



ALTERNATE BARD



HOMEBREW

Become the Wandering Master of Musical Magic you were Meant to Be!

THE BARD

An elderly man in an extravagant purple coat stepped out of the shadows into the middle of the giant lord's stronghold. With the eyes of all his foes on him, he began to play a masterful song ridiculing the frost giant lord. As the multitude of foes closed around on him, the elderly musician's heroic companions jumped from the battlements, and motivated by the wondrous song, they made quick work of the giant and his horde.

The sprightly halfling let forth a mighty blast on her war horn and led the charge toward the hobgoblin legion. Not to be outdone, and inspired by the bravery of the halfling in her shining armor, the heroes drew their weapons and ran forward. When the battle was won, the valiant halfling sat down to write a ballad of the heroics of the day.

A man of otherworldly beauty and grace stood before the townsfolk against the backdrop of a dark and rainy night. For uncounted years, this town had been living under the brutal rule of an evil vampire lord. After many hopeless years, the tales told by this strangely beautiful man had given the townsfolk hope that together they could overthrow their undead overlord.

All three of the heroes described above are considered Bards. The versatile performers wander the world collecting tales, talents, knowledge, and unique magical abilities which they use to motivate and inspire heroism in their comrades.

THE SONG OF CREATION

The first tale every bardic mentor imparts to their protégé is the *Song of Creation*. Though the myth has many variations, they all tell of the multiverse being created by the song. All Bards learn to draw upon the creative power of this song to work their signature magic to inspire greatness in others.

While not all Bards are wandering musicians, they each learn to draw upon the song of creation in their own unique way. Whether through their speech, songs, or art, all Bards recognize the magical power of spoken words. While their magic may not be as powerful or wondrous as a Wizard or Cleric, their subtle and versatile abilities allow Bards and their allies to overcome nearly any challenge they may face.

WONDROUS WANDERERS

True practitioners of bardic magic aren't common. Not every minstrel or jester is a true Bard. Learning to channel the song of creation requires natural talent and dedication. True Bards spend their lives wandering the land gathering local legends, secret lore, and unique magic. No two Bards are ever alike.

Bards are marked by an unquenchable desire to learn new things, master new skills, and gather strange tales. For these travelers, the call of adventure is nearly impossible to resist. They often find themselves in the company of heroes delving into forgotten tombs, deciphering ancient scrolls, and on the hunt for strange exotic creatures. Any Bard that can tell an awe-inspiring story from personal experience earns renown among other Bards. Indeed, after telling stories about heroes accomplishing mighty deeds, many Bards take these themes to heart and assume heroic roles themselves.



CREATING YOUR BARD

When creating your Bard, the most important thing for you to consider is your Bard's *Muse*, or inspiration. Do they seek out beauty in the world, writing ballads and songs inspired by the sights they see? Maybe they find their inspiration in tales of selfless heroism and travel the world seeking the next hero of the realm? Or, maybe the lure of power and influence is what drives your Bard to travel the land gathering lore and magic.

Also, consider your Bard's preferred style of performance and how it makes them unique from other Bards. Are they a virtuoso, known throughout the land for their skill with their signature musical instrument? Or, are they a rowdy teller of tales who only performs in the cheapest tavern in each town?

MULTICLASSING AND THE BARD

If your group uses the optional multiclassing rule, here is what you need to know should you choose to take your first level in the Bard class.

Ability Score Minimum. As a multiclass character, you must have a minimum Charisma score of 13 in order to take your first level in Bard, or to take a level in another class if you are already a Bard.

Proficiencies Gained. If Bard is not your initial class, you gain proficiency in light armor, one skill from the Bard skill list, and one musical instrument when you take your first level in the Bard class.

Spell Slots. Add half your levels (rounded down) in the Bard class to the appropriate levels from other classes to determine available spell slots.



THE BARD

Level	PB	Features	Cantrips Known	Spells Known	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	Bardic Insp.
1st	+2	Bardic Inspiration, Spellcasting	2	2	2	—	—	—	—	d6
2nd	+2	Folklore, Song of Rest	2	3	2	—	—	—	—	d6
3rd	+2	Bardic Tradition, Magical Secrets	2	3	3	—	—	—	—	d6
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement	3	4	3	—	—	—	—	d6
5th	+3	Tradition Feature	3	5	4	2	—	—	—	d8
6th	+3	Countersong, Magical Secrets	3	5	4	2	—	—	—	d8
7th	+3	Folklore, Font of Inspiration	3	6	4	3	—	—	—	d8
8th	+3	Ability Score Improvement	3	6	4	3	—	—	—	d8
9th	+4	Musical Expertise	3	7	4	3	2	—	—	d8
10th	+4	Folklore, Magical Secrets	4	7	4	3	2	—	—	d8
11th	+4	Tradition Feature	4	8	4	3	3	—	—	d10
12th	+4	Ability Score Improvement	4	8	4	3	3	—	—	d10
13th	+5	—	4	9	4	3	3	1	—	d10
14th	+5	Folklore, Magical Secrets	4	9	4	3	3	1	—	d10
15th	+5	Tradition Feature	4	10	4	3	3	2	—	d10
16th	+5	Ability Score Improvement	4	10	4	3	3	2	—	d10
17th	+6	—	4	11	4	3	3	3	1	d12
18th	+6	Magical Secrets	4	11	4	3	3	3	1	d12
19th	+6	Ability Score Improvement	4	12	4	3	3	3	2	d12
20th	+6	Folklore, Mythic Secrets	4	12	4	3	3	3	2	d12

CLASS FEATURES

HIT POINTS

Hit Dice: 1d8 per Bard level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 8 + your Constitution modifier.

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per Bard level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

Armor: Light armor, medium armor

Weapons: Simple weapons, hand crossbows, longswords, rapiers, shortswords.

Tools: One musical instrument, and any two artisan's tools, gaming sets, or musical instruments of your choice.

Saving Throws: Dexterity, Charisma

Skills: Choose three from Acrobatics, Arcana, Deception, History, Insight, Investigation, Perception, Performance, Persuasion, Religion, Sleight of Hand, or Stealth.

EQUIPMENT

As a Bard, you start with the following equipment:

- (a) a rapier, (b) a longsword, or (c) any simple weapon
- (a) leather armor or (b) a chain shirt
- (a) a diplomat's pack or (b) an entertainer's pack
- One musical instrument of your choice and a dagger

QUICK BUILD

You can make a Bard quickly by following these suggestions. First, make Charisma your highest ability score, followed by Dexterity. Second, choose the Entertainer background.

BARDIC INSPIRATION

Starting at 1st level, you can inspire heroism with both word and music. When you or a creature that can hear you within 60 feet makes an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw, you can use a reaction to expend a Bardic Inspiration die and add it to the result of its roll. You can use this reaction after the creature rolls, but before you know if it succeeds or fails.

Your Bardic Inspiration die begins as a d6, and increases in size when you reach certain levels in this class, as shown in the Bardic Inspiration column of the Bard table above.

You have a number of Bardic Inspiration dice equal to 1 + your Charisma modifier (minimum of 1), and you regain all of your expended dice when you finish a short or long rest.

SPELLCASTING

Also at 1st level, you learn to use your performative ability to draw upon the song of creation and produce wondrous spells:

CANTRIPS

You learn two cantrips of your choice from the Bard spell list. You learn an additional Bard cantrip at 4th and 10th level, as shown in the Cantrips Known column of the Bard table.

SPELL SLOTS

The Bard table shows how many spell slots you have to cast your Bard spells of 1st-level and higher. To cast Bard a spell, you must expend a slot of the spell's level or higher, and you regain all expended spell slots when you finish a long rest.



SPELLS KNOWN OF 1ST-LEVEL AND HIGHER

At 1st level, you learn two 1st-level spells of your choice from the Bard spell list at the end of this class description.

The Spells Known column of the Bard table shows when you learn more Bard spells of your choice. Each Bard spell you learn must be of a level for which you have spell slots, as shown on the Bard table. For instance, at 5th level in this class, you learn one new Bard spell of 1st or 2nd-level.

When you gain a Bard level, you can choose a Bard spell you know and replace it with one Bard spell of your choice which must also be of a level for which you have spell slots.

SPELLCASTING ABILITY

Charisma is your spellcasting ability for your Bard spells, as your magic comes from the heart and soul you pour into the performance of your music. You use Charisma whenever a Bard spell refers to your spellcasting ability, when setting the saving throw DC, and when making an attack roll with one.

Spell save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus
+ your Charisma modifier

Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus
+ your Charisma modifier

RITUAL CASTING

You use your varied knowledge to cast the ritual version of any Bard spell you know so long as it has the ritual tag.

SPELLCASTING FOCUS

You can use a musical instrument that you are proficient with as a spellcasting focus for Bard spells you know.

FOLKLORE

You have traveled far and wide and gleaned various bits of knowledge. At 2nd level, you gain proficiency with two skills, musical instruments, or tools. You can learn to speak, read, and write one language of your choice in place of one or both of these skill, instrument, or tool proficiencies.

At certain Bard levels, you learn more Folklore. You gain proficiency with one skill, musical instrument, tool, or you learn another language of your choice at 7th, 10th, 14th, and 20th level.

SONG OF REST

Beginning at 2nd level, you can use soothing music or oration to help revitalize your wounded allies during a short rest. If you or any friendly creatures who can hear your performance regains hit points at the end of the short rest by spending one or more Hit Dice, each of those creatures regains additional hit points equal to one roll of your Bardic Inspiration Die.

In place of regaining these additional hit points, a creature can choose to reduce its current level of exhaustion by 1.

BARDIC TRADITION

At 3rd level, choose the Bardic Tradition that best represents the varied skills, talents, and knowledge you have gained in your many travels: Fool, Loremaster, or Skald.

Also included at the end of this class are Bardic Traditions inspired by the Bard options published in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*: the Conspirator, Mesmer, and Sword Dancer.

Your Bardic Tradition grants you features at 3rd level, and again when you reach 5th, 11th, and 15th level in this class.

MAGICAL SECRETS

In your varied travels, you have plundered magical knowledge from an assortment of disciplines. At 3rd level, you learn two 1st-level spells of your choice from any class spell list. These Magical Secrets spells become Bard spells for you, but they do not count against your total number of Spells Known.

You can cast each of your Magical Secret spells once, at its lowest level, without expending a spell slot, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. You can also cast Magical Secrets spells with any spell slots you have.

You learn two additional Magical Secrets spells of your choice when you reach 6th level, and again at 10th level, 14th level, and 18th level in this class. Any additional Magical Secrets you learn must be of a level for which you have spell slots as per the Bard table.

Unlike your other Bard spells, any Bard spells that you learn as a Magical Secret through this feature cannot be switched out for another Bard spell when you gain a level in this class.



ABILITY SCORE IMPROVEMENT

When you reach 4th level, and again at 8th, 12th, 16th, and 19th level, you can increase one ability score by 2, or two ability scores by 1. As normal, you can't increase one of your ability scores above 20 using this feature.

COUNTERSONG

Beginning at 6th level, you can use your bardic performance to disrupt other spellcasters. When a creature you can hear within 60 feet casts a spell that has a verbal component, you can use your reaction to play a discordant melody and expend one or more Bardic Inspiration dice.

If the number of Bardic Inspiration dice you expend is equal to or higher than the level at which the spell was cast, the spell instantly fails and has no effect.

If the spell is of a level higher than the number of Bardic Inspiration dice you expended, roll the Bardic Inspiration dice. If the total is equal to or higher than 10 + the level of the spell, then the spell instantly fails and has no effect.

FONT OF INSPIRATION

Beginning at 7th level, you can draw bardic power directly from the Song of Creation itself. As a bonus action, you can expend a spell slot to regain a number of expended Bardic Inspiration dice equal to the level of the slot expended.

MUSICAL EXPERTISE

The song of creation propels your performative abilities to supernatural heights. Starting at 9th level, you add double your proficiency bonus to any ability check you make that uses a musical instrument you are proficient with.

Moreover, whenever you expend a Bardic Inspiration die, you can roll it twice and use the higher result.

MYTHIC SECRETS

By 20th level, you have unlocked some of the most powerful and secret magics of the multiverse. You learn one 6th-level and one 7th-level spell of your choice from any spell list, and you can cast each spell once per long rest at its lowest level.

BARDIC TRADITION

Choose the Bardic Tradition that best represents the various skills and abilities of your Bard: Fool, Loremaster, or Skald.

FOOL

Bards who count themselves among this Tradition use crude stories, daring acrobatics, and cutting jokes to entertain and cajole audiences. Where other Bards seek out forgotten lore or tales of bravery, Fools recount embarrassing and satirical stories to undermine the plans of those in power. Their sharp wit and acrobatics make them slippery opponents in battle.

SATIRICAL THEATRICALS

3rd-level Fool Tradition feature

You gain the skills to pass as a bumbling nincompoop. You gain proficiency in Acrobatics and Sleight of Hand. Whenever you make an ability check with either skill, you gain a bonus to your roll equal to one roll of your Bardic Inspiration die.



CUTTING WORDS

3rd-level Fool Tradition feature

You know just the right thing to say to distract, confuse, and sap the confidence of others. As a reaction when a creature that can hear you within 60 feet makes a damage roll, ability check, or attack roll you can expend a Bardic Inspiration die, roll it, and subtract the number rolled from the creature's roll. You can use this reaction after the creature rolls, but before it is determined if its roll succeeds or fails, or it deals damage.

TUMBLING FOOL

3rd-level Fool Tradition feature

You have learned to move about in a strange yet entertaining manner. You can take the Dash action as a bonus action on your turn. Whenever you take the Dash action, you gain the benefits listed below until the end of your current turn:

- Opportunity attacks against you have disadvantage.
- You gain a climbing speed equal to your walking speed.
- You can move through the space of any creature equal to you in size, or larger, without expending extra movement.
- You reduce falling damage you take by an amount equal to your level + your Charisma modifier (minimum of 1).



SHARP WIT

5th-level Fool Tradition feature

You can use sarcasm and wit to distract those who would do you harm. When a creature you can see within 60 feet targets you with an attack, you can use your Cutting Words reaction without expending a use of your Bardic Inspiration.

Also, whenever you use your Cutting Words reaction, and the target misses with its attack or fails its ability check, you can choose for it to take psychic damage equal to one roll of your Bardic Inspiration die + your Charisma modifier.

WONDROUS TUMBLER

11th-level Fool Tradition feature

You can embellish your natural acrobatic talents with bardic magic. When you take the Dash action, you can expend one Bardic Inspiration die to gain one of the following benefits:

Disappearing Act. You turn invisible and can move about without making a sound for 10 minutes. This invisibility ends if you damage a creature or force it to make a saving throw.

Misdirection. You disappear, only to instantly reappear in an unoccupied space that you can see within 30 feet.

FOOL'S LUCK

15th-level Fool Tradition feature

You can snatch defeat from victory to regain some of your bardic magic. When the DM calls for you to make an ability check or forces you to make a saving throw and you succeed, you can instead choose to fail in comical fashion, and regain one of your expended Bardic Inspiration dice.

LOREMASTER

The Bards known as Loremasters travel the world collecting bits of knowledge about everything they can. From scholarly tomes and religious texts to tavern tales and superstitions of local peasants, these travelers value stories of all kinds. The loyalty of these Bards lies above all in the pursuit of beauty and truth, not in fealty to a monarch or the tenets of a deity.

ADDITIONAL MAGICAL SECRETS

3rd-level Loremaster Tradition feature

Your knowledge of various magical traditions exceeds even that of your fellow Bards. You learn one additional 1st-level Magical Secret spell of your choice.

Also, whenever you learn additional Magical Secrets you learn three spells of your choice, instead of the normal two.

JACK OF ALL TRADES

3rd-level Loremaster Tradition feature

In your many wanderings you have learned much about many things. You can add half your proficiency bonus to any ability check you make that doesn't include your proficiency bonus.

In addition, you gain proficiency in two of the following skills of your choice: Arcana, History, Nature, or Religion.

POTENT PERFORMER

5th-level Loremaster Tradition feature

Whenever you cast a Bard spell that deals thunder or psychic damage, or restores hit points to a creature, you gain a bonus to the damage roll or the number of hit points restored by the spell equal to one roll of your Bardic Inspiration die.





WONDROUS SUCCESS

11th-level Loremaster Tradition feature

Your skills are beyond reproach. When you use your Bardic Inspiration reaction to add to an ability check, you can invoke a magical success and turn the creature's d20 roll into a d20. If the target succeeds, it does so in an overtly magical way.

Once you use your Bardic Inspiration in this way you must finish a short or long rest before you can do so again.

INSPIRATION & MAGICAL SUCCESS

With their Wondrous Success feature a Loremaster Bard can allow a creature to almost automatically succeed on one ability check once per rest.

Remember, characters should only make ability checks when the DM calls for an ability check, and ability checks should not be called for unless there is a chance, however small, of a successful result.

BURST OF INSPIRATION

15th-level Loremaster Tradition feature

Your speech and song are laced with powerful bardic magic, inspiring all who hear you. When you use your Bardic Inspiration reaction on a creature other than yourself, creatures of your choice within 10 feet of your target can add one roll of your Bardic Inspiration die to the first ability check, attack roll, or saving throw they make before the beginning of your next turn.

SKALD

Bards of this Tradition are no strangers to adventure. Unlike other Bards that sing the tales of heroes from ages long past, Skalds seek to inspire new legends. They seek out bands of adventurers and potential heroes, hoping to use their magic to inspire them to great feats worthy of song and legend.

BARDIC WARRIOR

3rd-level Skald Tradition feature

In your desire to stand among the heroes of legend you have learned to hold your own in battle. You gain proficiency with martial weapons, shields, and heavy armor.

Also, when you are wielding a weapon or shield in both of your hands, your voice counts as a musical instrument for the purposes of casting Bard spells or using other Bard features.

COMBAT INSPIRATION

3rd-level Skald Tradition feature

You use your bardic magic to inspire feats of valor in battle. When you or a creature that can hear you within 60 feet hits a creature with a weapon attack, you can use your reaction to expend one use of your Bardic Inspiration, roll your Bardic Inspiration die, and add the result to the damage roll.

EXTRA ATTACK

5th-level Skald Tradition feature

You can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn. Moreover, you can cast one Bard cantrip you know in place of one of these attacks.

GALLANT CHARGE

5th-level Skald Tradition feature

When you roll initiative, you can expend a use of your Bardic Inspiration to rally a heroic charge. You, and any creatures of your choice within 15 feet that can hear you gain a bonus to their initiative rolls equal to a roll of your Bardic Inspiration.

You can't use this feature when incapacitated or surprised.

RINGING STRIKES

11th-level Skald Tradition feature

You empower your strikes with bardic magic. Whenever you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you deal bonus thunder damage equal to one roll of your Bardic Inspiration die.

Also, you can choose for your Combat Inspiration bonus damage to be thunder in place of the weapon's damage type.

HEROIC BALLAD

15th-level Skald Tradition feature

Your words motivate others to ever greater feats of gallantry. When you use Combat Inspiration you can also grant the target temporary hit points equal to one roll of your Bardic Inspiration die + your Charisma modifier (minimum of 1).



BARD SPELL LIST

Below are the spells available to Bards. They are organized by spell level, not character level. The spells below are found in the *Player's Handbook*, *Xanathar's Guide to Everything**, and *Tasha's Cauldron of Everything***. Any spell that can be cast as a ritual is marked with the (ritual) tag.

Any spells marked with a *B* are exclusive to the Alternate Bard class, and they can be found on the following pages.

CANTRIPS (0-LEVEL)

blade ward
booming blade ^{TCoE}
dancing lights
friends ^B
glitterbeam ^B
guidance
light
mage hand
mending
message
mind sliver ^{TCoE}
minor illusion
prestidigitation
resistance
spare the dying
thunderclap ^{XGtE}
toll the dead ^{XGtE}
true strike
vicious mockery ^B

1ST-LEVEL

animal friendship
bane
beast bond ^{XGtE}
cause fear ^{XGtE}
ceremony ^{XGtE}
charm person
color spray
command
comprehend languages
cure wounds
detect magic (ritual)
disguise self
dissonant whispers
earth tremor ^{XGtE}
faerie fire
feather fall
healing word
heroism
hideous laughter
identify (ritual)
illusory script (ritual)
inspiring melody ^B
longstrider
silent image
sleep
speak with animals (ritual)
thunderous smite
thunderwave
unseen servant (ritual)

2ND-LEVEL

aid
animal messenger (ritual)
blindness/deafness
calm emotions
cloud of daggers
crown of madness
detect thoughts
enhance ability
enlarge/reduce
enthrall
heat metal
hold person
invisibility
knock
lesser restoration
locate object
magic mouth
mirror image
phantasmal force
pyrotechnics ^{XGtE}
see invisibility
shatter
silence (ritual)
skywrite (ritual)
song of confidence ^B
suggestion
zone of truth

3RD-LEVEL

bestow curse
clairvoyance
dispel magic
enemies abound
fear
feign death (ritual)
glyph of warding
haste
heroic anthem ^B
hypnotic pattern
major image
mass healing word
nondetection
sending
slow
sonic wave ^B
speak with dead
stinking cloud
thunderstep ^{XGtE}
tiny hut (ritual)
tongues

4TH-LEVEL

banishment
charm monster ^{XGtE}
compulsion
confusion
dimension door
dominate beast
elemental bane
fabricate
freedom of movement
greater invisibility
hallucinatory terrain
locate creature
phantasmal killer
polymorph
resilient sphere
revitalizing hymn ^B

5TH-LEVEL

animate object
awaken
dominate person
dream
geas
greater restoration
hold monster
legend lore
legendary ballad ^B
mass cure wounds
mislead
modify memory
planar binding
raise dead
screaming
seeming
skill empowerment ^{XGtE}
synaptic static ^{XGtE}
telepathic bond (ritual)
teleportation circle



BARD SPELLS

The following spells are available exclusively to the Bard class and are presented in order of ascending spell level.

FRIENDS

Enchantment cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self

Components: S, M (a small amount of makeup applied to the face as this spell is cast)

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You lace your words with soothing magic and force a creature of your choice that can hear and understand you to make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, you have advantage on all Charisma checks directed at that creature for the duration.

On a successful save, the creature realizes that you used magic to attempt to influence it and becomes hostile toward you. A creature prone to violence might attack you, and other creatures might seek retribution against you in other ways.

GLITTERBEAM

Evocation cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 120 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: Instantaneous

You project a beam of twinkling lights at a creature or object within range. Make a ranged spell attack against the target. On a hit, it takes 1d8 radiant damage. Until a creature uses an action to remove the glitter, a target hit by this spell emits bright light in a 5-foot radius and has disadvantage on any Dexterity (Stealth) checks it makes to hide or conceal itself.

At Higher Levels. The damage of this spell increases by 1d8 at 5th (2d8), 11th (3d8), and 17th level (4d8).

VICIOUS MOCKERY

Enchantment cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 feet

Components: V

Duration: Instantaneous

You unleash a string of provoking words at a creature that can hear and understand you within range. The creature must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw, or it takes 1d4 psychic damage and has disadvantage on attack rolls against targets other than you until the start of your next turn.

At Higher Levels. This spell's damage increases by 1d4 when you reach 5th (2d4), 11th (3d4), and 17th level (4d4).

INSPIRING MELODY

1st-level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self (10 feet)

Components: V, M (a musical instrument that you are proficient with)

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You play a tune that inspires those who hear it to stand and fight. Creatures of your choice within range that can hear you gain temporary hit points equal to your spellcasting ability modifier (minimum of 1 temporary hit point).

As a bonus action on each subsequent turn, you can use an instrument to play this tune again and grant another creature that can hear you within range these temporary hit points.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd-level or higher, the range increases by 10 feet and you can grant one additional target temporary hit points each time you play, for each slot level above 1st.





SONIC WAVE

3rd-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self (30-foot cone)
Components: V, S
Duration: Instantaneous

You forcefully clasp your hands together and a shockwave of booming force shoots forth from you, emitting a boom audible out to 500 feet. All creatures in a 30-foot cone must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or take 4d8 thunder damage, fall prone, and be deafened for 1 minute. On a success, they take half as much damage and are not knocked prone or deafened.

A creature can repeat the Constitution saving throw at the end of each of its turns, and on a success it is no longer deafened.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th-level or higher, the initial thunder damage dealt by the spell increases by 1d8, and the size of the cone grows by 5 feet for each slot level above 3rd.

SONG OF CONFIDENCE

2nd-level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self (20 feet)
Components: V, M (a musical instrument that you are proficient with)
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You play a song that inspires those who hear it to live up to their full potential. Choose an ability score. Creatures of your choice within range that can hear you add your spellcasting modifier (minimum of +1) to ability checks or saving throws using the chosen ability score until the start of your next turn.

As a bonus action on each subsequent turn, you can use an instrument to play this tune again, choosing a new ability score and different creatures to gain this spell's benefits.

At Higher Levels. When cast with a slot of 3rd-level or higher, its range increases by 10 feet for each level above 2nd.

HEROIC ANTHEM

3rd-level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self (30 feet)
Components: V, M (a musical instrument that you are proficient with)
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You play an anthem that inspires heroic action. Creatures of your choice within range that can hear you can add your spellcasting modifier (minimum of +1) to any attack rolls they make before the beginning of your next turn.

As a bonus action on each subsequent turn, you can use an instrument to continue this anthem and repeat its effect.

At Higher Levels. When cast with a slot of 4th-level or higher, its range increases by 10 feet for each level above 3rd.

REVITALIZING HYMN

4th-level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self (40 feet)
Components: V, M (a musical instrument that you are proficient with)
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You perform a hymn that inspires those who hear it to shake off potent effects. Creatures of your choice within range that can hear you can immediately repeat a saving throw to end one hostile effect or spell that is currently affecting it, adding your spellcasting modifier (minimum of +1) to their roll.

As a bonus action on each subsequent turn, you can use an instrument to continue the hymn and allow a creature of your choice that can hear you in range to gain these benefits again.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell with a 5th-level spell slot, the range of the spell increases by 10 feet.

LEGENDARY BALLAD

5th-level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self (50 feet)
Components: V, M (a musical instrument that you are proficient with)
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You perform a ballad that inspires those who can hear it to legendary feats of heroism. A number of creatures of your choice equal to your spellcasting ability modifier (minimum of 1) that can hear you can instantly make a single weapon attack or cast a spell of 1st-level or lower.

As a bonus action on each subsequent turn, you can use an instrument to continue this ballad and grant allow a creature that can hear you within range to immediately make a single weapon attack or cast a spell of 1st-level or lower.





ADDITIONAL TRADITIONS

Also included here are Bardic Traditions based on options for the Bard class published in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.

Official Bard College	Bardic Tradition
College of Whispers	Conspirator
College of Glamour	Mesmer
College of Swords	Sword Dancer

CONSPIRATOR

The Bards known as Conspirators use their skills and talents for their own benefit. They abuse the trust most folks have for Bards and work their way into positions where they can find incriminating secrets to use for blackmail. These narcissistic Bards often masquerade as practitioners of other Traditions, operating in secret to accumulate wealth and influence, and rarely, if ever, reveal their true motivations to others.

CUNNING INFLUENCE

3rd-level Conspirator feature

You are an expert at manipulating creatures that make the mistake of trusting you. You gain proficiency in Deception and with two of the following tools of your choice: disguise kits, forgery kits, poisoner's kits, or thieves' tools.

Whenever you make an ability check that uses any of the skill or tool proficiencies listed above you gain a bonus to your roll equal to one roll of your Bardic Inspiration die.

PSYCHIC ASSAULT

3rd-level Conspirator feature

Your strikes assault body and mind. When you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can expend a Bardic Inspiration die to deal additional psychic damage to the creature equal to two rolls of your Bardic Inspiration die.

SEEDS OF TERROR

3rd-level Conspirator feature

You can lace innocent speech with insidious bardic magic to inspire terror and paranoia. If you speak with a humanoid for at least 1 minute, you can expend one Bardic Inspiration die and force it to make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, it is frightened of a creature of your choice that it can see for 1 hour. This effect ends early if the frightened creature or its allies are attacked or damaged by you or your allies.

Regardless of the outcome of the saving throw, the target is unaware that you tried to magically influence its feelings.

DEVIOUS STRIKE

5th-level Conspirator Tradition feature

Once per turn, you can deal an additional 2d6 damage to one creature you hit with a weapon attack if another enemy of the target, other than you is within 5 feet of it, that enemy isn't incapacitated, and you don't have disadvantage.

This additional damage increases at certain levels in this class: at 9th level (3d6), 13th level (4d6), and 17th level (5d6).

VISAGE OF SHADOWS

5th-level Conspirator Tradition feature

You can use sinister magic to trap the visage of other people who fall victim to you. When a humanoid dies within 30 feet of you, you can use your reaction to capture its Shadow.

As an action, you can expend this Shadow and magically transform so that you resemble that humanoid as it looked in life. The effect lasts for 1 hour or until you end it as an action.

While you are transformed by a Shadow, you have access to any information that humanoid would have shared with a casual acquaintance, such as general details on its personal life and background, but not any secret information.

Creatures can attempt to see through this transformation by using their action to make an Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Insight) check against your Bard Spell save DC.



MENTAL ANGUISH

11th-level Conspirator Tradition feature

You weave manipulative magic into every strike. When you use *Psychic Assault*, you can force the creature to make a Wisdom saving throw against your Bard Spell save DC, or it becomes frightened of you until the end of your next turn.

Also, when you hit a creature that is frightened of you with a weapon attack, you can end the frightened condition for it and turn your weapon attack into an automatic critical hit.

SINISTER MANIPULATION

15th-level Conspirator Tradition feature

Your manipulative magic knows no bounds. As an action, you can whisper into the ear of a creature that can both hear and understand you within 5 feet and force it to make a Wisdom saving throw against your Bard Spell save DC.

On a failed save, the creature believes that you know of its darkest secret, though you have no knowledge of it. It is then charmed by you until you or your allies attack or damage it.

While charmed this way, a creature will secretly aid you in any way it can, short of fighting or risking its life for you.

You can only have one creature charmed in this way at a time, and attempting to charm another creature in this way ends this effect for the previous creature. You can also end these effects on the charmed creature as an action.

MESMER

Often hailing from the wondrous courts of the Feywild, these glamorous Bards use their magic to beguile and captivate all who look upon them. Never to be upstaged, Bards known as Mesmers use their powerful personalities to manipulate or motivate an audience to serve their goals.

MESMERIZING PRESENCE

3rd-level Mesmer Tradition feature

Your words are laced with seductive Fey magic. You learn the *friends*, *charm person*, and *command* spells, but they do not count against your total number of Cantrips Known or Spells Known.

Also, if you perform for, or speak with a creature for at least 1 minute, you can expend one Bardic Inspiration die to cast *charm person* targeting that creature. When you cast the spell in this way, the target is unaware that you attempted to influence it with magic.

WONDROUS PERFORMANCE

3rd-level Mesmer Tradition feature

You can momentarily enhance your appearance with bardic magic. As a bonus action, you can expend a Bardic Inspiration die to empower yourself with Fey magic and choose any number of creatures, up to your Charisma modifier, that can see you within 60 feet.

Creatures gain temporary hit points equal to one roll of your Bardic Inspiration die and can instantly move up to their speed.

This special movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

GREATER PERFORMANCE

5th-level Mesmer Tradition feature

The seductive power of your bardic magic has grown. When you use *Wondrous Performance* it lasts for 1 minute, but it ends early if you are incapacitated or you choose to end it.

While your *Wondrous Performance* lasts, you can use each subsequent bonus action to either grant a creature the effects of *Wondrous Performance*, or you can cast *charm person* or *command* without expending a spell slot. When cast in this way these spells only last until the end of your *Performance*.

REFLEXIVE CHARM

5th-level Mesmer Tradition feature

You can attempt to distract your foes with whimsical magic. As a reaction when a creature you can see targets you with a melee attack, you can add one roll of your Bardic Inspiration die to your Armor Class against that attack.

MANTLE OF PROTECTION

11th-level Mesmer Tradition feature

Your performances exude a powerful aura of protective Fey magic. Creatures of your choice within 30 feet that can see or hear you have advantage on saving throws to resist the charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, and stunned conditions while your *Wondrous Performance* lasts.



FEY PRESENCE

15th-level Mesmer Tradition feature

The bardic magic you draw from the Feywild has changed you, giving you a lovely yet fierce appearance. When you force a creature that can see you to make a saving throw to resist the charmed or frightened condition while your Wondrous Performance is active, it has disadvantage on its roll.

SWORD DANCER

Known simply as Blades, the Bards that follow this Tradition are famous for their wondrous, yet deadly performances that incorporate bladed weapons. Far from mundane performers, these Bards use their skill with blades to find employment as duellists, vigilantes, and sometimes even turn to adventuring.

ELEGANT DUELIST

3rd-level Blade Dancer Tradition feature

You incorporate deadly blades and combat techniques into your performances. You gain proficiency with scimitars, and if you are proficient with a melee weapon, you can use it as a spellcasting focus for any Bard spell you know.

You also gain proficiency in Performance, and whenever you would make a Charisma (Performance) check, you can make a Dexterity (Performance) check that incorporates a deadly bladed weapon you are proficient with instead.

FIGHTING STYLE

3rd-level Blade Dancer Tradition feature

You gain one of the Fighting Styles listed below. You cannot learn the same Fighting Style more than once, even if you are able to learn another Fighting Style.

Whenever you gain a Bard level, you can replace this Fighting Style with another option from the same list.

CLASSICAL SWORDPLAY

While wielding a finesse weapon and no other weapons, you gain a +1 bonus to both your attack rolls and to your Armor Class so long as you are not using heavy armor or a shield.

DUELING

When you are wielding a melee weapon in one hand and no other weapons, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with it.

DUAL WIELDING

When you take the Attack action while two-weapon fighting, you can make a single additional attack with your off-hand weapon as part of your action instead of your bonus action, adding your ability modifier to the damage of this attack.

FEATHERWEIGHT FIGHTING

While you are wielding only light weapons and nothing else your speed increases by 10 feet. You also gain a +1 bonus to damage rolls with light weapons, so long as you are not wearing medium or heavy armor, or wielding a shield.

THROWN WEAPON FIGHTING

You can draw a weapon that has the thrown property as part of the attack you make with the weapon. Moreover, when you hit with a ranged weapon attack using a thrown weapon, you gain a +2 bonus to the damage roll of that attack.

VERSATILE FIGHTING

While wielding a single versatile weapon and no shield, you can choose to wield your weapon one or two-handed until the start of your next turn. When wielding it one-handed you gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls and to your Armor Class. Wielding it two-handed you gain a +2 bonus to your damage rolls.



ELEGANT EXPLOITS

3rd-level Blade Dancer Tradition feature

You have studied various exploits to improve your deadly bardic performances. You gain the following features:

Exploits. You learn two Martial Exploits of your choice from those available to the [Alternate Fighter](#). The Exploits Known column of the Blade Dancer Exploits table shows when you learn more Martial Exploits of your choice.

To use an Exploit, you expend a Bardic Inspiration die. You can only use one Exploit per ability check, attack, or saving throw. When a Martial Exploit refers to an Exploit Die, you use your Bardic Inspiration die.

When you gain a Bard level, you can replace one Exploit you know with another Martial Exploit of your choice of that degree.

High Degree. Your Bard level limits the Exploits you are able to perform. This limit is reflected in the High Degree column of the Blade Dancer Exploits table. In order to learn a Martial Exploit it must be equal to your High Degree on the Blade Dancer Exploits table, or lower.

Saving Throws. If an Exploit requires a creature to make a saving throw, the DC is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Exploit save DC} = 8 + \text{your proficiency bonus} + \text{your Dexterity modifier.}$$

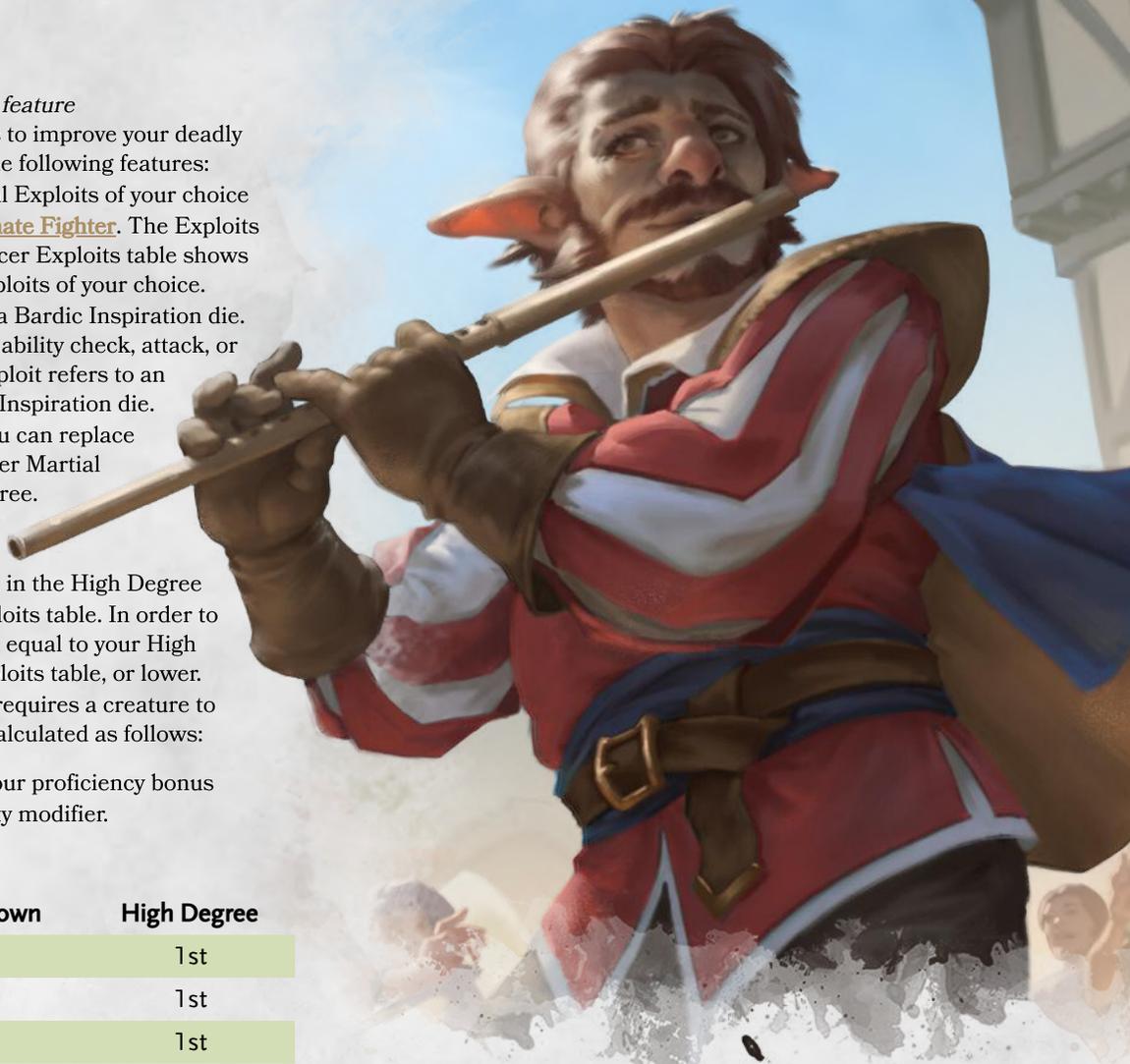
BLADE DANCER EXPLOITS

Bard Level	Exploits Known	High Degree
3rd	2	1st
4th	2	1st
5th	3	1st
6th	3	1st
7th	4	2nd
8th	4	2nd
9th	4	2nd
10th	4	2nd
11th	5	2nd
12th	5	2nd
13th	5	2nd
14th	5	2nd
15th	6	3rd
16th	6	3rd
17th	6	3rd
18th	6	3rd
19th	7	3rd
20th	7	3rd

EXTRA ATTACK

5th-level Blade Dancer Tradition feature

You can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn. Moreover, you can cast one Bard cantrip you know in place of one of these attacks.



DEADLY FLOURISH

11th-level Blade Dancer Tradition feature

You wield your chosen weapons with deadly precision. When you deal damage with a melee weapon that you are proficient with, you can roll your Bardic Inspiration die in place of the weapon's normal damage die, unless its damage die is higher.

In addition, when you use an Exploit as part of your action, you can take the Dash or Disengage action as a bonus action.

MASTER OF BLADES

15th-level Blade Dancer Tradition feature

You are a master of your deadly yet beautiful craft. Once per turn, you can use an Exploit you know without expending a Bardic Inspiration die, rolling a d6 in its place.

Finally, at the end of each long rest, you can spend time practicing your techniques and replace one Martial Exploit you know with another Martial Exploit of your choice.

MULTICLASSING & EXPLOITS

Your martial skill depends partly on your combined levels in classes that learn Exploits, and partly on your individual levels in each class. If your group uses the optional rule for multiclassing and you learn Exploits from more than one class, you use the following rules: [Alternate Martial Multiclassing](#).





ALTERNATE BARD

Become the wandering master of musical magic you were meant to be with this alternate take on the Bard class! Channel the Song of Creation through six different Bardic Traditions:
*Fool - Loremaster - Skald - Conspirator
Mesmer - Sword Dancer*

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