

Ravens Bluff Bards Guild

This document is subject to revision at any time. Changes are generally discussed on the Bard-Talk email list prior to adoption, and any changes that are adopted will be noted on the Bards Guild News page and reflected in the text of this document.

Overview

Membership based on Skills, not character class.

Bards are "jacks of all trades" in D&D. As such, it makes no sense to strictly limit membership to those who have a particular character class. Full Member Status, Associate Status, and Patron status will be available to all who meet membership requirements. Status will depend on the number and type of Skills a character has, as well as the Rank in those Skills. In keeping with D&D 3e concepts, no minimum levels are required for advancement. Instead, a minimum Rank is necessary for certain Bards Guild Statuses. Bardic College faculty members must be *completely* retired from adventuring.

Bards will still have an advantage within the Bards Guild.

Bard characters will have an advantage over non-Bards in the Bards Guild hierarchy. Each experience level as a Bard the character has will count as one Rank towards the minimum Rank requirements. The Bard must have at least half (round up) the required actual Ranks in the Skill. There are more details in the Fellowships section.

The list of Skills varies by Fellowship.

The lists of Non Weapon Proficiencies for Bards Guild membership put forth in LC5 and *The City of Ravens Bluff* sourcebook are outdated and **not used** in the Living City campaign. Each Fellowship (see below) will have a distinct list of Skills used to determine qualification for that Fellowship. Bards Guild members may belong to more than one Fellowship within the Bards Guild, but they must qualify for each separately.

The Bardic College

The Bards Guild as a whole runs the Bardic College, which has several branches. Each of these branches has one or more "Fellowships" of Bards who manage that branch and who train new Bards and anyone else interested in the subjects taught at the College. There is no particular age requirement to attend the College, and tuition is often generously subsidized by gifts from Bards who have begun an adventuring career. All manner of subjects are taught in the Bardic College.

The College of Arms

The College of Arms (CoA) teaches Bards what they need to know about physical combat, knights of the city, and heraldry. This college is responsible for maintaining Ravens Bluff's "Roll of Arms," the official registry of the heraldic insignia of all persons in the city who have a coat of arms (the Roll of Arms is housed in the Bards Guild Library). The CoA also maintains barracks and training facilities for learning and practicing combat skills, often employing off-duty soldiers and other professional warriors. Knights of the Golden Rooster are often seen here as well.

The Fellowship of Blades

The Fellowship of Blades is that group within the Bards Guild who concern themselves with martial matters, such as the making and care of weapons and armor, the use of weapons, songs and tales of great battles, legendary warriors, and fierce foes and the like. Members of this Fellowship can often be seen displaying silver plated weapons so showy that their deadliness is sometimes underestimated.

Skills relevant for this Fellowship are: Balance, Escape Artist, **Intimidate**, Jump, Tumble, Use Rope
Relevant Feats are: Alertness, Ambidexterity, Blind Fight, Expertise, Two weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse
This Fellowship's specialty Skill is Intimidate.

The Fellowship of Heralds

The Fellowship of Heralds teaches the "courtly" skills a Bard needs to know. Heraldry, of course, is one of these as are diplomacy, etiquette, history, knightly matters, and so forth. Intrigue and information gathering are the meat and drink of Heralds, who in other realms are often the "official court spies." In Ravens Bluff, the Fellowship of Heralds are known

supporters of the Harpers, and a message left for the Harpers with this Fellowship will eventually find its way into the right hands.

Skills relevant for this Fellowship are: Bluff, **Diplomacy**, Gather Information, Innuendo, Knowledge (Geography, Local, Nobility and Royalty, Religion), Ride, Sense Motive, Speak Language, Spot
Relevant Feats are: Mounted Combat, Skill Focus (Diplomacy)
This Fellowship's specialty Skill is Diplomacy.

The College of Magic

This is where members learn how to cast spells. Spells useful for performing and relating stories are emphasized, but the nature of Bards is diversity and all manner of spells can be found in the Bards Guild Library. Some spells are said to be available *only* to Bards who study and qualify at the College of Magic.

The Fellowship of Prestidigitation

This Fellowship is for Bards who prefer finding magical solutions to the situations in which they find themselves. Members of this Fellowship, or "Prestidigitators" as they are known, travel the world in search of new variations on existing spells, spells that no one has heard of before, or ways to outdo their fellows in the magical arena. Because of the migratory life of the Bard it is rumored that spells can be found here that are available nowhere else in Ravens Bluff [*like those in companion Bards books*]. The portion of the Bards Guild Library maintained by the Prestidigitators has tomes in all known-and some unknown-languages, and the laboratory maintained by the Prestidigitators is said (by the Prestidigitators, at least) to rival that of any Guild of wizards in the Realms.

Skills relevant for this Fellowship are: **Bluff**, Concentration, Disguise, Knowledge (Arcana, Local, Religion), Perform (Buffoonery, Juggling, Limericks, Storytelling), Spellcraft
Relevant Feats are: Any Item Creation Feat.
This Fellowship's specialty Skill is Bluff

The College of Performing and Fine Arts

This college operates the Ravens Bluff Playhouse and other theaters in the city. It trains and hires actors and musicians, playwrights, set designers, and is even rumored to train "shills" to sit in audiences and help achieve the desired effect at important performances (rumors of "magical" audiences are denied by the Fellowship). This college is the most visible of all the branches of the Bards Guild, and often serves as the "public relations" arm of the Bards Guild.

The Fellowship of Artists

The members of this Fellowship are far more than mere craftsmen. The works produced by the Fellowship of Artists often grace mansions and palaces, admired for their beauty above (or in addition to) any common functionality. While the Guild of Craftsmen might make chairs, it is the Fellowship of Artists who would produce a gilded throne for a ruler. The Fellowship includes art and antique dealers and appraisers in addition to artisans, but those who create the beautiful works are generally granted more respect and admiration than those who merely deal in them.

Skills relevant for this Fellowship are: Appraise, **Craft (choose)**, Knowledge (Architecture, Nature), Sense Motive
Relevant Feats are: Skill Focus (Craft (choose)).
This Fellowship's specialty Skill is Craft (choose one).

The Fellowship of Performers

The Thespians (as they are sometimes known) are those Bards whose joy in life lies in performing for others. Singers, dancers, musicians and players are all at home in this Fellowship, as are orators and would-be politicians (this latter group is considered less reputable than the "honest" performers, of course). The Fellowship also includes those whose skills enhance the performance of others, such as set and costume designers, illusionists, playwrights and directors. Under the Bards Guild's charter with the city, no non-Guild performer may perform within Ravens Bluff without at least a temporary permit from the Bards Guild (granted at the discretion of the Bards Guild). After six months in the city, the Bard must either join the Bards Guild, stop performing, or leave the city.

In game terms, non-Guild performer PCs must pay 50gp per tournament or face the City Watch for unauthorized performance in the city. Fines may include a day in prison and/or a 100gp fine, half of which goes to the Bards Guild, a quarter to the arresting Watch officer, and the remaining 25gp goes to the city. For such an easy payoff, the Watch and the city are more than happy to ask any performers for their license, so such crimes never go unpunished (the performance is a violation of law in Ravens Bluff). Gypsies are allowed to perform without permits provided they pay

their respects at the Bards Guildhouse upon entering the city. Gypsies are special NPCs at this time. They may be added to the campaign later. While you may hold that your PC is a Gypsy, it does not count at this time for this purpose.

Skills relevant for this Fellowship are: Balance, Disguise, Escape Artist, Innuendo, **Perform (choose)**, Tumble
Relevant Feats are: Skill Focus (Perform).
This Fellowship's specialty Skill is Perform.

The College of Lore

This college teaches all manner of information about the history, society, traditions and so on of all of Toril. Classes on Local History, Ancient History and various languages are quite popular. The Bard's ability to more easily learn new languages derives from his training at this college.

The Fellowship of Loremasters

The Loremasters are the historians and keepers of knowledge within the Bards Guild. They travel the Realms over, searching out hidden tomes, tracking down rumors, and seeking lost or "forbidden" lore. The fabled "Legend Lore" ability of a Bard is a direct result of the training provided by Loremasters both at the Bards Guild and during their travels. It is the Loremasters who primarily maintain the Bards Guild Library as well, recording and preserving knowledge for generations to come. Due to the tremendous number of adventuring Bards based in Ravens Bluff, the Bards Guild Library there is reputed to be among the best new libraries in the Vast. Although they refuse to offer proof, the Loremasters say that Elminster himself was present when the Ravens Bluff Bards Guild Library was founded in DR1352.

Skills relevant for this Fellowship are: Appraise, Decipher Script, Forgery, Gather Information, **Knowledge (choose)**, Speak Language, Wilderness Lore
Relevant Feats are: Skill Focus (required Loremaster Skill – see above).
This Fellowship's specialty Skill is Knowledge (choose).

Secret Fellowships

Rumors of other Fellowships within the Bards Guild sometimes circulate through Ravens Bluff, but Bards Guild Officials are uncharacteristically tight-lipped when questioned about this. For a non-Bard to even learn of the existence of one of these Fellowships is rare. Bards who are invited to join such a Fellowship-if indeed any even exist-would be extremely highly honored.

New Fellowships

It is possible that Bard PCs may wish to start a Fellowship that has not been listed here. This is a healthy outgrowth of the Bards Guild and should be allowed. To seek approval for a new Bardic Fellowship, certain minimum standards must be met. The proposed Fellowship must have at least five PC members from at least five different players. One of the PCs must be at least "Master" Status. All of the PCs who are founding the Fellowship must already be Bards Guild members in good standing. A list of qualifying Skills (min. 7, max 12 different Skills) must be included, along with a rationale for the Fellowship and the Bardic College to which it is attached. The Bards Guild will work with players who wish to found new Fellowships to make sure that they fit into the flavor and organization of the Bards Guild and the campaign.

Guild Membership Requirements

Players

Players who wish to have their characters enrolled in the Bards Guild must fill out a membership form which includes the player's RPGA number and the date that their Guild-Level RPGA membership expires (found on your membership card). For lifetime memberships players can use their "renewal month" and the year 2100 to signify lifetime membership. The player's mailing address must also be included even if joining through a Viceroyal (regional representative). If possible, please include an email address and/or telephone number in case the Bards Guild needs to contact you about your application.

Some conventions may charge a fee for "metacampaign" activities like joining a Bards Guild. This is done strictly at the convention level, and players should ask which charity their fees will support. A nominal fee to cover postage and printing costs is necessary.

Characters

Patrons can donate without any testing. They are always welcome to the Bards Guild.

Characters wishing to become Associates do so automatically. They just need to turn in their information and pay their dues.

Characters of any character class may join the Bards Guild, but they must follow the guidelines in this document. The first step is to consider the various Fellowships to see which one most closely fits the concept upon which the character is based. Consult the [Skills Table](#) and be sure that your character has at least one Skill with 3 Ranks from the list for the Fellowship you wish to join. This does not apply to Patrons or Associates.

Once you are sure that the character qualifies to join a Fellowship, he or she must approach the Bards Guild and ask to be admitted. Characters with at least one level of Bard class are automatically eligible. Those without even one level of Bard class must make a Diplomacy check (DC: 15) (this can be done at an Interactive or via the "metacampaign" kit). However, the applicant may receive a circumstance bonus of +1 for every 100gp the character spends entertaining influential NPC members of the Bards Guild **prior** to making the roll. **A maximum of +4 circumstance bonus may be obtained this way** (though the PC is welcome to spend more if desired). An unmodified roll of 1 always fails for non-Bards regardless of modifiers. Characters that fail the Diplomacy check may reapply for admission in one month, but the costs for entertaining NPC Bards Guild members are doubled for each failed check (even a rich boor is still a boor).

As of Gen Con 2001 (2 August 2001), PCs who join the Bards Guild are admitted at Apprentice Status. Particularly gifted individuals might be pre-approved for Journeyman Status, but six months (real time) must be spent as an Apprentice. Applicants must pass a test, which will vary depending on Fellowship.

Benefits of membership / penalties of non-membership

Once accepted into a Fellowship the new Bards Guild member will receive a Status within the Bards Guild. From this point on, all members of "Associate" Status or above must devote at least ten "metacampaign" Day Units (10DU) per year while a Bards Guild member to reflect time spent pursuing Bards Guild activities instead of adventuring. **[Note: As of Winter Fantasy 2001, "metacampaign" activities will cost "day units" instead of time units for participation.]**

These Bards Guild members may ply their legal trades within the city without harassment from the Bards Guild or from city officials, and may perform within the city if they wish.

All members of at least Apprentice status will be called upon to serve the Bards Guild (perform in major plays, teach Apprentices, serve in the Bards Guild Guard, *etc.*) at least four times per year, and any proceeds from the work done by members during this service goes to the Bards Guild. There are additional benefits listed below, depending on Status and Fellowship.

Methods of joining the Bards Guild

Interactives

If official representatives of the Bards Guild are in attendance at a sanctioned Interactive event, they will be empowered to induct new Bards Guild members. These representatives will collect information and distribute official membership certificates.

The "metatournament" kit

A packet is available for use at Game Days and conventions that are too small to have Interactives so that RPGA members who cannot attend the larger conventions can still participate in Bards Guild and other metatournament activities (land purchase, City Watch, *etc.*). Bards Guild member registration forms are included in the kit so that potential members can register by mail.

Viceroyals

A Viceroyal (Vicereine, Viceroy, or Vizier, see below) has the authority to sign up members. Contact your local Viceroyal for more information.

Online sign-ups

While registration will be made available online in the future, due to the nature of the official certificates, they will still need to be sent by regular mail.

Non-paying members of the RPGA

Non-paying members ("Fellowship level") of the RPGA may purchase one-year licenses to avoid entanglements with the Bards Guild. Simply note the payment of 500gp on the log sheet and have a proper authority (DM, Staff, etc) sign it and date it. All this will give you is a license to perform. There are no other benefits.

Viceroy and Vicereines needed.

Bards Guild representatives are being recruited in all areas where conventions take place in order to assure that the Bards Guild is represented at Interactives and so that new members can be signed up. These regional representatives will have a fair degree of autonomy to deal with local issues. They will also be responsible for reporting on any activity involving the Bards Guild or Bards Guild members in their areas so that we can keep the Bards Guild in the public eye by submitting articles for *The Trumpeter* and for other newsletters.

New NPCs needed

It is possible that PCs who are about to retire from the campaign (for whatever reason) could be put in charge of Colleges or Fellowships. These characters cannot be played as PCs once they become Bards Guild officials as the duties of their office would preclude adventuring.

ANNUAL DUES.

OUTSIDE METAGAMING (for RPGA non-paying members)

Fellowship-level members of the RPGA (non-paying members) may purchase Licenses so as to avoid entanglements with the Bards Guild. These licenses can be either 50gp per tournament (one shot license) or 500gp per year. Log this in your Log Sheet and have the DM sign it, as usual.

GOLD

The annual membership fee is 500gp. It is payable in one lump sum, 500gp, at the beginning of the real-world calendar year or whenever the LC campaign determines the year begins.

The dues may also be paid monthly. It is more expensive this way-600gp/year. Fees paid monthly are at the rate of 50gp, payable on the each 1st of each month. Once you go monthly, the payoff is the balance of 600gp.

DAY UNITS MAY BE USED IN LIEU OF GOLD.

Each additional Day Unit your PC spends is good for 25gp. You can decide what it is that you were/are/will be doing with that/those days. You do not get any gold. No refunds!

For example, you owe 500gp in dues. You pay 250gp. 10 extra Day Units will cover the remaining 250gp owed. You will be performing chores for the Bards Guild and teaching the children to read, etc.

We recognize that not all PCs are wealthy, but they may have lots of spare time.

DISCOUNTS

- Wizards Guild members get a 25% discount towards membership dues.
- Procampur Bards Guild members get a 25% discount towards membership dues.
- Gypsies, if allowed in the campaign as a separate group, do not have to pay dues to the Bards Guild if they do not wish. They are required, however, to pay their respects to the Bards Guild when in Ravens Bluff. Gypsies are special NPCs at this time. They may be added to the campaign later. While you may hold that your PC is a Gypsy, it does not count at this time for this purpose.

PLAYER DUES

It costs US\$1.00 to get a standard black and white (or black and colored paper) certificate (cert). These will be handed out at the time of joining.

An option exists for those that want fancier certs. The "nice" certs (an 8.5" by 11" nice quality, gold sealed, fleur-de-lis die cut certificate) costs US \$2.00.

If joining by mail, you must also provide a self-addressed stamped envelope. If you do not want your cert folded, provide the larger (9"x12") envelope. These require extra postage. Check your local post office for fees.

Otherwise, a simple certificate will be mailed if a SASE (self-addressed stamped envelope) is sent. There is no requirement to get the nice cert. Both are valid and can be used as proof of memberships, along with an RPGA Guild level membership card and a log sheet showing that dues are paid for the current year.

FELLOWSHIP REQUIREMENTS

SKILLS

Each Fellowship specializes in certain areas, with some minor overlap amongst themselves..
The following is a list of Skills appropriate to each Fellowship:

Artists

Appraise, Craft (choose), Knowledge (Architecture, Nature), Sense Motive

Blades

Balance, Escape Artist, Intimidate, Jump, Tumble, Use Rope

Heralds

Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Innuendo, Knowledge (Geography, Local, Nobility and Royalty, Religion), Ride, Sense Motive, Speak Language, Spot

Loremasters

Appraise, Decipher Script, Forgery, Gather Information, Knowledge (choose), Speak Language, Wilderness Lore

Performers

Balance, Disguise, Escape Artist, Innuendo, Perform (choose) , Tumble

Prestidigitators

Bluff, Concentration, Disguise, Knowledge (Arcana, Local, Religion), Perform (Buffoonery, Juggling, Limericks, Storytelling), Spellcraft

FEATS

Some Feats are particularly relevant to Fellowships. A Feat may count as 3 Ranks in a Skill required to achieve Status within a Fellowship. It must be used against one requirement only. It cannot be broken into 2 and 1 Ranks.

Artists:

Skill Focus (Craft (choose))

Blades:

Alertness, Ambidexterity, Blind Fight, Expertise, Two weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse

Heralds:

Mounted Combat, Skill Focus (Diplomacy)

Loremasters:

Skill Focus (required Loremaster Skill – see above)

Performers:

Skill Focus (Perform)

Prestidigitators:

Any Item Creation Feat

A Skill or Feat that is counted towards one Fellowship may not be counted towards the requirements of another Fellowship. **The bonus for Bard levels may only be applied towards one Fellowship.**

This list is not static. In the future, Skills and Ranks may be added or deleted. If deleted, Status will be grandfathered, so no one will lose rank because of a deletion of Skills or Ranks.

Skills and Feats will be added as new Rulebooks are approved. The Bards Guild will review these and determine if they are suitable additions to the Fellowships. Generally, such additions take effect at or around Winter Fantasy and Gen Con.

FELLOWSHIP BENEFITS

Each Fellowship has a particular specialty. Due to constant exposure to these Skills, members of the Bards Guild get better at them. Once they leave the Bards Guild, the exposure ceases, and the bonus goes away.

Artists – Craft (choose one)

Loremasters – Knowledge (choose one)

Blades – Intimidate

Performers – Perform

Heralds - Diplomacy

Prestidigitators – Bluff

A member of a Fellowship gets to add BGS/2 (round down) circumstance bonus (Bards Guild Fellowship Specialty) to any check against their Fellowship Specialty. This bonus stacks with other BGS bonuses. BGS is explained in the Status section below.

PERFORMANCE

All members of the Bards Guild receive license to perform freely within Ravens Bluff. As long as they follow Bards Guild guidelines, they are protected from arrest and harassment. In addition, the renown and skill of Bards Guild members is legendary. In this great city, filled with adventurers and nobles, it is always a treat to watch a performance by members of the Bards Guild.

INCOME

Bards Guild members are often gregarious and spend their time pursuing activities other than adventuring. To reflect this, a member of the Bards Guild may spend non-adventure time performing.

At the beginning of a game, before the adventure begins, the player may choose to spend 1 Day Unit and make a Perform check, adding a performance circumstance bonus (Bards Guild fame) equal to their BGS. This bonus is cumulative with the Performers Fellowship Specialty bonus (see above). Money gained from the performance is added to the log sheet. The player should show the certificate to the DM and make his roll immediately. All effort must be made to avoid taking time away from the game session.

RECOGNITION

Any NPC directly associated with the Bards Guild has a chance of recognizing and acting more favorably towards a Bards Guild member. This is under normal circumstances. Disguised or otherwise changed (polymorphed, invisible, etc) individuals might not be recognized.

A Dean or a Faculty Member of a Fellowship will always automatically recognize members of that Fellowship.

Others (DM's/Author's discretion) may make a DC: 15 check to recognize the member, adding the member's BGS to the roll. Typically, these NPCs will include the nobility, visiting members of other cities' Bards Guilds, and anyone with great interest in performance, such as Bards.

PROCAMPUR'S BARDS GUILD

Members in good standing at the Ravens Bluff Bards Guild may receive a 25% discount for membership in the Procampur Bards Guild.

Other benefits might be available. Please contact the Procampur's Bards Guild for more details.

STATUS REQUIREMENTS

Members of the Bards Guild join at the Associate level (for casual membership) or at the Apprentice level (for those wishing to pursue a more serious course of study).

In order to become an Apprentice, an applicant chooses a suitable Fellowship. She must have at least 3 Ranks in one of the Fellowship's relevant Skills (see Fellowships). Alternatively, she may use a Fellowship's relevant Feat to count for the 3 Ranks required. Applicants with at least one level of Bard require only 2 Ranks at Apprentice level.

STATUS QUICK REFERENCE TABLE

Status	Skills	Ranks	Day Unit Cost	BGS	Specialty Bonus	Advance Check
Associate	N/A	N/A	10	1	0	N/A
Apprentice	1	3	20	2	1	-
Journeyman	2	7/3	25	3	1	26
Fellow	3	11/7/3	30	4	2	28
Master	5	15/11/7/3/1	35	5	2	30
Guildmaster	6	19/15/11/7/3/1	40	6	3	32
Faculty (NPC only)	7	24/19/15/11/7/3/1	N/A	7	3	N/A
Dean (NPC only)	8	28/24/19/15/11/7/3/1	N/A	8	4	N/A

Skills

The number of different Fellowship-specific Skills needed to achieve a specific Status.

Ranks

The minimum Rank required in a Skill. If there is more than one number, then at different Skills must have at least these many Ranks.

Example:

Fellow 11/7/3

To be a Fellow, you must have at least 3 Fellowship-specific Skills. One of those Skills must have at least 11 Ranks, another must have at least 7 Ranks, and the last one must have at least 3 Ranks.

Bards bonus

Levels in Bard class may be counted as Ranks toward requirements, but the Bard must have at least half (round up) the required actual Ranks in the Skill. THIS BONUS MAY ONLY BE APPLIED TOWARDS THE FIRST FELLOWSHIP JOINED.

Example 1:

Simple Dexter is a 1st level Bard.

He may count his one level as 1 Rank toward the 3 Ranks required to become an Apprentice.

Example 2:

William Shakesdagger has the following levels: Fighter 3, Rogue 4, and Bard 7.

He is applying for Fellow Status in the Fellowship of Heralds.

He may count his 7 levels of Bard towards the requirements of 11/7/3 Skill Ranks as follows: He may count a maximum of 5 towards the 11 Ranks, a maximum of 3 towards the 7 Ranks, or a maximum of 1 towards the 3 Ranks. He would have to make up the remainder in actual Ranks.

Note that he can only apply a maximum of 7 Ranks from Bard, so if he applied 5 towards the 11 Ranks, he would only have 2 left to apply towards the other requirements.

Feats

A Fellowship-specific Feat counts as 3 Ranks in a Skill (player's choice). A Feat may only be applied once towards Rank requirements.

Example:

Danton, the Blade Apprentice, has the Feats Alertness and Ambidexterity. He may apply each of them towards advancement because they are Blade specific Feats. However, he cannot count them as 6 Ranks. He can count them each as 3 Ranks, each going towards a different Skill.

Day Unit Cost

The number of Day Units per year that it costs to have that Status.

BGS (Bards Guild Status)

BGS is a reflection of time spend in the Bards Guild honing the Fellowship-specific Skills. A member of a Fellowship gets to add BGS/2 (round down) circumstance bonus (Bards Guild Fellowship Specialty) to any check against their Fellowship Specialty. This bonus stacks with other BGS bonuses. This bonus is due to the constant exposure to the Fellowship's specialty Skill. If the member leaves the Fellowship, the bonus goes away. Likewise, if the member takes a lighter load by taking a lower Status, the bonus reduces accordingly.

Specialty Bonus

BGS/2 worked out for you. See right above. This is also the number of tests on different Skills needed to advance to this Status (see Advancement)

Advance Check

The DC of the test(s) needed to advance from the previous Status to this Status (see Advancement).

NOTE:

All members of Apprentice Status and higher must belong to a Fellowship.

Associates can belong to Fellowships, but are generally listed with the general Bardic College. Associates do not get any additional Status-specific benefits.

Patrons also generally contribute to the general Bardic College, though they may specify which Fellowship they sponsor. After that basic contribution, a Patron may choose to sponsor a specific Bards Guild member.

ADVANCEMENT

After six months, an Apprentice may apply for advancement. Every time a new Status is achieved, six months of real time must pass before applying for advancement. The highest Status a PC may achieve is Guildmaster. The positions of Faculty and of Dean are open only to NPCs. A PC may be donated to the Bards Guild to become Faculty or Dean. Such PC is now retired and becomes an NPC forever more.

To advance, the member must meet the new requirements of the Status he wishes to achieve. In addition, he must pass tests based on the desired Status. The tests are Skill checks at DC: 20+(BGSx2) on Fellowship-specific Skills of the member's choice. The number of tests is equal to the Specialty Bonus he expects to gain. Each test must be on a different Skill.

There is a fee of 25gp per test or retest.

If a check is failed, the member has failed the test. He may retake the test after one real month or after gaining a Level (whichever comes first). The dates and scores of the tests are recorded on the cert. Only the failed checks need to be redone. The member gets credit for the passed checks. However, he still pays 25gp each time he retests.

STATUS BENEFITS

All Statuses listed below receive the following benefits:

- They may purchase instruments and costumes from the Bards Guild at a 25% discount from list price.
- They may perform freely in Ravens Bluff without fear of persecution or harassment, as long as they follow Bards Guild policy.

Each section contains the name of the Status, Bards Guild Status (BGS) that is used in many checks, the Specialty Bonus (q.v.), and the Day Unit cost for the Status. We also list an explanation of the dues to be paid, and where Bards Guild Day Units are spent.

ASSOCIATE: BGS 1; Specialty Bonus: 0; Day Unit cost: 10

An Associate member of the Bards Guild is often a dabbler or one whose other commitments do not permit a full-time membership in the Bards Guild. Associates may not room at the Bards Guild Hall or the Bardic College. Associates pay a license fee of 500 gold pieces each year. Associates spend only 10 Day Units each year while an Associate member.

APPRENTICE: BGS 2; Specialty Bonus: 1; Day Unit cost: 20

An Apprentice is a relative novice at his trade. Apprentices often live for free at the Bards Guild Hall or the Bardic College and spend a great deal of time studying and serving higher ranking members of the Bards Guild and teaching children and some adults to read. Occasionally, apprentices may be called upon to run errands for higher-ranking members and do the bulk of the chores at the Bards Guild Hall and the Bardic College. Apprentices pay a room and board fee of 500 gold pieces each year. Apprentices spend 20 Day Units each year working on behalf of the Bards Guild.

JOURNEYMAN: BGS 3; Specialty Bonus: 1; Day Unit cost: 25

A Journeyman is one who has been deemed competent at his chosen profession. Journeymen (the term applies regardless of sex) may ply their trades publicly for money. Journeymen are usually exempt from doing chores at the Bards Guild Hall, but not at the Bardic College. Journeymen also spend some time teaching people to read. Journeymen pay a member fee of 500 gold pieces each year. Journeymen spend 25 Day Units each year helping with Bards Guild activities.

FELLOW: BGS 4; Specialty Bonus: 2; Day Unit cost: 30

A Fellow is a Bards Guild member who has been deemed experienced enough in Bards Guild matters to train Apprentices and to participate in electing the head of the Fellowship. A Fellow is seen as an "adult" within the Bards Guild family and is treated as such even by the Guildmasters. Fellows are exempt from chores even at the Bardic College. However, they will often be the ones teaching the more obscure languages. Fellows pay a fellow fee of 500 gold pieces each year. Fellows spend 30 Day Units each year training Apprentices and assisting Masters.

MASTER: BGS 5; Specialty Bonus: 2; Day Unit cost: 35

A Master is a leader within the Bards Guild. Masters are acknowledged as among the very best at their trade. Masters train Apprentices and sometimes even Journeymen and have a voice in the running of the Bards Guild. Masters help the Bards Guild by paying a maintenance fee of 500 gold pieces each year. Masters spend 35 Day Units each year planning and organizing the activities of their Fellowships, directing others, and of course in meetings with other Bards Guild officials.

GUILDMASTER: BGS 6; Specialty Bonus: 3; Day Unit cost: 40

The highest ranking Bards Guild members in a Fellowship are often (but not always) selected as Guildmasters. Fellowships can have more than one Guildmaster position each. Guildmasters plan and direct the operation of the Fellowship to which they belong. Guildmasters assign Apprentices to Masters. All lower-ranking members in the Fellowship report to the Guildmaster. Guildmasters support the Bards Guild by paying an annual fee of 500 gold pieces. Guildmasters spend 40 Day Units each year directing their Fellowships, receiving reports from the Masters, and politicking to get a seat on the College faculty.

The Faculty and the Dean positions are open only to NPCs. If your PC is completely retired, you may apply for this position.

FACULTY: BGS 7; Specialty Bonus: 3; Day Unit cost: N/A

Outside of the ordinary hierarchy of the Fellowships are the faculty members in the Bardic College. Faculty members are chosen for their vast knowledge of the subject matter they teach and their extensive experience in the world.

DEANS: BGS 8; Specialty Bonus: 4; Day Unit cost: N/A

Each branch of the Bardic College has a Dean who supervises the faculty members, plans curricula, and manages the day to day operations of the College. The Dean is chosen from the most qualified of the faculty in his or her college, and usually serves for life or until too old to fulfill the obligations of the office.

PATRONS

Patrons are the lifeblood of the Bards Guild. In order to become a Patron, a minimum donation of 500gp is made to the Bards Guild. The Patron may choose to specify a Fellowship. If not, the gold goes to the general Bardic College fund.

The patronage does not go unrecognized, though anonymous donations are sometimes made. Because some Patrons wish to donate more, we have established a new system of gifts of thanks. It is based on donation levels. Day units may be used in lieu/addition to gold pieces (see Day Units section, coming next)

The four Patron levels are Patron, Friend of the Bards Guild, Guardian of the Bards Guild, and Philanthropist.

Patron

- Minimum annual donation of 500gp.
- Patron and all higher patronage levels receive the following in return for their kind donations:
- 2 tickets to the a performance in Orchestra section for free
- Additional tickets in Orchestra section are half price.
- Freedom to purchase tickets in balcony or lower for any/all performances at half price, based on availability.
- Listing in the Bards Guild "Book of Patrons".
- +1 bonus to Recognition from anyone in the Bards Guild.

Friend of the Bards Guild

- Minimum annual donation of 2000gp

- Friend of the Bards Guild receives the same as Patron, plus the following:
- 2 additional tickets to the a performance in Orchestra section for free
- Additional +1 bonus to Recognition from anyone in the Bards Guild. (Total: +2).

Guardian of the Bards Guild

- Minimum annual donation of 5000gp
- Guardian of the Bards Guild receives the same as Friend of the Bards Guild, plus the following:
- 2 additional tickets in Balcony section for free.
- May take part in performances if desired. These are usually kept to small walk ons, comedic in nature, or perhaps as a guest musician in a recital, based on Skill.
- Additional +1 bonus to Recognition from anyone in the Bards Guild. (Total: +3).
- Is normally automatically recognized by Bards Guild Faculty.

Philanthropist

- Minimum annual donation of 10,000gp
- Philanthropist receives the same as Guardian of the Bards Guild, plus the following:
- 2 tickets to a box seat event at the Bards Guild's discretion. These seats are usually reserved for the Mayor and the Nobles.
- A handsome plaque made by a Master of the Bards Guild, commemorating his generosity.
- Additional +2 bonus to Recognition from anyone in the Bards Guild. (Total: +5)
- Automatically recognition from the Bards Guild Faculty and Deans.