

COLLEGE OF THE MACABRE

The world can be a dark place. For every story of noble heroes or great triumphs there is a tale of terrifying monsters or senseless tragedy. While most bards like to focus on stories and songs that uplift and inspire, some bards instead shift their focus to a darker calling.

While not a college in the traditional sense, the College of the Macabre is a term used to describe the varied and disparate group of Bards who focus their art on the grim, dreadful and dreary. Bards of this college can include such varied personalities as funeral musicians who compose and perform dirges, morbid storytellers who collect tales of tragedy and horror and even power-hungry megalomaniacs who use their abilities as a means to selfish ends. However, no matter their approach all these bards possess the ability to reanimate the dead with their words or songs, invoking the power of the grave with their haunting voices

As a loose assemblage rather than a formal college, bards of the Macabre rarely meet and many times may go their entire life without encountering one of their peers. However, some more organized societies of bards with an interest in the macabre exist. Such societies often meet in graveyards or sites where murders, hauntings and other grim events transpired, seeking out new inspiration for their dreadful compositions. The most organized of these societies often own and run funeral homes themselves, either to legitimately help people mourn or as a cover for more sinister activities.

BONUS PROFICIENCIES

Starting at 3rd level when you select this college, you add your proficiency bonus to your death saving throws. Additionally, you gain proficiency with the medicine skill.



DREADFUL DIRGE

At 3rd level you learn how to perform music or oration that fills your enemies with fear and dread. As an action you can spend 1 use of your bardic inspiration to make 1 creature within 30ft that can hear your voice the target of your dreadful dirge. When you do this the target must make a wisdom save against your Bard spell Save DC. On a successful save that creature cannot be the target of your dreadful dirge again for 24 hours. On a failed save this feature is treated as a concentration spell that can be maintained for 1 minute. As long as you concentrate on this feature the target is frightened of you.

Creatures who can't hear you or are immune to being charmed are immune to this effect.

DANSE MACABRE

Starting at 6th level you learn vile words or music that let you call the dead back for one last dance. You gain *Animate Dead* as a bonus spell known. Additionally, at 11th level you gain *Create Undead* as a bonus spell known. These spells are considered bard spells for you and do not count against your total spells known as per the bard table. When you cast a Necromancy spell that creates undead (such as *Animate Dead* or *Create Undead*) that spell gains the following additional effects (These benefits do not stack with the benefits of the Undead Thralls wizard feature) :

- The undead this spell creates increase their hit point maximum by your Bard level
- The undead this spell creates add your proficiency bonus to their weapon damage rolls.
- If this spell is *Animate Dead* it can target 1 additional corpse or bone pile and create 1 additional skeleton or zombie (as applicable).

RULE THE STILL HEART

At 14th level you learn how to perform music or oration that dominates the undead. As an action you can spend 1 use of your bardic inspiration and target any number of undead who can see or hear you within 60ft whose total combined CRs do not exceed your bard level. These creatures make a charisma saving throw against your Bard spell save DC. Intelligent undead are harder to control with this feature; undead with 8 or more intelligence have advantage on their saving throw.

All targets that make their save cannot be affected by this feature again for 24 hours. All targets that fail their save are dominated by you temporarily. This effect is treated as a concentration spell that can be maintained for 4 hours. As long as you maintain concentration on this effect you have control of all targets that failed their saves as if they were beasts under the effects of a *Dominant Beast* spell cast by you.