

Cast Breakdown—Much Ado About Nothing 2026

Character Name	Age range, Gender (<i>in the text.</i>)	Brief description <i>[much borrowed with much gratitude from 2021]</i>	Tracks? Yes, No, or Maybe
Don Pedro	25-40, m	A prince. Like Leonato, Don Pedro is a linking character playing key roles, first in the wooing of Hero for Claudio, then in the deceptions of both Beatrice and Benedick, and finally as an unwitting eyewitness to Don John's staging of Hero's unfaithfulness.	N
Don John	25-40, m	[Half]-Brother to Don Pedro. He tried to overthrow his brother in battle but lost and he longs to get back at his brother. He will use any means by which to bring mischief; everyone is a pawn in his machinations.	Y, probably
Benedick	25-40, m	The archetypal “man who doesn’t believe in love...” Another soldier in Don Pedro's company, not a count like Claudio, but referred to respectfully as "signor." He is witty and often sarcastic, independent in spirit, loyal to friends. He is quite ready to believe that Beatrice loves him and is not afraid of changing his mind, even publicly.	N
Claudio	25-30, m	The younger friend that Benedick takes under his wing. Falls in love at first sight of Hero. A young count (with an uncle in Messina) who is a companion to Don Pedro and has played a heroic part in the fight against Don John. He seems immature and easily misled by the suggestions and actions of others, including Don Pedro, Don John, and Leonato. His affections are mercurial — back and forth between infatuation and rejection. He is committed to a personal code of ethics that prevents him from accepting a "tarnished" bride. Would like him to be able to sing at least a little.	N?
Borachio	Any, m	One of Don John’s personal followers. Borachio has a personal relationship with Margaret, one of Hero’s attendants. He uses this relationship for Don John’s mischief and his own personal profit by devising the deceptive “window scene.” His later repentance seems to stem at least partly from a recognition that the deception went too far.	Y
Conrade	Any, m	Another of Don John’s personal followers, he is the one who “notes” the romance brewing between Hero and Claudio, and Leonato’s take on it.	Y

Leonato	40+, m	Most of the play takes place in and around Leonato's home and estate. He is father to Hero, uncle and guardian to Beatrice, and host to Don Pedro and his entourage. Influenced by appearances and the opinions of others, Leonato is a unifying figure, linking the play's plot lines to one another from the first scene to last.	M
Innogen(?)	40+, f	A "ghost" character, one who is mentioned in the stage directions but never speaks.	Y
Anthony/Antonio	40+, m	Funny older man. (<i>He is referred to as "old man" and "brother" in the Folio text.</i>) Brother to Leonato and a member of his household.	Y
Hero	25-30, f	The younger cousin of Beatrice. The reborn woman of two weddings. Daughter of Leonato and Claudio's intended wife-to-be. She is the unwitting victim of Don John's plot to cause mischief for Don Pedro and Claudio.	M?
Beatrice	25-40, f	Orphaned niece of Leonato, raised in his household as a second daughter. Strong-willed, opinionated, and outspoken, she has been emotionally wounded by Benedick in earlier encounters and has built a defense system against him with sarcasm, wit, disparagement, and apparent indifference. She is protective of Hero, her cousin.	N
Balthasar	Any, any	Musician and attendant to Don Pedro. Should play guitar, lute, or other instrument - convince me and Phil.	Y
Margaret	Any, f	One of two gentlewomen to Hero. She is misled by Borachio into the plot to deceive Claudio and Don Pedro.	Y
Ursula	Any, f	The second of Hero's maidservants. Ursula plays a small role in deceiving Beatrice about Benedick's love.	Y, C

Boy (Youth)	Young, any	Household aide.	Y
Friar Francis	35+, m	The good friar who is to perform the marriage of Hero and Claudio. Friar Francis proposes the scheme to hide Hero after her denunciation, pretending she is dead.	Y
Musicians	Any, any	Likely doubling with Balthasar, but we'd love to see a band of musicians who can bring the party scene into something beautiful.	Y

Dogberry	Any, m	The constable of Messina, in charge of the night watch. Dogberry may be a man of "low station" and rough habits, especially as demonstrated in his garbled speech, but his pride and his wit suggest that some of his actions and expressions may be intentionally ambiguous and provocative. He iconically bumbles on the meanings of words - in the hands of the clever actor, quite fun.	Y?
Verges	Any, m	The deputy constable ("headborough") of Messina and Dogberry's constant companion.	Y?
Sexton	Any, any	A public official who records the testimony in a trial.	Y
1st & 2nd Watch	Any, any	The words and actions of the watchmen make them seem more alert and intelligent than Dogberry and Verges. After all, they overhear Don John's plot with Borachio, report the misdeed, and provide testimony that convicts Borachio and ultimately Don John.	Y