

Nolram the Goose, Court Jester

CG male gnome Rogue 20

Design Notes

An Arcane Trickster build for campaigns big on courtly intrigue.

For games that feature social interactions and intrigue, the go-to subclass for most Rogue players would be the Inquisitive or the Mastermind, or even the Assassin. Even though Arcane Tricksters are a fairly popular choice (as it offers further magical versatility to an already-versatile class), they are associated more with standard dungeon delving adventures. But its focus on enchantments and illusions, coupled with the right skill selection, could make the Arcane Trickster fit right into any campaign worthy of Game of Thrones.

For a traditional Bard-based jester, see the [College of Satire](#) from Unearthed Arcana.

Character History

Nolram hails from the Hullack forest in Cormyr. He's the type of person who would crack a joke at any moment and make a friend laugh when they're down, moreso than most of his gnomish kin. He is extremely intelligent and possesses an aptitude for the Art, but his loquacious nature and lack of mental focus made him a poor wizard's apprentice. He also had a predisposition for wanderlust, so Nolram used his natural talent for comedy (and the innate forest gnome ability to conjure illusions at will) to become a traveling entertainer.

Nolram's travels brought him to Suzail, the kingdom's capital and the seat of Cormyrean court. There he earned quite a reputation as a comedian, and his schedule was always booked with performances for various fairs and even parties thrown by wealthy nobles. With these well-placed contacts, Nolram was able to secure an audience with the royal court.

In what could be described as Nolram's best satirical performance of his career, Queen Raedra let out the heartiest laugh in her entire life with his no-holds-barred mockery of the nobility. Throughout Cormyr's history, the crown and the nobility had never seen eye to eye, especially in matters concerning the common people. Tapping into this conflict for his satire had earned Nolram a place as the Queen's own court-appointed jester.

However, Cormyrean court was full of powerful (and seriously dull) people—haughty nobles, Purple Dragon knights, War Wizards—and Nolram's humor didn't sit well with these humans especially when they're the target of his parodies, earning him the nickname "the Silly Goose" and "the Gibbering Goose" (or just "the Goose"). But as the Royal Jester, he could mock them with impunity as often as he pleased. Nolram's status as both an outsider and an insider made him an invaluable adviser to the Queen.

When he's not entertaining the royal family, Nolram can be found either adventuring within the borders of Cormyr with his best friend Sir Bors of the Purple Dragons, or sticking his nose into the nobility's business, much to Bor's chagrin.

Stats and Progression

Starting Ability Scores: Str 8, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 14.

Race: gnome, forest.

- ASI - +2 Intelligence, +1 Dexterity.
- Traits - darkvision, gnome cunning, natural illusionist, speak with small beasts.

Background: courtier [SCAG].

- Feature - court functionary.
- Proficiencies - Insight, Persuasion, 2 languages.

1: Rogue 1.

- Proficiencies - Perception, Performance, Sleight of Hand, Stealth, Dexterity saves, Intelligence saves, thieves' tools.
- Features - expertise (Insight, Performance), sneak attack (+1d6 every odd level).
- Cantrip - *minor illusion* [racial].
- Starting equipment - leather armor, rapier, shortbow with 20 arrows, 2 daggers, burglar's pack, thieves' tools, fine clothes, 10 gp.

2: Rogue 2.

- Feature - cunning action.

3: Rogue 3.

- Roguish Archetype - Arcane Trickster.
- Features - mage hand legerdemain.
- Cantrips - *booming blade* [XGtE], *friends*, *mage hand*.
- Spells - *disguise self*, *find familiar*, *Tasha's hideous laughter*.

4: Rogue 4.

- Spell - *shield*.
- ASI/Feat - +2 Dexterity.

5: Rogue 5.

- Feature - uncanny dodge.
- Starting equipment - hand crossbow with 20 bolts (76 gp, replaces shortbow), *clothes of mending* [XGtE] (common item), *studded leather armor of gleaming* [XGtE] (common item).

6: Rogue 6.

- Feature - expertise (Perception, Stealth).

7: Rogue 7.

- Feature - evasion.
- Spell - *invisibility*.

8: Rogue 8.

- Spell - *detect thoughts*.
- ASI/Feat - +2 Dexterity.

9: Rogue 9.

- Feature - magical ambush.

10: Rogue 10.

- Cantrip - *toll the dead* [XGtE].
- Spell - *shadow blade* [XGtE].
- ASI/Feat - +2 Charisma.

11: **Rogue 11.**

- Feature - reliable talent.
- Spell - *mirror image*.
- Starting equipment - *headband of intellect* (major uncommon item), *wand of magic detection* (minor uncommon item).

12: **Rogue 12.**

- ASI/Feat - +2 Charisma.

13: **Rogue 13.**

- Feature - versatile trickster.
- Spell - *hypnotic pattern*.

14: **Rogue 14.**

- Feature - blindsense.
- Spell - *tiny servant* [XGtE].

15: **Rogue 15.**

- Feature - slippery mind.

16: **Rogue 16.**

- Spell - *suggestion*.
- ASI/Feat - +2 Intelligence.

17: **Rogue 17.**

- Feature - spell thief.
- Starting equipment - *rod of rulership* (major rare item), *winged boots* (major uncommon item, replaces *headband of intellect*).

18: **Rogue 18.**

- Feature - elusive.

19: **Rogue 19.**

- Spell - *greater invisibility* (replaces *invisibility*), *hallucinatory terrain*.
- ASI/Feat - +2 Intelligence.

20: **Rogue 20.**

- Feature - stroke of luck.
- Spell - *dimension door*.

Sources:

SCAG - *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide*

XGtE - *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*