

SONG AND SILENCE

A Guidebook to Bards and Rogues

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INTRODUCTION

Call them the skilled gentlemen and ladies.

Some prefer to keep to the silence and the shadows, avoiding attention while plying their trade. Others love to display their talents, basking in the adoration of the public. They are rogues and bards, and they often make the difference between success and failure for their companions.

As one of these highly skilled individuals, you have a special place in any adventuring party. Let the fighters, barbarians, rangers, and monks charge into combat when danger threatens. Let the wizards and sorcerers hang back to cast their spells from a safe distance. Let the clerics, paladins, and druids keep the party in line and provide the healing that keeps everyone going. Your approach is subtler and more oblique. If you're a rogue, you know how to set up the best possible shot—a surgical strike that leaves your foe in a world of hurt. If you're a bard, you thrive as a jack-of-all-trades—you have good combat skills, a nice array of spells, a knack for getting along with others, and special powers that improve the talents of your companions. Quite simply put, those who adventure without a rogue in their midst tend to have a lot of traps blow up in their faces, while those in a party with a bard become better at whatever it is they do.

WHAT THIS BOOK IS AND IS NOT

This book examines rogues and bards in depth and offers new ways to develop them. All this material pertains to the new edition of the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS*® game. Here you will find new feats, rules, and prestige classes, as well as useful advice for getting the most out of your rogue or bard.

This supplement is designed to mesh with the rules system presented in the three core D&D rulebooks: the *Player's Handbook*, *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* and *Monster*

Manual. Nothing here supersedes or replaces the rules or information presented there, except where noted.

This book provides options rather than restrictions for play. Take and use what you like, modify anything you wish, and ignore the rest. Players should ask their Dungeon Masters (DMs) about incorporating elements of this book into existing campaigns before making any changes to their player characters (PCs). DMs can also use the rules, classes, and magic items presented here to develop interesting nonplayer characters (NPCs).

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Song and Silence provides a variety of tools for customizing your bard or rogue character. New prestige classes, new feats, new equipment, and new organizations let you personalize your characters and enhance their roles in adventuring groups.

All this information pertains equally to PCs and NPCs, so both players and DMs can make full use of it. Any place names mentioned

here are drawn from the D&D world as defined in the *D&D Gazetteer*; DMs using other campaign settings can simply replace these names with others of their choice.

Chapter 1 presents ten new prestige classes especially appropriate for rogues and bards. Each class offers a unique

direction for character development.

Chapter 2 features an array of new feats that expands the capabilities of any bard or rogue. Also presented here are some new ways to use existing skills.

Chapter 3 details a plethora of new equipment for rogues and bards, from musical instruments to new magic items.

Chapter 4 describes thieves' guilds and bardic colleges. Membership in one of these groups can provide a bard or rogue with allies as well as other benefits.

Chapter 5 places your character in context with the rest of the campaign world. It also offers hints on utilizing special combat maneuvers, such as flanking and sneak attacks, to best advantage.

Finally, Chapter 6 lists new spells for bards and assassins. Besides enhancing their regular abilities, these spells help to set those classes apart from others.



CHAPTER 1: PRESTIGE CLASSES

“How do you do that?”

—Regdar

“It’s all in the wrist, just . . . like . . . this!”

—Lidda

Rogues and bards, the game’s ultimate skill-users, are ideal candidates for advancement into prestige classes. The ten classes presented here are of particular interest to rogues and bards, although any character who meets the requirements is welcome to adopt one.

DREAD PIRATE

Thugs and cutthroats in every port lay claim to the title “pirate,” but actually making a fortune through piracy is no easy task. A dread pirate, however, has mastered every aspect of larceny on the high seas. His network of contacts tells him when a particularly valuable cargo is shipping out. After a flawless ambush at sea, he swings aboard the target ship on a rope, rapier in hand. Once he and his shipmates have overpowered the prize vessel’s crew, they liberate the cargo and make their escape. Later, the dread pirate meets representatives from the black market in some isolated cove and sells his newly acquired cargo for a handsome profit.

Some dread pirates accomplish their goals through fear, killing indiscriminately and ruling their ships at rapier-point. Others minimize bloodshed and exhibit a curious sort of chivalry, perhaps realizing that the captain and crew of a prize ship are more likely to surrender if they believe they’ll live to see port again. Now and then a dread pirate takes his chivalric streak a step further and preys only on the ships of enemy nations—or even solely on other pirates.

A dread pirate’s lifestyle fits most rogues to a tee, for the job requires a number of skills that members of other classes don’t have the time or inclination to learn. However, the class is also attractive for some spellcasters, who can use magic to conceal their ships or incapacitate a prize vessel’s crew.

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

To qualify for the dread pirate prestige class, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any nonlawful.

Base Attack Bonus: +4.

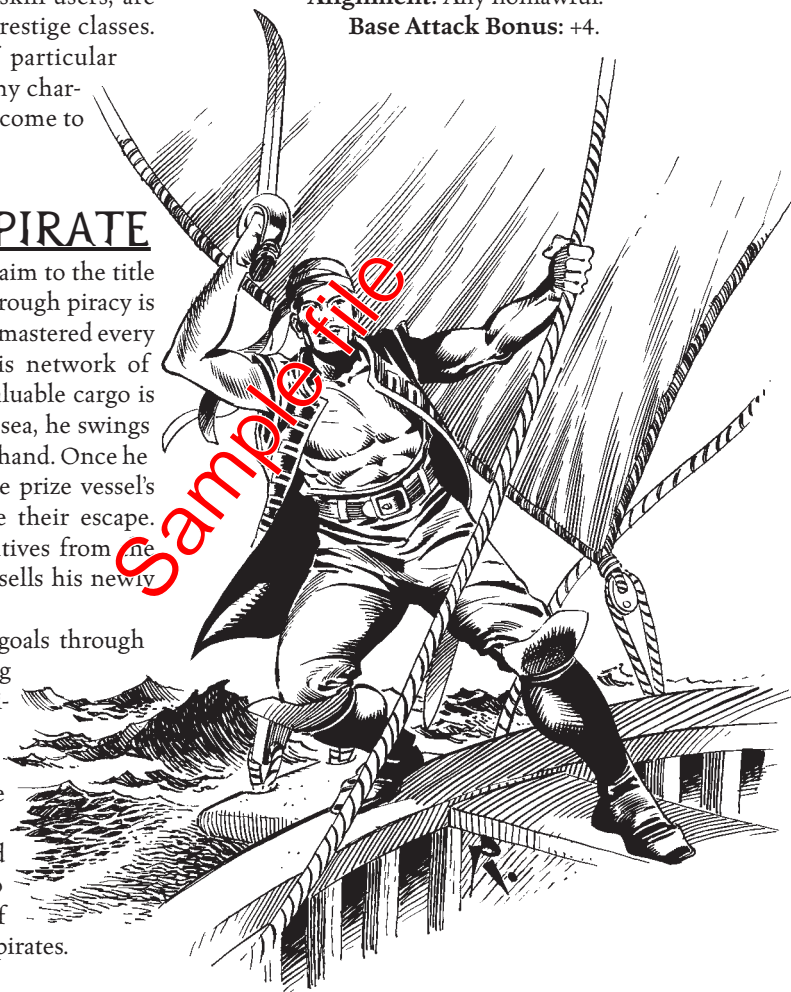


TABLE 1–1: THE DREAD PIRATE

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+0	+2	+0	Fight with two weapons
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+0	Fearsome reputation +2
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+1	Rope swing, wind at your back
4th	+4	+1	+4	+1	Fearsome reputation +4
5th	+5	+1	+4	+1	Leadership +2, shifting deck
6th	+6	+2	+5	+2	Come about, fearsome reputation +6
7th	+7	+2	+5	+2	Concealed weapon attack, leadership +4
8th	+8	+2	+6	+2	Fearsome reputation +8, <i>hoist the black flag</i>
9th	+9	+3	+6	+3	Leadership +6
10th	+10	+3	+7	+3	Fearsome reputation +10, scourge of the seas

Skills: Appraise 8 ranks, Profession (sailor) 8 ranks, Swim 5 ranks, Use Rope 5 ranks.

Feats: Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse (any).

Special: The character must own a ship worth at least 10,000 gp. The method of acquisition—purchase, force of arms, or skullduggery—makes no difference, as long as he can freely operate it on the high seas.

Class Skills

The dread pirate's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Innuendo (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Pick Pocket (Dex), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), and Use Rope (Dex). See Chapter 4 of the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the dread pirate prestige class. The Difficulty Class (DC) for any required skill check is included where appropriate.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A dread pirate is proficient with simple and martial weapons, and with light and medium armor. If he is wearing light, medium, or no armor, he can fight with two weapons as if he had the feats Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting. A dread pirate most often fights with a rapier and either a short sword or a dagger in his off hand. If he has no magical means of swimming in armor, he usually goes unarmored, at least while aboard ship.

Fearsome Reputation: At 2nd level, the dread pirate is developing a reputation on the high seas. At this point, he must decide whether to adopt the honorable pirate's code (avoid undue bloodshed and focus on cargo, not mayhem) or take the more bloodthirsty, dishonorable approach. Unless he is going incognito, the dread pirate gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy checks (if honorable) or Intimidate checks (if dishonorable). Every two dread pirate levels thereafter, this bonus increases by +2. Failure to live up to his reputation at any point may (at the DM's discretion) negate these bonuses.

Rope Swing (Ex): If a number of overhead ropes or booms are nearby (and on a ship, they almost always are), a dread pirate of 3rd level or higher can grab one and swing up to 20 feet in a straight line as a move-equivalent action or as the movement portion of a charge action. If the dread pirate makes a successful Use Rope check (DC 15), this movement doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity for moving through threatened squares. A successful Use Rope check (DC 25) allows the character to move up to 20 feet through occupied squares without provoking attacks of opportunity. Failure in either case means the dread pirate

swings through the desired area but provokes attacks of opportunity normally. Rope swing can be used on land as well—in a room with a tapestry or chandelier, for example.

Players using the variant rules for Tumble (see Chapter 2) should apply the same variant to rope swing.

Wind at Your Back: At 3rd level, the dread pirate has become a master at eking every bit of propulsion out of the prevailing winds. Any ship he captains moves 1 mile per hour faster than normal.

Leadership Bonus: At 5th level, the dread pirate gains a +2 bonus to his character level for the purpose of acquiring cohorts with the Leadership feat. Every two dread pirate levels thereafter, this bonus increases by +2.

Shifting Deck: As a free action, a dread pirate of 5th level or higher can attempt a Balance check (DC 15). Success negates any penalties for uneven ground, such as a ship's deck in rolling seas, and any higher-ground bonuses that opponents might otherwise have. The DM may set a higher DC for checks involving particularly uneven or dangerous ground.

Come About: The dread pirate's ability to maneuver a vessel is legendary. At 6th level, he gains a +4 insight bonus on Profession (sailor) checks.

Concealed Weapon Attack: A dread pirate often hides small daggers up his sleeves or in his boots. At 7th level, a dread pirate who doesn't already have the sneak attack ability gets it now at a +2d6 damage bonus, but he can use it only to make sneak attacks with concealed weapons. If the character does have the sneak attack ability from a previous class, the damage bonuses stack only for sneak attacks made with concealed weapons.

Hoist The Black Flag (Sp): The unique insignia of a dread pirate of 8th level or higher is so well known that when it is displayed on a flag or banner, every ally within 50 feet of it gains a +2 morale bonus on attacks. This bonus lasts for 10 rounds after the flag is revealed, or until it is destroyed or lowered, whichever occurs first. *Hoist the black flag* may be used three times per day, and the dread pirate must either hoist the flag personally or hand it to an ally who then hoists it.

Scourge of the Seas: A 10th-level dread pirate's exploits have become so legendary that hundreds of able sailors are willing to sign on as his crew for no compensation other than a share of the booty. High-level dread pirates can use this influx of sailors to crew pirate fleets of up to a dozen ships. Any small city's dock district has enough sailors (1st-level warriors and experts) to crew a single ship, and a larger city can provide the crew for an entire fleet. This ability is separate from the Leadership feat; crew members acquired with the scourge of the seas ability don't count as cohorts or followers.