look clear and age well. Contemporary designs appear more detailed, with finer lines and in depth shading.

Jolly Roger Pirate Tattoos

The Jolly Roger is quite possibly the most iconic of all pirate tattoo symbols. Typically consisting of a white skull and cross bones crafted onto a black flag, the Jolly Roger is a symbol of death meant to strike fear into those who encountered any ship that flew such a flag. The Jolly Roger was often flown to terrify the ship they were attacking into immediate surrender. Other Jolly Roger variations include a skull, a skeleton, a skull with two crossed swords underneath, a hand with a raised sword, a skull wearing an eye patch and many other intimidating designs. Sometimes two or three symbols were used together; the much-feared Blackbeard flag consisted of a horned skeleton holding an hourglass and a spear next to a bleeding heart. Today, the Jolly Roger pirate tattoo has become a symbol of adventure as well as a recognizable symbol of piracy.

Pirate Ship Tattoos

While Jolly Roger tattoos are often quite small in size, pirate ship tattoos are typically large designs that are very detailed and elaborate. Pirate ship tattoos commonly feature a Jolly Roger as a flag of the ship. These designs often feature large masted ships with billowing sails. Sometimes pirate ship tattoo designs are made to look ghostly, as if being haunted or as though coming out of the mist. Other popular pirate ship tattoo designs feature the ship cutting through fierce and choppy waves.

Pirate ship tattoos often symbolize a desire to live a life of freedom against all adversity, much like the pirate lived freely despite the law and attempts to his life. Pirate ship tattoos also represent those with an outlaw attitude, those who like to play the game of life by their own rules, and those with an adventurous personality who are not afraid to sail uncharted waters. Pirate ship tattoos often have significant personal meanings for the wearer as many people view their ship as a metaphor for life.