

THE GALDR

A D&D 5E VIKING RUNE MAGE



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GALDR

Crouched low, eyes flaring, the man begins drawing strange shapes in the air, and fiery runic effigies appear, floating. The man rears back, and screams a single word in a forgotten language. A blast emits from the rune, and after the dust settles, the Galdr is the only one left standing.

Leaving the house of a beloved sister, the Galdr carves a rune on her door. That night, when raiders from the North come to her house to pillage, they are met with howling ethereal wolves, who fiercely protect the dwelling.

A man throws an axe at a vicious draugr, the axe flies true, tumbling and as it does so, the runes etched into it flare up, and emit a blue burst of light, eviscerating the other nearby draugr.

Whether carving runes in mid air to cast spells, or imbuing items and object with great power, the Galdr is the embodiment of the raw power of runic magic. They heed what the runes tell them, and many are powerful seers, though all of them have devastating abilities that can change the course of a battle in an instant. Galdr are often great entertainers, and their stories are legendary, should you be lucky enough to meet one.

RUNIC MAGIC

The Galdr uses the ancient language of the gods to cast spells, allowing them to access the deeper are more carnal magics of the earth to unleash great forces on their targets. They learn these runes through teachers, books or the gods themselves, and while they protect the language from outsiders, they are often fond of telling regaling stories of their skill and prowess in battle. Simply because Galdr use spells, does not make them physically weak. They are often strong, powerful physical fighters, who can use both blade and spell alike to wreak havoc on their enemies.

REMEMBERING THE ART

While runic magic may be seen by some as archaic and useless, these people have never met a Galdr. The fact that the language was lost to most people is the sole reason why it is so powerful. Its exclusivity gives Galdr a real edge in combat, as many opponents will not be able to handle the pure power of the Galdr. While they may enjoy regaling others with tales of their prowess, they hold a sombre respect for the language that they hold so dear.

THE GALDR

Proficiency			Cantrips	-Spell Slots per Spell Level-								
Level	Bonus	Features	Known	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th
1st	2	Galdr Spellcasting	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2nd	2	Runic Inscription	2	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3rd	2	Galdr Archetype	2	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4th	2	Ability Score Improvement	3	4	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
5th	3	-	3	4	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
6th	3	Galdr Archetype Feature	3	4	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
7th	3	-	3	4	3	3	1	-	-	-	-	-
		Galdr Archetype Feature, Ability Score Improvement										
8th	3		3	4	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	-
9th	4	-	3	4	3	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
		Galdr Archetype Feature	4	4	3	3	3	2	-	-	-	-
10th	4		4	4	3	3	3	2	-	-	-	-
11th	4	Self Branding	4	4	3	3	3	2	1	-	-	-
		Ability Score Improvement	4	4	3	3	3	2	1	-	-	-
12th	4		4	4	3	3	3	2	1	-	-	-
13th	5	Self Branding	4	4	3	3	3	2	2	1	-	-
		Galdr Archetype Feature	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	-	-
14th	5		4	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	-	-
15th	5	Self Branding	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	-
		Ability Score Improvement	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	-
16th	5		4	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	-
17th	6	Self Branding	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	1
18th	6	-	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	1
		Ability Score Improvement	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	1
19th	6		5	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	1
20th	6	Runic Master	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	1

CREATING A GALDR

When making a Gald, try to think about how your character came to be in possession of their power. How have the runes been taught to them, and how do they feel they should use their power? Perhaps an old Gald taught your character the runes, or maybe they came to your character in a dream. Have you only recently learned the ways of runic magic now, or did they learn them as a child? Perhaps your Gald was wild and undisciplined until they learned the runes, and has become a well rounded, powerfully calm character.

QUICK BUILD

You can make a Gald quickly by following these suggestions. First, make Charisma your highest ability score, followed by Constitution. Second, choose the Entertainer Background.

CLASS FEATURES

HIT POINTS

Hit Dice: 1d8 per Gald Level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 8 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier

PROFICIENCIES

Armour: Light Armour, Medium Armour, Shields

Weapons: Simple Weapons, Longsword, Shortsword, Battleaxe, Maul, Warhammer, War Pick

Tools: Calligrapher's Tools, Painter's Supplies, Woodcarver's Tools

Saving Throws: Charisma, Constitution

Skills: Choose three from History, Insight, Intimidation, Investigation, Nature, Perception, Performance, Survival

EQUIPMENT

(a) Any Simple Weapon or (b) a Longsword or (c) a Battleaxe

(a) a Shield or (b) Any Simple Weapon or (c) Any Martial Weapon

(a) An Explorer's Pack (b) an Entertainer's Pack

Leather Armour, Woodcarver's Tools, a Dagger

RUNIC

You are able to understand and read runes, an ability which most have forgotten. Only Gald are able to read runes, and they keep this ability to themselves with obsessive care.

SPELLCASTING

Gald can use runes to cast spells, the very essence of the runes, flowing through their veins as they channel the ancient language of the gods. See the end of this class description for the Gald spell list.

CANTRIPS

At 1st level, you know 2 cantrips of your choice from the Gald spell list. You learn additional Gald cantrips of your choice at higher levels, as shown in the table above.

CASTING SPELLS

Unlike many other types of magic user, a Gald commits the entire runic alphabet to memory, as well as the specific order of the runes to make each spell. To cast a spell, the Gald must expend a spell slot of the spell's level or higher. You regain all expended spell slots after a long rest.

SPELLCASTING ABILITY

Charisma is your spellcasting ability for your Galdr spells, since your ability to cast spells does not simply lie in the runes themselves, but the deeper connection you yourself have with these runes. Whenever a spell refers to your spellcasting ability you use your Charisma modifier. In addition you use your Charisma modifier when setting the saving throw DC for a Galdr spell you cast, and when making an attack roll with one.

Spell Save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier

Spell Attack Modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier

RITUAL CASTING

You can cast a Galdr spell as a ritual if that spell has the ritual tag.

RUNIC INSCRIPTION

Starting at 2nd level Galdr can inscribe runes into objects to empower the object, as well as strengthen their bond with it. You may use a short rest to inscribe a rune onto an item, however you may only expend one hit die for that rest. The results in the user of the item being able to cast the spell once at will. For example, if a Galdr inscribes the spell Burning Hands onto a sword, the wielder of that sword may then cast burning hands from the sword himself, by saying the power word, and using their power of the Galdr who inscribed it. Upon the user casting the spell, a spell slot of the Galdr who inscribed it is used, no matter where they are. The Galdr will also know when this happens, wherever he may be. If the Galdr has no spell slots of required level, he takes damage equal to $1d8 \times \text{Galdr Level} + \text{Spell Level}$. For example: if the first level spell Thunderwave was inscribed, and the Galdr who inscribed it had no remaining spell slots, they would take $1d8 + 1$ points of damage, as the power for the spell is taken by force by the inscription.

GALDR ARCHETYPE

Starting at 3rd Level, you choose an archetype that you focus upon, and attempt to better yourself in this specific area. You may choose Scribe, Rune Mage or Seer. These Archetypes grant you benefits at 3rd level, and again at 6th, 8th, 10th and 14th. The details for each can be found later in the chapter.

ABILITY SCORE IMPROVEMENT

When you reach 4th level, and again at 8th, 12th, 16th and 19th level, you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or you can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, you can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

SELF BRANDING

Starting at 9th Level, and again at 13th, 15th and 17th level, you can brand yourself with a rune. This takes a long rest, and will cause you to see visions and hallucinate for the next day. After this however, the spell you have branded upon yourself can be cast without expending a spell slot once per day. After use, it fades, before returning 24 hours later. The spell must be one that you know, and have spell slots of a high enough level to cast.

RUNIC MASTER

At 20th level, you may learn every spell from the Galdr Spell list.

GALDR ARCHETYPES

Most people believe that Galdr are simply runic mages who can do amazing things and tell even more amazing stories, however, while this is true, there is a deeper connection between a Galdr and his runes. They do not simply know them as a language, but as another party, who guides and protects them. A Galdr does not choose his archetype, the runes do, and he must follow.



SCRIBE

A Scribe is a Galdr who has prized the inscription of runes above all else. They spend ample time carving runes into objects, and will probably carry a large number of objects with them for carving, such as bone, wood and rocks. They revere the elegance and subtleties of runes. While they may seem more subdued than the other archetypes, do not underestimate them, they can turn mundane objects into weapons of great power and ferocity.

WEAPON INSCRIPTION IMPROVEMENT

When you choose the Scribe at 3rd level, you become more proficient at inscribing runes, and are able to inscribe items with spells at higher levels (For example, you can inscribe a weapon with a 1st level spell such as burning hands, but use a spell slot of 2nd level, so that when the inscribed spell occurs, it happens at 2nd level). Furthermore, inscription has become second nature to you, and you can now regain hit points as normal when inscribing an item.

DUAL INSCRIPTIONS

At 6th level, you gain the ability to inscribe items with two spells, both occurring at the same time. The total spell slots of the inscribed spells cannot exceed your level (EG: A level 5 Galdr could inscribe something with a 3rd level spell and a 2nd level spell – total 5, but not two 3rd level spells – total 6).

BONUS SPELL SLOTS

Starting at 8th level, you gain an additional 2 spell slots of any level that you currently have slots for, and an additional 1 spell slot of any level that you currently have slots for whenever your Galdr level increases.

REMOTE INSCRIPTION

Starting at 10th level, you can cast a spell inscribed on an item yourself, wherever you are in the world. The spell occurs and its target is determined by wherever the rune is pointing at the time. This still expends the spell slot used.

LIVING INSCRIPTION

Starting at 14th level, you gain the ability to inscribe living beings, giving them the ability to access, cast and detonate the rune that is inscribed on them.

RUNE MAGE

A Rune Mage is a Galdr whose focus lies in the drawing of runes in mid air during battle to cast spells. Rather than taking the time to inscribe runes, a Rune Mage is more suited to casting spells in the heat of battle, attempting to harness the energy of the runes in the moment when they are most needed, rather than pre-emptively.

RUNIC DEFENCE

When choose this archetype starting at 3rd level, you gain both offensive and defensive properties as the runes protect and guide you. You gain a +2 bonus to AC. As well as this, You gain a +2 bonus to hit as long as you have cast a Galdr spell this combat.

RUNIC FURY

Starting at 6th level, whenever you cast a Galdr spell, you may use your bonus action to make a normal attack against a different target.

OVERLOAD

Starting at 8th level, you can overpower your runic magic to increase the damage dealt. You can use this ability a number of times equal to half your level rounded down. You must declare that you are using this ability before casting the spell, and, upon a hit, the spell deals damage as though it were cast at a level equal to the spell's level + 2 (EG: overloading a 4th level spell, will mean the spell is cast at 6th level, but you only expend a 4th level slot).

DUAL CRITICAL

Starting at 10th level, whenever you roll a critical hit on a spell attack, the spell's effect is copied again at the same level, the normal bonus from scoring a critical hit still applies (EG: If you cast burning hands and score a critical, not only will you double the damage on that spell, but the spell is cast again). You may choose a new target for the copied spell.

RUNIC HERO

Starting at 14th level, you may use your reaction to cast a Galdr spell if you are attacked at any point during a combat encounter.

SEER

A Seer is a Galdr who has a deeper spiritual connection with the Gods and the runes. They are more inclined to search for knowledge and have limited powers of divination. As well as this, Seers also are more adept at summoning magic than their counterparts, and while they may not be as physically powerful as some of the other Galdr, they more than make up for it in their improved magical prowess.

RUNIC RESEARCH

When choose this archetype starting at 3rd level, you gain access to several more spells, all of which are detailed at the end of this chapter.

READ THE BONES

When choose this archetype starting at 3rd level, you gain the Knuckle bones of a creature of your choice. How you acquired these is also up to you. Once per day, you may use these bones to attempt to read the future by asking a question, and rolling them. You must make a DC 15 Charisma check, if successful, you gain the ability to see an answer to your question, although the outcome of this may often be confusing or seemingly cryptic or unhelpful, it must be true nonetheless.

RUNIC VISIONS

Starting at 6th level, you can no longer be surprised, and can sense attacks before they happen. Once per round, and a number of times equal to your level divided by 2 per day, you may roll 1d8, and reduce the damage of an incoming attack by that much.

BRANDING

Starting at 8th level, you can use the power bestowed upon you by your knowledge of the runes to brand an enemy. To do this, your target must make a Charisma saving throw against your spell save DC. If they fail, they become branded, and must do your bidding for up to 24 hours, or if you order them to directly cause damage to themselves. As well as this, you are able to always know their location, and can use a ritual lasting 2 minutes, to assume control over them, seeing through their eyes and controlling their actions. This forces their eyes to change colour and glow. You may only use this on beings of CR lower than or equal to your level. You may only use this ability a number of times equal to your Charisma modifier, and you may only have one being branded at one time. If you brand a new target while having someone else branded, the original brand wears off.

RUNIC BRAND

Starting at 10th level, you may have up to two targets branded at once. You may only control one at a time, though the other will still follow your orders. As well as this, you may cast your spells through the target you are controlling. Also, your targets now remain branded indefinitely.

ELDER SEER

Starting at 14th level, You may brand a number of targets equal to half your level. As well as this, the branded targets also may brand people upon your command (they count towards the number of people you have branded). You may also add your Charisma bonus to the DC for saving throws made against branding.

GALDR SPELL LIST

Cantrips

Blade Ward
Fire Bolt
Minor Illusion
Ray of Frost
Light
True Strike

1st Level

Thunderwave
Entangle
Longstrider
Jump
Thunderous Smite
Wrathful Smite

2nd Level

Branding Smite
Flame Blade
Flaming Sphere
Heat Metal
Shatter

3rd Level

Call Lightning
Lightning Bolt
Fireball
Vampiric Touch
Gaseous Form

4th Level

Dimension Door
Dominate Beast
Ice Storm
Stoneskin

5th Level

Cone of Cold
Dominate Person
Wall of Stone
Dream
Scrying
Conjure Elemental

6th Level

Chain Lightning
Eyebite
Sunbeam
Wall of Ice

9th Level

Meteor Swarm
Power Word Kill
Weird

SEER EXTENDED SPELL LIST

Cantrips

Friends
Prestidigitation
Minor Illusion

1st Level

Hex
Illusory Script
Message

2nd Level

Alter Self
Blindness/Deafness
Crown of Madness
Locate Object
Magic Mouth

3rd Level

Clairvoyance
Dispel Magic
Hypnotic Pattern
Tongues