BATTLE of the BARDS

Rulebook
Components

• 1 Rulebook
• (#) Basic Bard cards
• (#) Lead Bard cards
• (#) Roadie cards
• (#) Wanted Poster cards
• (#) Veteran Bards cards
• (#) Audience cards
• (#) Encore Round cards
• (#) Performance tokens
• (#) Tune tokens
• (#) Dice

Color Reference

Bards, Performances and dice are grouped into four colors:

- Blue represents Illusions
- Purple represents Dancing
- Red represents Singing
- Orange represents Music (instrumental)

Overview & Objective

Poets, Minstrels and Troubadours throughout Tessandor meet in Noonshade Keep for the annual Battle of the Bards competition to spin tales of the glorious battles and adventures they’ve witnessed in their travels. They band together into Troupes creating unique teams to fight in the Battle of the Bards, attempting to capture audiences and earn the Championship Title.

During a game of Battle of the Bards, players will build their troupe, create performances, and capture audiences as the game progresses. The game will end at the end of the round that a player captured four audiences. At game end, an encore round will occur, providing the troupes a final shot at gaining victory points. After the encore, the troupe with the most victory points will win the game.
Shuffle all Audience cards to create the Audience deck. Flip over three Audiences and put them into the center of play. Flip over the top Audience card and place it on top of the deck.

Separate the Lead Bards, Basic Bards, and Veteran Bards into separate piles so that the starting decks can be distributed.

**Create the Veteran Bard Line:**
Shuffle all Veteran Bards together and place the deck in the middle of the play area. Draw four Veteran Bards and place them in a row to create the Veteran Bard Line. The Veteran Bard that is next to the Deck is referred to as “The Newest Bard in Town.”

Each player will be given the following Basic cards to start their deck:

- 2 Basic Dancers (Purple)
- 2 Basic Illusionists (Blue)
- 2 Basic Musicians (Orange)
- 2 Basic Singers (Red)
- 2 Wanted Posters
- 1 Roadie

Shuffle all Leads and give one randomly to each player. The players then reveal their Leads simultaneously and gain a Performance Token and two dice of the same color as their Lead.

Each player adds their Lead to their deck (now 12 cards) and shuffles it, placing it face-down in front of them. Each player then draws 4 cards from their deck.

Shuffle all Encore cards and give one randomly to each player. Each player can look at their Encore card but should keep it secret from other players. The Encore card is used in the final round of scoring at the end of the game. For a full explanation of how the Encore cards work, read the Encore Round rules on page 7.

The last player to have performed on stage takes the First Player token, otherwise choose a random player to take the First Player token.
A round of Battle of the Bards is a mix of simultaneous and turn-based phases. Inside of a round, turn order is the player with the First Player token, then the player to their left, and so on around the table. The turn phases are:

1) Take the Stage (simultaneous phase)
2) Put on a Show (turn-based phase)
3) End of Round (simultaneous phase)

1) Take the Stage (simultaneous phase)

- All players will choose three cards from their hand, revealing them at the same time placing the cards in front of them.
- In turn order, each player will gain dice from the cards they put into play. Each card will add a colored die to your dice pool (indicated in the top left of the card.) If a white die is shown, you may pick any color die to add to your dice pool.
  - Note that a Wanted Poster card can be played on stage or can be left in your hand. A Wanted Poster in play will copy the ability of The Newest Bard in Town, and a Wanted Poster in your hand can be discarded with dice to Hire a Veteran Bard (see page 5).
- All players then roll all the dice in their dice pool.

Take the Stage Example

Carrie chooses to play a Basic Dancer, a Basic Illusionist and a Roadie. She chooses to keep the Wanted Poster in her hand to potentially purchase a Veteran Bard later in the turn. The three Bards she played will enable her to add a Purple and Blue die, and she chooses to take an additional Purple die for the Roadie. Carrie then adds those three dice to her dice pool and rolls all of her dice.
2) Put on a Show (turn-based phase)

In turn order, each player will take two actions until all players have passed. When it is your turn, you may complete two of the following actions:

- Create a Performance
- Use a Bard Ability
- Hire a Veteran Bard
- Capture an Audience
- Discard to Capture an Audience
- Use a Tune Token (free action)
- Discard to Tune (free action)
- Pass

Create a Performance: Discard 3 dice in a sequence (1,2,3 or 2,3,4 or 3,4,5 or 4,5,6) to gain a performance of the type that is the dominant color amongst the discarded dice. If the three dice are all different colors, choose one of those three colors as the Performance Type. See example below.

Create Performances Example

Moxie is using the following dice to create one (of two different) Performances:

With the 1, 2 and 3 dice, she can only create a purple Dancing Performance because purple is dominant. With the 3, 4, and 5 dice, she can create a performance that is either Red, Blue, or Orange and chooses to make a red Singing Performance. Note that if Moxie didn’t want a Dancing Performance, she could swap the 3s in this case, giving her more versatility in her selection. With a separate action, she can create the second Performance.
**Use a Bard Ability:** Assign a die to one of your Bards in play by placing a die on top of the card. You must use an appropriate number rolled on the die, indicated by the die icon on the left of the card (color does not matter). An Assigned die is now locked in and can no longer be used or stolen for any reason that round.

- Execute the Abilities in order, from left to right. If you are not able to fulfill the requirements of any Ability Icon, you do not continue on to the other icons in the ability line.
- You may only use a Bard’s Ability once each round.
- Roll any dice gained. They are available for use during this round.
- Any Tune Tokens gained may be used during this round.
- A Bard with a Sustain ability can be used in two ways: You may gain an extra action this turn or your may turn the Bard on its side and gain the ability written on the side of the card. It will then will remain activated in Sustain until the end of the round. The Sustain abilities on the cards will tell you how they are used and what you gain from them.
- If you have a Wanted Poster on Stage, it copies the ability of the Newest Bard in Town. If the Newest Bard in Town has a Sustain Ability, you must choose to gain an extra action instead of using the Sustain Ability.

**Hire a Veteran Bard:** If you have a Wanted Poster in your hand, discard it to your discard pile and Discard 2 dice with the same (any) number to Hire any Bard in the Veteran Bard Line. If the Bard is The Newest Bard in Town (the Bard closest to the deck), you must pay a third die that is also the same number. When Hired, slide the other Veteran Bards away from the deck and draw a new Veteran Bard to become the Newest Bard in Town. See example on opposite page.

**Capture an Audience:** Discard the appropriate number and types of Performances shown at the top of one of the three Audience cards in play to Capture that Audience. The Audience card on top of the Audience deck is not available to capture unless you discard the card in your hand. (see below)

Note: This icon indicates that you can discard a Performance Token of any type.

- Place the Audience Card face up to the side of your playing area. Audiences have a permanent ability that you can use for the rest of the game.
- Take the faceup card on top of the Audience Deck and put it with the other capturable Audiences and then flip the top card of the Audience faceup.
Paige has a Wanted poster in her hand and is going to Hire a Veteran Bard. She discards the Wanted Poster to her discard pile and also discards the two dice showing a 4. She then grabs the Veteran Dancer Bard and adds it to her Discard pile. If she wants The Newest Bard in Town, she would need to discard another die showing a 4. After Paige hires the Dancer, the Singer slides to the right and a new card is drawn off the top of the deck to become the Newest Bard in Town.
Discard to Capture an Audience: Discard the card in your hand AND the required Performance tokens to Capture the Audience that is faceup on top of the Audience deck. Place the Audience Card face up to the side of your playing area as normal. Then flip the top card of the Audience faceup.

Use a Tune Token (free action): Using a Tune Token is a free action and can be done before or after any of the actions of your turn. Discard a Tune Token to do one of these two actions:
- Increase or decrease a single die one pip on the die (ex 4 to a 5). You can may not turn a 1 into a 6 or vice versa.
- OR Reroll any number of your dice.

Discard to Tune (free action): Discarding to Reroll is a free action and can be done before or after any of the actions of your turn. Discard the card in your hand to immediately increase or decrease a single die one pip, or reroll any number of your dice.

Pass: Do nothing for your turn. You will be skipped in the turn order for the rest of this round.

3) End Turn (simultaneous phase)

All players simultaneously discard all Bards they played this round.
- If a player has a card in their hand, they may discard it to their discard pile.
- Fire the card, removing it from their deck permanently.
- All players then draw back up to a hand of four cards. If your Bard deck has run out of cards, shuffle your discard pile and create a new Bard deck.
- Keep any dice not discarded, including any dice assigned to Bards. They will stay in your dice pool and be rolled next round.
- The First Player token moves to the next player clockwise and a new round begins.

Once a player has Captured four Audiences, that will signal the end of the game. Continue playing that round until all players have passed as normal.

At the end of the round, all players separate their hired Veteran Bards from their deck and move into the Encore Round.
Encore Round

Each player discards all dice in their dice pool and then reveals their Encore card. For each Veteran Bard that a player purchased during the game that corresponds to one of the symbols on their Encore card, they gain one dice. Then all players roll their dice simultaneously and add them up.

Whoever has the highest total wins the Encore Round and adds 4 points to their victory point total.

Players may use Tune Tokens gained throughout the game during this Encore round. If there is a tie for the lead during the Encore, then all tied players roll again until there is a clear winner of the Encore Round.

Encore Round Example

Travis has 5 Veteran Bards and the Encore Round card shown here. Two of the Veteran Dancers and the one Illusionist will allow him to roll 3 dice during the Encore Round.

Final Scoring

Each player totals up all Victory points gained throughout the game:

- Each Player’s unused Performance Tokens award 1 victory point each.
- Audience cards award the points shown in the upper right.
- Veteran Bards award the points shown in the upper right.
- The winner of the Encore Round is awarded 4 victory points.

Whoever has the most victory points wins the Battle of the Bards competition. If there is a tie, the tied players move to Sudden Death (see next page).
• Note: If there are no dice of the appropriate color available when gaining a die, then you would gain no die.

• Any tokens or dice that are used and discarded return to the general pool of tokens and dice and can be used again as the game continues.

• If you are required to draw during your turn and you have no cards in your deck, immediately shuffle all cards in your discard pool into a new deck and continue with the action.

• You may use multiple Tune Tokens in a turn, and can use a Tune Token to change or reroll a die multiple times.

• If a card’s rules go against this rulebook, the card is correct.
Card Anatomy

Basic Bard
1) Name
2) Basic Bard Border
3) Bard Color
4) Ability Cost
5) Ability Icon

Veteran Bard
1) Name
2) Veteran Bard Border
3) Veteran Icon & Bard Color
4) Ability Cost
5) Ability Icons
6) Sustain Ability
7) Victory Point value

Lead Bard
1) Name
2) Basic Bard Border
3) Lead Icon & Bard Color
4) Ability Cost
5) Ability Icons

Audience Cards

1) Victory Point value
2) Performance Requirements
3) Permanent In-Game Ability