

The Bards Tale

IBM, Tandy and Compatibles

Getting Started

Never try to play The Bard's Tale using the master disks. Boot your computer with a PC-DOS disk (version 2.0 or later) and make copies of both your Program and Picture disks. (See your PC-DOS User's Manual for copy instructions). After you have copied both disks, put the master disks away. Do not write-protect your copy of the Program disk or you will not be able to set your screen configuration.

Playing from Floppy Disk

To load The Bard's Tale, insert the Program Disk in drive A and at the A prompt type `bar` <return>. The program will load automatically.

Playing from a Hard Disk

To install The Bard's Tale on your hard disk, place your Program disk in drive A and at the A prompt type `a:install c:` <return>, then follow the on-screen prompts. Your character disk will automatically be created in the `bardtale` subdirectory. If this is your first time booting Bard's Tale, type `setup` when prompted and choose a display mode (refer to Game Configuration below for details). To play The Bard's Tale, type the DOS command `cd\bardtale` <return> `bar` <return>.

Making a Character Disk

Before you start playing The Bard's Tale for the first time, you need to make a character disk. Prepare a blank formatted disk. If you have a two drive system place your blank disk in drive "B" and your Picture disk in drive A. At the A prompt type `"copychar"` <return>. If you have a one drive system, at the A prompt insert your Picture disk in drive A and type `"copychar"` <return>. When instructed to do so, insert your blank formatted disk in the drive and follow the on-screen prompts.



Note: On a one-drive system you may be prompted to place your disk in drive B -- please use drive A at that prompt throughout the character disk creation routine. When you have finished, your new character disk will have a completely outfitted and ready-to-go band of adventurers named *ATEAM. To use the *ATEAM, select (A) dd a member from the Main Menu.

Game Configuration

The Bard's Tale can be played with the keyboard, mouse, or joystick. If you wish to use a mouse make sure that your mouse driver is loaded before loading The Bard's Tale (See the manual that came with your mouse for instructions). On a Tandy computer, to use the joystick it must be plugged into the right hand port. When you are ready to start play, insert the program disk and type "setup" <return> and you will be presented with the Display Configuration menu. Use this menu to specify the type of graphic card and display your computer is equipped with. The four choices are:

1. Composite or TV monitor
2. RGB monitor
3. EGA monitor
4. Tandy computer with RGB monitor

Choose the appropriate monitor display by selecting #1-4. This does not need to be done again unless you change your system set-up.

Note: If you have a Tandy with a composite monitor, try #4. If it doesn't work, try #1.

Game Play

When the game begins you'll find yourself at the Adventurer's Guild. Game information and menus appear in the white requester in the upper right of the screen. To select from this screen, click on the option you want, or type the option's first letter. You make all game decisions (except direction of travel) from this box.

Information about your characters appears in the cast list at the bottom of the screen. When the white requester asks you to select a character for any reason, move the pointer to the character's name and click, or type the number that corresponds to the character's place in the marching order (1-6).

Main Menu

You only have access to the Main Menu while in the Adventurer's Guild. Your options are:

Add a member - Adds members from other parties on your disk to the current party. You can also use it to recombine characters into entirely new parties. The requester that appears contains all the parties and characters saved to the disk; party names are preceded by an *. Click on the name of the party or character you want to add or use the up/down arrow keys to highlight the name and press <return>.

Remove a member - Removes a member from your current party and saves that character to disk.

Create a member - Creates a new character. The prompts that follow this command ask you for the new character's race, class, and name (up to 14 characters). Answer the prompts either by clicking your selection or typing the selection number. If you are not satisfied with your character's statistics, feel free to "re-roll."

Delete a member - Deletes a character from your party. Caution: When you use this command, the character disappears forever.

Save Party - Saves the entire party to disk under a single party name. Party names are preceded by an * on the disk menu. Caution: This does not save character information, it only saves the party name.

Leave Game - Exits the Bard's Tale. When you select this option, you're offered a "yes/no" choice before you actually leave the game. A "no" answer returns you to the Main Menu. A "yes" answer takes you to the DOS screen.

Enter the City - Leaves the Adventurer's Guild and starts play.

Safety and Death

Face it. The sort of streets where you run into wandering Kobolds, Werewolves and Orcs are dangerous -- especially at night. Don't be shy about spending the night in the Adventurer's Guild. When you leave the Guild, the clock is always set ahead to the next morning.

Moving About

When you place the pointer in the view window in the upper left of the screen, it turns into a directional arrow. As you move the arrow, it points out the various directions you can

travel: ahead, around corners, into buildings, through doors. Click to indicate that you want to go in the direction currently indicated by the arrow. You can also control your motion with the keyboard arrows.

Viewing Characters

To view a character, point to the name on the cast list and click, or type the number that corresponds to the character's place in the marching order (1-6). Character information appears in the white requester, along with the options to Trade Gold, Pool Gold or Continue. The Continue command is followed by the equipment list, from which you can (T)rade or (D)rop items, or (E)quip the character by pressing the number of the item or clicking on it and then selecting the desired option.

Combat Commands

During battle, your characters' actions and options appear in the white information requester. You can respond by clicking the option you want, or pressing:

F to Fight

R to Run

P to start intra-Party combat at any time.

A to Attack monsters in the first two ranks, hand-to-hand. (Available to the first three party members.)

D to Defend. This lessens the chance of damage from a monster in that round.

U to Use a magical item. The character must be equipped with the item in advance.

B to sing one of six Bard's tunes. (Available only to Bards.)

C to Cast a spell. Click on the spell code from the list that appears. You can also type the spell code and press Return. (Available to magic users only.)

H to Hide in the shadows. (Available only to rogues.)

> to speed up message scrolling rate

< to slow down message scrolling rate

Other Adventuring Commands

The following commands are available while you're peacefully exploring the streets of Skara Brae:

C to Cast a spell. Click on the spellcaster's name, then select the spell code from the list that appears. You can also type the number that corresponds to the

character's place in the marching order, or you can press the function key that corresponds to your spellcaster's character number, then type the spell code and press Return. (Available to magic users only.)

P to start intra-party combat at any time.

B to sing one of six Bard's tunes while travelling. You can also press the function key that corresponds to your Bard's character number. (Available only to Bards.)

A to ascend up through a portal. The party must have a levitation spell in operation. Works only in dungeons.

D to go Down a portal. Works only in dungeons.

? to learn the name of the street your party is on, and the time of day.

N to establish a New marching order for your party. Click on the name of character you want to move. Click again on the position in the cast list you want the character to occupy. You can also type the number that corresponds to the character's place in the marching order and then the position in the marching order you wish the character to occupy. All other characters will move up or down to accomodate the new placement.

T to Pause and Resume the game.

U to Use an item. Some items, like torches, don't work until you activate them with this command; others run out of power after only one use.

V to turn sound on or off.

Spacebar You can speed up a message display by pressing the spacebar after the first part of a message. The next message or window display will promptly appear.

Creating and Saving Characters

You can create characters and form parties only at the Adventurer's Guild. To create characters, form your own parties, remove characters, or rearrange their marching order, use the Main Menu commands described above.

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