

THE RANGER

v1.0



A REVISED VERSION OF THE RANGER CLASS
FOR 5E DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS



RANGER

The Ranger class found in the 5e *Player's Handbook* has long been a matter of contention in the D&D community. While the base class as a whole works well enough, there has been a lot of discussion (and concerns) about the flavor and usefulness of some of its features. And in addition to that, opinions that the Beast Master archetype simply doesn't work well mechanically. Not everyone agreed that the Ranger needed to be "fixed," but I believe the majority of opinions leaned in that direction, and I too found myself in the "it could use some help" camp.

Wizards of the Coast themselves, at least for some time, seemed to agree with these concerns, and released a Revised Ranger through their *Unearthed Arcana*. But this new class, while fixing many of the issues people had with the PHB Ranger, was ultimately too overtuned. And besides that, Wizards decided to scrap the Revised Ranger entirely, and has settled on the decision that the PHB ranger is the **only** Ranger. The release of *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* further cemented this stance, by releasing new subclasses for the Ranger which naturally require the PHB Ranger's features to properly function.

FIX ONLY WHAT NEEDS FIXING

In the Athenæum's opinion, the Ranger as a whole does not need a complete rework. The base class, and all of the subclasses besides the Beast Master, work well mechanically and at best only need a touch up here or there.

To that end, the Ranger class presented in this document is about 70% PHB Ranger; most of the mechanics of the base class and the Hunter archetype were not touched. The Favored Enemy, Natural Explorer, and Primeval Awareness features were altered to provide a balanced best-of-both-worlds between the PHB Ranger and the UA Revised Ranger. The Beast Master is completely rebuilt so that it falls more in line with the way other classes use "pets" such as necromancer wizards, without overtuning the beast companion itself. Finally, both the Hunter and Beast Master were given an additional feature at lvl 3; both subclasses now gain additional subclass spells like the new subclasses found in *Xanathar's*. This helps bridge the gap between the new subclasses and the old, so that playing a PHB subclass no longer feels like you are missing out on features.

I hope that the Athenæum's take on the Ranger is different enough to cover any gaps or concerns you may have with the original class, while staying similar enough to be easy to use. My philosophy has always been that "less is more" and "sometimes simple is better," and to that end aimed to make as few changes to the PHB Ranger as possible to improve it. I believe the greatest strength of this revision is that it remains similar enough to the original class that the *Xanathar's* subclasses (or any other homebrew subclasses you would like to use which build off the PHB Ranger) will work perfectly with it. I hope you enjoy.

QUICK BUILD

You can make a ranger quickly by following these suggestions. First, make Dexterity your highest ability score, followed by Wisdom. (Some rangers who focus on two-weapon fighting make Strength higher than Dexterity.) Second, choose the outlander background.

CLASS FEATURES

As a ranger, you gain the following class features

HIT POINTS

Hit Dice: 1d10 per ranger level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 10 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d10 (or 6) + your Constitution modifier per ranger level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

Armor: Light armor, medium armor, shields

Weapons: Simple weapons, martial weapons

Tools: None

Saving Throws: Strength, Dexterity

Skills: Choose three from Animal Handling, Athletics, Insight, Investigation, Nature, Perception, Stealth, and Survival

EQUIPMENT

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- (a) scale mail or (b) leather armor
- (a) two shortswords or (b) two simple melee weapons
- (a) a dungeoneer's pack or (b) an explorer's pack
- A longbow and a quiver of 20 arrows

FAVORED ENEMY

Beginning at 1st level, you have significant experience studying, tracking, hunting, and even talking to a certain type of enemy.

Choose a type of favored enemy: aberrations, beasts, celestials, constructs, dragons, elementals, fey, fiends, giants, monstrocities, oozes, plants, or undead. Alternatively, you can select two races of humanoid (such as gnolls and orcs) as favored enemies.

You gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with weapon attacks against creatures of the chosen type. In addition, you have advantage on Wisdom (Survival) checks to track your favored enemies, as well as on Intelligence checks to recall information about them.

When you gain this feature, you also learn one language of your choice that is spoken by your favored enemies, if they speak one at all.

You choose one additional favored enemy, as well as an associated language, at 6th and 14th level, and at 6th level your bonus to damage rolls against all your favored enemies increases to +4. As you gain levels, your choices should reflect the types of monsters you have encountered on your adventures.

THE RANGER

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features	Spells Known	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
1st	+2	Favored Enemy, Natural Explorer	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd	+2	Fighting Style, Spellcasting	2	2	—	—	—	—
3rd	+2	Ranger Archetype, Primeval Awareness	3	3	—	—	—	—
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement	3	3	—	—	—	—
5th	+3	Extra Attack	4	4	2	—	—	—
6th	+3	Favored enemy and Natural Explorer improvements	4	4	2	—	—	—
7th	+3	Ranger Archetype feature	5	4	3	—	—	—
8th	+3	Ability Score Improvement, Land's Stride	5	4	3	—	—	—
9th	+4	—	6	4	3	2	—	—
10th	+4	Natural Explorer improvement, Hide in Plain Sight	6	4	3	2	—	—
11th	+4	Ranger Archetype feature	7	4	3	3	—	—
12th	+4	Ability Score Improvement	7	4	3	3	—	—
13th	+5	—	8	4	3	3	1	—
14th	+5	Favored Enemy improvement, Vanish	8	4	3	3	1	—
15th	+5	Ranger Archetype feature	9	4	3	3	2	—
16th	+5	Ability Score Improvement	9	4	3	3	2	—
17th	+6	—	10	4	3	3	3	1
18th	+6	Feral Senses	10	4	3	3	3	1
19th	+6	Ability Score Improvement	11	4	3	3	3	2
20th	+6	Foe Slayer	11	4	3	3	3	2

NATURAL EXPLORER

You are particularly familiar with one type of natural environment and are adept at traveling and surviving in such regions. Choose one type of favored terrain: arctic, coast, desert, forest, grassland, mountain, swamp, or the Underdark. When you make an Intelligence or Wisdom check related to your favored terrain, your proficiency bonus is doubled if you are using a skill that you're proficient in.

While traveling for an hour or more in the wilderness, you gain the following benefits:

- Difficult terrain doesn't slow your group's travel.
- If you are traveling alone, you can move stealthily at a normal pace.
- While tracking other creatures, you also learn their exact number, their sizes, and how long ago they passed through the area.
- You can use the Keep a Lookout traveling action even when you are engaged in another activity while traveling.
- You gain a +5 bonus to Navigation checks (in addition to your doubled proficiency bonus, if you have it).
- You have a +5 bonus to Foraging checks (in addition to your doubled proficiency bonus, if you have it).

You choose additional favored terrain types at 6th and 10th level.

A NOTE ON NATURAL EXPLORER

The last three bullets of the Natural Explorer feature listed to the left are intended to be used with the Arcane Athenæum's own rules for running wilderness travel, which you can find in *The Explorer's Guide to the Wilderness* on the Dungeon Masters Guild, and are phrased with those rules in mind. If you are not using those rules, replace those three bullets with these listed below.

These rules purposely make Rangers exceptional at wilderness survival, especially when they are in their favored terrain. It should be very difficult (though not impossible) for a Ranger from the forest to get lost in a forest.

- Even when you are engaged in another activity while traveling (such as foraging, navigating, or tracking), you remain alert to danger.
- You gain a +5 bonus to any check you make to navigate through the wilderness.
- When you forage, you find twice as much food as you normally would.

FIGHTING STYLE

At 2nd level, you adopt a particular style of fighting as your specialty. Choose one of the following options. You can't take a Fighting Style option more than once, even if you later get to choose again.

ARCHERY

You gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls you make with ranged weapons.

DEFENSE

While you are wearing armor, you gain a +1 bonus to AC.

DUELING

When you are wielding a melee weapon in one hand and no other weapons, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with that weapon.

TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING

When you engage in two-weapon fighting, you can add your ability modifier to the damage of the second attack.

SPELLCASTING

By the time you reach 2nd level, you have learned to use the magical essence of nature to cast spells, much as a druid does. See chapter 10 of the *Player's Handbook* for the general rules of spellcasting and chapter 11 for the ranger spell list.

SPELL SLOTS

The Ranger table shows how many spell slots you have to cast your spells of 1st level and higher. To cast one of these spells, you must expend a slot of the spell's level or higher. You regain all expended spell slots when you finish a long rest.

For example, if you know the 1st-level spell *animal friendship* and have a 1st level and a 2nd-level spell slot available, you can cast *animal friendship* using either slot.

SPELLS KNOWN OF 1ST LEVEL AND HIGHER

You know two 1st-level spells of your choice from the ranger spell list.

The Spells Known column of the Ranger table shows when you learn more ranger spells of your choice. Each of these spells must be of a level for which you have spell slots. For instance, when you reach 5th level in this class, you learn one new spell of 1st or 2nd level.

Additionally, when you gain a level in this class, you can choose one of the ranger spells you know and replace it with another spell from the ranger spell list, which also must be of a level for which you have spell slots.

SPELLCASTING ABILITY

Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for your ranger spells, since your magic draws on your attunement to nature. You use your Wisdom whenever a spell refers to your spellcasting ability. In addition, you use your Wisdom modifier when setting the saving throw DC for a ranger spell you cast and when making an attack roll with one.

Spell save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier.

Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier.

RANGER ARCHETYPE

At 3rd level, you choose an archetype that you strive to emulate: Hunter or Beast Master, both detailed at the end of the class description. Your choice grants you features at 3rd level and again at 7th, 11th, and 15th level.

PRIMEVAL AWARENESS

Beginning at 3rd level, you can use your action and expend one ranger spell slot to focus your awareness on the region around you. For 1 minute per level of the spell slot you expend, you can sense whether any of your favored enemies are present within 5 miles of you.

This feature reveals which of your favored enemies are present, their size and general numbers, and the creatures' general direction and rough distance from you.

For example, you may learn that there is a single large dragon to the north two miles away, or a group of about three dozen goblins all within a few hundred feet of you. You cannot use this feature to pinpoint the exact location of a creature, such as identifying an individual standing next to you as a vampire, but can learn that there is an undead within the immediate area. If there are multiple groups of your favored enemies within range, you learn this information for each group.

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.

EXTRA ATTACK

Beginning at 5th level, you can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn.

LAND'S STRIDE

Starting at 8th level, moving through nonmagical difficult terrain costs you no extra movement. You can also pass through nonmagical plants without being slowed by them and without taking damage from them if they have thorns, spines, or a similar hazard.

In addition, you have advantage on saving throws against plants that are magically created or manipulated to impede movement, such as those created by the *entangle* spell.

HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT

Starting at 10th level, you can spend 1 minute creating camouflage for yourself. You must have access to fresh mud, dirt, plants, soot, and other naturally occurring materials with which to create your camouflage.

Once you are camouflaged in this way, you can try to hide by pressing yourself up against a solid surface, such as a tree or wall, that is at least as tall and wide as you are. You gain a +10 bonus to Dexterity (Stealth) checks as long as you remain there without moving or taking actions. Once you move or take an action or a reaction, you must camouflage yourself again to gain this benefit.

VANISH

Starting at 14th level, you can use the Hide action as a bonus action on your turn. Also, you can't be tracked by nonmagical means, unless you choose to leave a trail.

FERAL SENSES

At 18th level, you gain preternatural senses that help you fight creatures you can't see. When you attack a creature you can't see, your inability to see it doesn't impose disadvantage on your attack rolls against it.

You are also aware of the location of any invisible creature within 30 feet of you, provided that the creature isn't hidden from you and you aren't blinded or deafened.

FOE SLAYER

At 20th level, you become an unparalleled hunter of your enemies. Once on each of your turns, you can add your Wisdom modifier to the attack roll or the damage roll of an attack you make against one of your favored enemies. You can choose to use this feature before or after the roll, but before any effects of the roll are applied.

RANGER ARCHETYPES

The ideal ranger has two classic expressions: the Hunter and the Beast Master.

HUNTER

Emulating the Hunter archetype means accepting your place as a bulwark between civilization and the terrors of the wilderness. As you walk the Hunter's path, you learn specialized techniques for fighting the threats you face, from rampaging ogres and hordes of orcs to towering giants and terrifying dragons.

HUNTER MAGIC

Starting at 3rd level, you learn an additional spell when you reach certain levels in this class, as shown in the Hunter Spells table. The spell counts as a ranger spell for you, but it doesn't count against the number of ranger spells you know.

HUNTER SPELLS

Ranger Level	Spell
3rd	<i>compelled duel</i>
5th	<i>magic weapon</i>
9th	<i>haste</i>
13th	<i>death ward</i>
17th	<i>hold monster</i>

HUNTER'S PREY

At 3rd level, you gain one of the following features of your choice.

Colossus Slayer. Your tenacity can wear down the most potent foes. When you hit a creature with a weapon attack, the creature takes an extra 1d8 damage if it's below its hit point maximum. You can deal this extra damage only once per turn.

Giant Killer. When a Large or larger creature within 5 feet of you hits or misses you with an attack, you can use your reaction to attack that creature immediately after its attack, provided that you can see the creature.

Horde Breaker. Once on each of your turns when you make a weapon attack, you can make another attack with the same weapon against a different creature that is within 5 feet of the original target and within range of your weapon.

DEFENSIVE TACTICS

At 7th level, you gain one of the following features of your choice.

Escape the Horde. Opportunity attacks against you are made with disadvantage.

Multiattack Defense. When a creature hits you with an attack, you gain a +4 bonus to AC against all subsequent attacks made by that creature for the rest of the turn.

Steel Will. You have advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

MULTIATTACK

At 11th level, you gain one of the following features of your choice.

Volley. You can use your action to make a ranged attack against any number of creatures within 10 feet of a point you can see within your weapon's range. You must have ammunition for each target, as normal, and you make a separate attack roll for each target.

Whirlwind Attack. You can use your action to make a melee attack against any number of creatures within 5 feet of you, with a separate attack roll for each target.

SUPERIOR HUNTER'S DEFENSE

At 15th level, you gain one of the following features of your choice.

Evasion. You can nimbly dodge out of the way of certain area effects, such as a red dragon's fiery breath or a *lightning bolt* spell. When you are subjected to an effect which allows you to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, you instead take no damage if you succeed on the saving throw, and only half damage if you fail.

Stand Against the Tide. When a hostile creature misses you with a melee attack, you can use your reaction to force that creature to repeat the same attack against another creature (other than itself) of your choice.

Uncanny Dodge. When an attacker that you can see hits you with an attack, you can use your reaction to halve the attack's damage against you.

RANGER'S COMPANION

At 3rd level, you gain a beast companion that accompanies you on your adventures and is trained to fight alongside you. Choose a beast that is no larger than Medium and that has a challenge rating of 1/2 or lower. Your DM may allow you to choose other beasts, at their discretion.

Your companion loses its Multiattack action if it has one, and uses your proficiency bonus rather than its own. In addition to the areas where it normally uses its proficiency bonus, a beast companion also adds its proficiency bonus to its AC and to its damage rolls. Your beast companion gains proficiency in two skills of your choice. It also becomes proficient with all saving throws, and for each level you gain in this class after 3rd, your beast companion gains an additional hit die and increases its hit points accordingly. Your companion also has its own death saving throw meter.

Whenever you gain the Ability Score Improvement class feature from this class, your companion's abilities also improve. Your companion can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or it can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, your companion can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature unless its description specifies otherwise.

Your companion takes its turn on your initiative and obeys your commands as best as it can. On each of your turns, you can use a bonus action to verbally command the companion as long as it can hear you. You decide what action the companion will take and where it will move, or you can issue a general command, such as to guard a particular individual or attack a particular creature. The companion obeys your orders to the best of its ability until the command is fulfilled. If you issue no commands, or are incapacitated, the companion defends you and itself against hostile creatures.

While traveling with only your beast companion, you can move stealthily at a normal pace.

If your beast companion dies, you can return it to life with 8 hours of work and the expenditure of 25 gp worth of rare herbs and fine food. You must have part of the companion's body, and the process closes all mortal wounds and restores any missing body parts.

If you lose your beast companion, you can obtain another one by spending 8 hours magically bonding with another beast that isn't hostile to you, either of the same type of beast as before or a different one.

PRIMAL STRIKE

Starting at 7th level, your beast companion's attacks count as magical for the purpose of overcoming resistance and immunity to nonmagical attacks and damage.

BESTIAL FURY

Starting at 11th level, when your beast companion attacks it can make two attacks instead of one. Alternatively, if the beast your companion is based on normally has the Multiattack action, your companion regains the use of its Multiattack and can use it when it attacks.

SHARE SPELLS

Beginning at 15th level, when you cast a spell targeting yourself, you can also affect your beast companion with the spell if the beast is within 30 feet of you. In addition, your beast companion benefits from the effects of your *hunter's mark* spell for any creature affected by it.

BEAST MASTER

The Beast Master archetype embodies a friendship between the civilized races and the beasts of the world. United in focus, beast and ranger work as one to fight the monstrous foes that threaten civilization and the wilderness alike. Emulating the Beast Master archetype means committing yourself to this ideal, working in partnership with an animal as its companion and friend.

BEAST MASTER MAGIC

Starting at 3rd level, you learn an additional spell when you reach certain levels in this class, as shown in the Beast Master Spells table. The spell counts as a ranger spell for you, but it doesn't count against the number of ranger spells you know.

BEAST MASTER SPELLS

Ranger Level	Spell
3rd	<i>command</i>
5th	<i>enhance ability</i>
9th	<i>catnap</i>
13th	<i>dominate beast</i>
17th	<i>skill empowerment</i>

Special thanks to Victoria Lind for helping playtest this revision, and
to Rebecca Read of Pixabay for her designs, which were used in this document.

The Ranger class features are taken from the Systems Reference Document (SRD) under the Open Gaming License (OGL).



This work is part of the collections of the Arcane Athenæum.

Visit thearcaneathenaeum.org for similar works.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, Wizards of the Coast, Forgotten Realms, the dragon ampersand, Player's Handbook, Monster Manual, Dungeon Master's Guide, D&D Adventurers League, all other Wizards of the Coast product names, and their respective logos are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast in the USA and other countries. All characters and their distinctive likenesses are property of Wizards of the Coast. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast.

©2016 Wizards of the Coast LLC, PO Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707, USA. Manufactured by Hasbro SA, Rue Emile-Boéchat 31, 2800 Delémont, CH. Represented by Hasbro Europe, 4 The Square, Stockley Park, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB11 1ET, UK.