

Bards

A Basic Fantasy RPG Supplement

Release 2

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Basic Fantasy Website: basicfantasy.org

INTRODUCTION

This supplement provides information for playing Bards, an additional character class, under the Basic Fantasy Role-Playing Game rule system. If you do not already have a copy of the Basic Fantasy RPG rules, please visit the website and download a copy.

NEW CHARACTER CLASS

Bard

Level	Exp. Points	Hit Dice	Song Prof.	Max Bonus
1	0	1d4	2	+1
2	1,000	2d4	2	+1
3	2,000	3d4	3	+1
4	4,000	4d4	3	+2
5	8,000	5d4	4	+2
6	16,000	6d4	4	+2
7	32,000	7d4	5	+3
8	64,000	8d4	5	+3
9	120,000	9d4	6	+3
10	200,000	9d4+2	6	+4
11	280,000	9d4+4	7	+4
12	360,000	9d4+6	7	+4
13	440,000	9d4+8	8	+5
14	520,000	9d4+10	8	+5
15	600,000	9d4+12	9	+5
16	680,000	9d4+14	9	+6
17	760,000	9d4+16	10	+6
18	840,000	9d4+18	10	+6
19	920,000	9d4+20	11	+7
20	1,000,000	9d4+22	11	+7

Bards represent those characters who make their way in the world by means of influencing others. Most Bards are entertainers of some sort or another; singing, playing music, and oratory are their strengths. The Prime Requisite of a Bard is Charisma; all Bards must have 9 or more points of Charisma. All Bards receive an additional +1 to reaction rolls, on top of any Charisma bonus one might have.

Characters of any race may be Bards; however, human Bards have the ability to form a combo class with any of the four core classes, as well as with any supplement classes the GM chooses to allow. Thus, a Bard/Cleric, Bard/Fighter, Bard/Magic-User, or Bard/Thief are all possible combinations for a human character.

Bards use the Cleric/Thief column of the Attack Bonus table. A single-class Bard uses the Fighter saving throw table, but a combo-class Bard uses the saving throw table for the other class (not the best of Fighter or the other class as would be usual for a combo class, but just the one for the other class). Of course, a Bard/Fighter uses the Fighter table.

Single-classed Bards may use any weapon and wear any armor, and may use a shield if desired. Combo-class Bards must abide by the limitations of the other class with respect to using armor or shields, but except for Bard/Clerics they may still use any weapon; Bard/Cleric characters must abide by the limitations of their class. If supplement classes are used, this requirement applies to combos with any subclass of Cleric as well.

Bard Songs

All Bards have the ability to play and sing songs which can influence not just the mood but even the abilities of those who hear them. When performed, these songs typically apply a bonus of some sort to die rolls made by allies of the Bard, or a penalty to his or her enemies. This is referred to as the "bonus" of the song. Bards begin play knowing two different Bard Songs plus one additional song for each point of his or her Charisma bonus. At 3rd level and at each odd level afterwards, the Bard receives an additional song proficiency. This may be used to learn an additional Bard Song, or to improve the Bard's proficiency with songs already known. Songs begin with a bonus of +1 (applied as a negative number when used against an enemy); a Bard may apply an additional song proficiency to a song to increase its bonus. This bonus may not be higher than the listed "maximum bonus" given on the advancement table above.

Listed below are the basic Bard Songs available to Bard characters with an explanation of each song's benefit. The player should be encouraged to come up with his or her own unique song names and perhaps even come up with some sample lyrics or melody for each. Of course, this is not necessary for actual play but may enhance the role-playing aspect of the campaign.

Songs that are played during the course of combat must be played continuously. Regardless of the Bard's particular playing style, he or she may not utilize a weapon; if Combat Options is being used, the Bard may not engage in Defending. The Bard may move about, but may not attack during a round in which he or she is performing. If the Bard is struck in combat, the effect is immediately canceled until the Bard's turn when he or she can resume performing. If a Bard chooses to end a song (with a flourish), the effect lingers one additional round; this does not apply if the Bard is interrupted. Note that this allows the Bard to take advantage of the song effect himself on his next turn.

When Bards are playing on opposing sides of a battlefield, all bonuses and penalties apply, sometimes creating a situation of a "net" bonus/penalty.

Sometimes Bards play together as a duet, quartet, etc. Each Bard must know the same songs to participate in such collective Bardic Song playing. The bonus for this combined song is equal to the highest bonus available (i.e. the bonus of the most proficient Bard) with an additional +1 for each additional Bard assisting; the maximum bonus which can be achieved is normally +5. However, if the performers are being opposed, calculate the full sum for both sides, subtract the lesser from the greater, and then apply the remainder to the side with the greater bonus, applying the limit of +5 to this figure. In combined performances, any one Bard who is interrupted will spoil the entire performance for all the Bards. A Bard may intentionally leave the song at any point, causing the bonus to be recalculated, and conversely a Bard may join the song at any point with the same effect.

The Songs

The songs listed below are the most common sort of Bard Songs. Other more rare or unique songs may be developed over the course of play by the Game Master or intrepid players. Any new abilities should mirror the power levels shown by those listed here. Not all songs require an instrument; if a song says "singing" then no instrument is needed, while if one says "playing" then an instrument is required. Performing without an instrument applies a penalty of -1 to the song (completely nullifying the effect if the song has a bonus of +1).

Alertness Song (rondo) – While singing this quiet tune, all allies within 10 feet are less likely to be surprised, reducing the die roll range by 1 (from 1-2 on d6 to a roll of 1 on d6). A second rank of proficiency reduces the chance further to a roll of 1 on d8, and a third rank modifies the roll to 1 on d10. Proficiency in this particular Bard Song may not be increased beyond 3 such ranks.

Battle Song, offense (march) – While playing all allies within 60 feet receive the benefit of +1 to their Attack Bonus.

Battle Song, defense (strophic) – While playing all allies within 60 feet receive the benefit of +1 to their Armor Class.

Charms Song (lullaby) – By playing lullaby, a Bard lulls those listening into a drowsy day-dreamy state. Allies are unaffected, but others have a -1 penalty on saves versus sleep, charms, illusions, suggestions and similar effects.

Funeral Song (requiem) – While playing this song, undead creatures (or vile beings from netherworld regions) are more easily turned by Clerics or those with similar powers, granting the character a +1 to his or her Turning attempt.

Healing Rest Song (nocturne) – By playing periodically during the periods of rest, each allied character including the Bard receives the benefit of an additional point of healing (see p. 51 of the Core Rules). A major disruption of the rest period will spoil the effect.

Laying of Hands Song (hymn) – While this song of divine inspiration is being played, any allied Clerics within 60 feet receive an additional +1 point per die when casting any healing spell.

Lock Picking Song (measures) – By this carefully timed piece, a Bard can assist in the concentration of roguish characters during attempts to Open Locks and in the Removal of Traps (but not location of such traps). The Thief gets a +5% bonus on such attempts for each rank of proficiency of the Bard. Any character with such abilities can benefit from the song's effect.

Magic Dampening Song (elegy) – When playing this tune, magical effects are easier to shrug off, granting a +1 to any saving throw versus a magical effect (at the very least, all saves vs. Wands and Spells, and any other effect the GM rules is magical). However, this song affects all within 60 feet of the Bard, whether ally or enemy. If opposing Bards play the song at the same time, only the highest bonus is applied.

Morale Boost Song (polonaise) – While the Bard plays, allies within 60 feet have the benefit of +1 on morale or saves against fear effects.

Morale Killing Song (caprice) – While the Bard plays, any enemies within 60 feet have a penalty of -1 on morale or saves against fear effects.

Pied Piper Song (allegro) – While playing this song, natural animals (including giant varieties) are more easily befriended or calmed by druids or those with similar powers. The druid receives a +1 to his or her Animal Affinity (Turning) attempt. While the song is playing, any animal specific charm or control type spell (as determined by Game Master) has a -1 penalty to the animal's saves.

Recall Song (lament) – This calming tune aids concentration and contemplation, allowing a spell caster (including the playing Bard if applicable) to recall a previously cast 1st level spell after a period of 1 hour of meditation while the Bard plays. Neither the Bard nor the spell caster may be interrupted during this time. No one spell caster may benefit from this effect more than once per day, but multiple spell casters may benefit from the

effect. Increased proficiency allows spells of higher level to be recalled (up to level 5 spells), but the spell caster may choose lower level spells if desired. Regardless, only one spell can be recalled.

Song of Destruction (crescendo) – When playing this tune, magical effects are much more destructive, granting a +1 to the effective caster level of damaging spells originating within 60 feet of the Bard, modifying spell effects such as range, damage, and/or duration. This song affects both allies and enemies equally. Only the highest proficiency Bard effect applies when multiple bards might play this song at same time. The empowered caster does not receive additional memorized spells or other level derived benefits, only increased effectiveness with their current allotment of damaging spells.

Travel Song (barcarolle) – By playing a rhythmic tune during the majority of a day's traveling time, the allied group receives the benefit of +10% additional distance after all other factors are figured. Each additional level of proficiency increases this bonus by an additional +10% (up to +50% maximum).

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INTRODUCTION

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