

## BARD - 250 points

You're a magical minstrel who dabbles in a little of everything: the roguish pursuits of the thief, the swordplay of the swashbuckler, and the spellcraft of the wizard. You rarely need to be so crudely direct, though – the power of Bard-Song lets you neutralize many opponents without resorting to violence or tiring spells. Exceptional social gifts round out your repertoire, helping the party score superior deals when buying or selling in town.

**Attributes:** ST 11 [10]; DX 12 [40]; IQ 14 [80]; HT 11 [10].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-1/1d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11 [0]; Will 14 [0]; Per 14 [0]; FP 11 [0]; Basic Speed 6.00 [5]; Basic Move 6 [0].

**Advantages:** Bardic Talent 2 [16]; Charisma 1 [5]; Musical Ability 2 [10]; and Voice [10]. • 25 points in Bard-Song abilities (p. 21); put leftovers into special skills and spells. • A further 25 points chosen from among additional Bard-Song abilities or DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], FP +1 to +8 [3/level], Basic Speed +1 [20], Acute Hearing [2/level], Appearance (Attractive, Handsome, or Very Handsome) [4, 12, or 16], Bardic Talent 3 or 4 [8 or 16], Charisma 2-6 [5/level], Cultural Adaptability [10], Eidetic Memory [5] or Photographic Memory [10], Honest Face [1], Language Talent [10], Languages (any) [2-6/language], Luck [15], Musical Ability 3 or 4 [5 or 10], No Hangover [1], Penetrating Voice [1], Signature Gear [Varies], Smooth Operator 1 [15], Social Chameleon [5], Wealth (Comfortable or Wealthy) [10 or 20], or Wild Talent 1 [20].

**Disadvantages:** -15 points chosen from among Chummy [-5] or Gregarious [-10], Compulsive Carousing [-5\*], Lecherousness [-15\*], Sense of Duty (Adventuring companions) [-5], or Xenophilia [-10\*]. • Another -15 points chosen from among Curious [-5\*], Impulsiveness [-10\*], Overconfidence [-5\*], or Trickster [-15\*]. • A further -20 points chosen from either of the two previous lists or Code of Honor (Gentleman's) [-10], Compulsive Lying [-15\*], Odious Personal Habit (Continuous singing or strumming) [-5], or Post-Combat Shakes [-5\*].

**Primary Skills:** Acting (A) IQ [2]-14; Diplomacy (H) IQ [1]-14†; Fast-Talk (A) IQ+1 [1]-15†; Musical Instrument (any) (H) IQ [2]-15‡; Performance (A) IQ+1 [1]-15†; Public Speaking (A) IQ+2 [1]-16†§; and Singing (E) HT+4 [1]-15†‡. • One of Rapier, Saber, Shortsword, or Smallsword, all (A) DX+2 [8]-14. • One of Shield (Buckler) (E) DX+2 [4]-14; Cloak or Main-Gauche, both (A) DX+1 [4]-13; or raise main sword skill to DX+2 [12]-15. • One of Thrown Weapon (Knife) (E) DX+1 [2]-13; or Bow or Throwing, both (A) DX [2]-12.

**Secondary Skills:** Fast-Draw (any) (E) DX [1]-12; Stealth (A) DX [2]-12; Current Affairs (any) and Savoir-Faire (High Society), both (E) IQ [1]-14; Interrogation, Merchant, Propaganda, and Streetwise, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-13; Musical Composition (H) IQ [1]-14‡; Carousing (E) HT [1]-11; Intimidation (A) Will-1 [1]-13; and Detect Lies (H) Per-2 [1]-12.

**Background Skills:** Heraldry and Poetry, both (A) IQ-1 [1]-13. • Six of Climbing or Dancing, both (A) DX-1 [1]-11; Acrobatics or Sleight of Hand, both (H) DX-2 [1]-10; First Aid or Gesture, both (E) IQ [1]-14; Connoisseur (any), Disguise, Teaching, or Writing, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-13; Mimicry (Speech) or Ventriloquism, both (H) IQ-2 [1]-12; Hiking (A) HT-1 [1]-10; Sex Appeal (A) HT+1 [1]-12†; Scrounging (E) Per [1]-14; or Observation (A) Per-1 [1]-13.

**Special Skills and Spells:** Spend 20 points on Hypnotism (H) IQ-2 [1]-12; Musical Influence (VH) IQ-1 [1]-13‡; Persuade (H) Will-2 [1]-12; Suggest or Sway Emotions, both (H) Will-2 [1]-12 (require Persuade); Captivate (H) Will-2 [1]-12 (requires Suggest); or spells from the Communication and Empathy and/or Mind Control colleges, which will be either (H) IQ [1]-14 or (VH) IQ-1 [1]-13 with the +2 for Bardic Talent.

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Includes +2 for Voice.

‡ Includes +2 for Musical Ability.

§ Includes +1 for Charisma.

### Customization Notes

A bard doesn't start out an expert at anything, and can be challenging to play until he has earned some points to spend on his favorite tricks. Thus, bards are best for players who don't mind supporting the party with a little song, a little spellcasting, and a little swordplay. It helps to decide early on whether to focus on Bard-Song (Rapier Wit and Terror work well in combat), spells (also combat-effective, and benefit from higher IQ or Bardic Talent), or out-of-combat effectiveness (e.g., high Charisma aids reactions, and enables the Enthralment skills to sway platoons of neutrals to the bard's cause; see p. B191).

Since a bard needs a costly blade and a musical instrument – the latter often bought as an expensive power item – it's wise to sacrifice some of the 5 points from quirks for cash. Given the diversity of Bard-Song abilities, instruments, and spells, bards don't especially need those points to further distinguish themselves from their peers.

**BARD-SONG:** This is the power of magical song. Its abilities are subject to the Bard-Song limitation. Rolls to use them are made at a bonus equal to the bard's Bardic Talent level.

**Power Modifier: Bard-Song -30% :** Bard-Song abilities require the bard to sing or play a musical instrument at skill 14+; all effects end immediately if he stops. Anything that affects others only works on targets who can hear the music, while any messages or instructions the bard sends have to be hidden in song. Bard-Song abilities are also subject to the constraints on wizardly magic: they need mana to work, Dispel Magic can end their ongoing effects, and modifiers such as the -5 for low mana and penalties for Magic Resistance apply to rolls to use them.

**Bard-Song Abilities:** Empathy (PM, -30%) [11]; Mimicry (PM, -30%) [7]; Mind Control (PM, -30%) [35]; Rapier Wit (PM, -30%) [4]; Speak With Animals (PM, -30%) [18]; Subsonic Speech (PM, -30%) [7]; Telecommunication (Telesend; PM, -30%) [21]; Terror (PM, -30%) [21]; and Ultrasonic Speech (PM, -30%) [7].

**Bardic Talent -- 8 points/level :** Bardic Talent both adds to Bard-Song rolls and lets the bard cast Communication and Empathy and Mind Control spells (only!) as if he were a wizard who had the same level of Magery with the Song limitation.