

## **NLS BARD**

### **What is BARD?**

BARD, the Braille and Audio Reading Download from the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS), is a web-based service that provides access to thousands of special-format books, magazines, and music scores. BARD is password-protected, and all files are in an electronic downloadable form of compressed audio or formatted braille. BARD is operated as a partnership between NLS and its network of cooperating libraries in the United States and its territories. NLS maintains the website, uploads titles, and supplies libraries with circulation statistics. [Network libraries](#) approve reader applications, respond to reader inquiries, and provide technical support. Ready to apply to get BARD? [Go to the BARD application page](#).

### **What is available on BARD?**

BARD makes available books and magazines from the vast NLS collection selected on the basis of their appeal across a wide range of interests. More than 115,000 audio and braille fiction and nonfiction titles are available, including some in languages other than English. Issues of more than ninety magazine titles are also available. NLS adds new titles regularly, including specially acquired music scores and music appreciation books. Network libraries routinely contribute local and regional interest titles.

### **BARD Mobile**

Digital audio and ebraille materials are also available through the BARD Mobile app for iOS and Android devices. BARD Mobile can be downloaded through the [App Store](#), [Google Play](#) store, and [Amazon Appstore](#). To download books and magazines on an iOS or Android device through the BARD Mobile app, users must register for the BARD online service with their network libraries. A refreshable braille display with a Bluetooth connection is required to access ebraille materials through the BARD Mobile app.

### **Digital talking books**

Digital talking books can be downloaded as a ZIP file to a computer in protected compressed audio file format. Once a reader selects, downloads, and saves the file, it can be decompressed and transferred to a USB thumb drive or cartridge to play on a library-provided digital talking-book machine or an approved commercial digital player. Users must be able to access the Internet and be authorized to use the service by their local cooperating library. Basic computer and Internet skills, including familiarity with online forms and downloading and unzipping files, are essential.

### **Ebraille**

On a computer, downloaded ebraille (electronic braille) materials can be embossed or read with a refreshable braille display. Users must have a braille display, braille-aware device, or braille embosser to read ebraille files. Ebraille materials are available in contracted and uncontracted format, and can be downloaded by individual volume (in the NLS Voyager catalog) or in a ZIP file on the BARD website containing all volumes of the book (or parts of the magazine).

## BARD Express

[BARD Express](#) software is free for NLS patrons who use BARD to download audio materials on Windows-based computers. With the touch of a button, BARD Express unzips and transfers files to an NLS cartridge or a USB drive. Step-by-step menus allow the patron to move books easily from a PC to the patron's device of choice. The software boasts a wider range of search-and-browse options to search the catalog. Once downloaded, BARD Express offers sorting options. The software categorizes materials such as magazines and books, and items can be marked as read or unread. Active NLS patrons with a BARD account can download BARD Express from the BARD home page. Support, "how-to" videos, frequently asked questions, and a getting started guide can be found on the BARD Express home page.

## Eligibility to use BARD and how to sign up

All active NLS patrons with an email account are eligible for BARD service. NLS patrons may visit [nlsbard.loc.gov](http://nlsbard.loc.gov) and follow the link to "BARD application instructions" to complete an online application. They will be contacted by their local cooperating library after submitting the application. Eligible readers may call 1-888-NLS-READ (1-888-657-7323) or visit [Find Your Library](#) to locate their local cooperating library. Eligible institutions who provide NLS services or whose primary purpose is to produce braille books for the use of eligible readers in the United States may also access BARD. The nearest cooperating library may be contacted for more information.

## Lost passwords

Users who have lost their BARD password should contact the cooperating library where they are registered to request that their password be reset. BARD accounts will be temporarily suspended if not used for six months. Under these conditions, contact your local cooperating library or dial 888-NLS-READ (888-657-7323). After choosing your preferred language, press "3" for BARD service and follow the prompts where you say the name of the state where you live. After being connected to your local library, explain that you have forgotten your password or you need your account reactivated.