

Unearthed Arcana: The Ranger, Revised

Over the past year, you've seen us try a number of new approaches to the ranger, all aimed at addressing the class's high levels of player dissatisfaction and its ranking as D&D's weakest class by a significant margin.

Those two factors combined to put us on the path to this revision. We have classes that rate as weak, but which nonetheless have high levels of player satisfaction. That tells us people playing those classes are happy with how their characters' abilities work and with their own experience at the table, even if those classes aren't the strongest. After all, not every class can rank at the top.

Likewise, most issues we see with classes are confined to specific abilities that don't play a big role in determining whether players like the class as a whole. In other words, no class is perfect, but each is close enough to the mark in its own way that players are happy.

As such, the ranger's status as a sore spot for players has been a cause for concern for a while. And so, today we present a new revision of the ranger. Though it retains many of the elements of the existing class, a lot has changed, so it's best to simply dig into the new material to get a sense of how it feels. But what I'd like to address here is how the D&D game will evolve in the future.

Any change as dramatic as rebuilding a character class requires planning, verification, and a clear, easy implementation.

The planning phase goes back to our review of playtest feedback. We review data and read anecdotes on Reddit, forums, and social media. We try to decide if addressing the issue is worth the potential disruption to the game.

In this case, we felt that a few factors combined to push for a change. Many players want to play rangers, but few were happy with the class, which held its place at the bottom of class power rankings by a significant margin. The class's individual features also filled the top-ten list of lowest-rated individual character features.

With our course set for a revision, we've spent the past year experimenting and gathering feedback. We believe that if something doesn't hit the mark the first time, we need to take our time and make sure our path to a solution is the right one. So our tinkering with the ranger led us here, to this latest update.

Our next step, which begins now, is verification. Are these fixes correct? Do they solve problems at your table? Do you, as the community of D&D players and DMs, accept them? I expect another revision or two to be made to the class, but I'm confident that the scope and direction of these changes fit in with what the community is looking for.

Finally, we come to implementation. If this iteration of the ranger, or a future revision of it, grades high enough, our plan is to present it as a revised ranger in a future D&D sourcebook. Players can select the original ranger or the revised version, though DMs will always be free to use only one or the other. Both will be legal for D&D Adventurers League play, and players of existing ranger characters will have the option to swap to the revised version. As you'll see as you read further, the original ranger and the revised class use almost identical progression tables, even if the specifics of some features differ. With a little work on our end, we can ensure that any new ranger options we provide work for both classes.

Overall, this approach captures our intent—fix what needs to be fixed when it's necessary to do so, but in a way that minimizes disruption and maximizes player satisfaction. With that in mind, take a look at our new ranger and keep an eye out for the feedback survey to follow.

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 commonly encountered in the wilds.

Choose a type of favored enemy: beasts, fey, humanoids, monstrosities, or undead. You gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with weapon attacks against creatures of the chosen type. Additionally, 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, typically one spoken by your favored enemy or creatures associated with it. However, you are free to pick any language you wish to learn.

The Ranger

Level	Proficiency		Spells Known	— Spell Slots per Spell Level —				
	Bonus	Features		1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
1st	+2	Favored Enemy, Natural Explorer	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd	+2	Fighting Style, Spellcasting	2	2	—	—	—	—
3rd	+2	Primeval Awareness, Ranger Conclave	3	3	—	—	—	—
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement	3	3	—	—	—	—
5th	+3	Ranger Conclave feature	4	4	2	—	—	—
6th	+3	Greater Favored Enemy	4	4	2	—	—	—
7th	+3	Ranger Conclave feature	5	4	3	—	—	—
8th	+3	Ability Score Improvement, Fleet of Foot	5	4	3	—	—	—
9th	+4	—	6	4	3	2	—	—
10th	+4	Hide in Plain Sight	6	4	3	2	—	—
11th	+4	Ranger Conclave feature	7	4	3	3	—	—
12th	+4	Ability Score Improvement	7	4	3	3	—	—
13th	+5	—	8	4	3	3	1	—
14th	+5	Vanish	8	4	3	3	1	—
15th	+5	Ranger Conclave 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 a master of navigating the natural world, and you react with swift and decisive action when attacked. This grants you the following benefits:

- You ignore difficult terrain.
- You have advantage on initiative rolls.
- On your first turn during combat, you have advantage on attack rolls against creatures that have not yet acted.

In addition, you are skilled at navigating the wilderness. You gain the following benefits when traveling for an hour or more:

- Difficult terrain doesn't slow your group's travel.
- Your group can't become lost except by magical means.
- Even when you are engaged in another activity while traveling (such as foraging, navigating, or tracking), you remain alert to danger.
- If you are traveling alone, you can move stealthily at a normal pace.
- When you forage, you find twice as much food as you normally would.
- While tracking other creatures, you also learn their exact number, their sizes, and how long ago they passed through the area.

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 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 can 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

Primeval Awareness

Beginning at 3rd level, your mastery of ranger lore allows you to establish a powerful link to beasts and to the land around you.

You have an innate ability to communicate with beasts, and they recognize you as a kindred spirit. Through sounds and gestures, you can communicate simple ideas to a beast as an action, and can read its basic mood and intent. You learn its emotional state, whether it is affected by magic of any sort, its short-term needs (such as food or safety), and actions you can take (if any) to persuade it to not attack.

You cannot use this ability against a creature that you have attacked within the past 10 minutes.

Additionally, you can attune your senses to determine if any of your favored enemies lurk nearby. By spending 1 uninterrupted minute in concentration (as if you were concentrating on a spell), 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 numbers, and the creatures' general direction and distance (in miles) from you.

If there are multiple groups of your favored enemies within range, you learn this information for each group.

Ranger Conclave

At 3rd level, you choose to emulate the ideals and training of a ranger conclave: the Beast Conclave, the Hunter Conclave, or the Stalker Conclave, all detailed at the end of the class description. Your choice grants you features at 3rd level and again at 5th, 7th, 11th, and 15th level.

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.

Greater Favored Enemy

At 6th level, you are ready to hunt even deadlier game. Choose a type of greater favored enemy: aberrations, celestials, constructs, dragons, elementals, fiends, or giants. You gain all the benefits against this chosen enemy that you normally gain against your favored enemy, including an additional language. Your bonus to damage rolls against all your favored enemies increases to +4.

Additionally, you have advantage on saving throws against the spells and abilities used by a greater favored enemy.

Fleet of Foot

Beginning at 8th level, you can use the Dash action as a bonus action on your turn.

Hide in Plain Sight

Starting at 10th level, you can remain perfectly still for long periods of time to set up ambushes.

When you attempt to hide on your turn, you can opt to not move on that turn. If you avoid moving, creatures that attempt to detect you take a –10 penalty to their Wisdom (Perception) checks until the start of your next turn. You lose this benefit if you move or fall prone, either

voluntarily or because of some external effect. You are still automatically detected if any effect or action causes you to no longer be hidden.

If you are still hidden on your next turn, you can continue to remain motionless and gain this benefit until you are detected.

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. 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. You can choose to use this feature before or after the roll, but before any effects of the roll are applied.

Ranger Conclaves

Across the wilds, rangers come together to form conclaves—loose associations whose members share a similar outlook on how best to protect nature from those who would despoil it.

Beast Conclave

Many rangers are more at home in the wilds than in civilization, to the point where animals consider them kin. Rangers of the Beast Conclave develop a close bond with a beast, then further strengthen that bond through the use of magic.

Animal Companion

At 3rd level, you learn to use your magic to create a powerful bond with a creature of the natural world.

With 8 hours of work and the expenditure of 50 gp worth of rare herbs and fine food, you call forth an animal from the wilderness to serve as your faithful companion. You normally select your companion from among the following animals: an **ape**, a **black bear**, a **boar**, a **giant badger**, a **giant weasel**, a **mule**, a **panther**, or a **wolf**. However, your DM might pick one of these animals for you, based on the surrounding terrain and on what types of creatures would logically be present in the area.

At the end of the 8 hours, your animal companion appears and gains all the benefits of your Companion's Bond ability. You can have only one animal companion at a time.

If your animal companion is ever slain, the magical bond you share allows you to return it to life. With 8 hours of work and the expenditure of 25 gp worth of rare herbs and fine food, you call forth your companion's spirit and use your magic to create a new body for it. You can return an animal companion to life in this manner even if you do not possess any part of its body.

If you use this ability to return a former animal companion to life while you have a current animal companion, your current companion leaves you and is replaced by the restored companion.

Companion's Bond

Your animal companion gains a variety of benefits while it is linked to you.

The animal companion loses its Multiattack action, if it has one.

The companion obeys your commands as best it can. It rolls for initiative like any other creature, but you determine its actions, decisions, attitudes, and so on. If you are incapacitated or absent, your companion acts on its own.

When using your Natural Explorer feature, you and your animal companion can both move stealthily at a normal pace.

Keeping Track of Proficiency

When you gain your animal companion at 3rd level, its proficiency bonus matches yours at +2. As you gain levels and increase your proficiency bonus, remember that your companion's proficiency bonus improves as well, and is applied to the following areas: Armor Class, skills, saving throws, attack bonus, and damage rolls.

Your animal companion has abilities and game statistics determined in part by your level. Your companion uses your proficiency bonus rather than its own. In addition to the areas where it normally uses its proficiency bonus, an animal companion also adds its proficiency bonus to its AC and to its damage rolls.

Your animal companion gains proficiency in two skills of your choice. It also becomes proficient with all saving throws.

For each level you gain after 3rd, your animal companion gains an additional hit die and increases its hit points accordingly.

Whenever you gain the Ability Score Improvement class feature, 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 shares your alignment, and has a personality trait and a flaw that you can roll for or select from the tables below. Your companion shares your ideal, and its bond is always, "The ranger who travels with me is a beloved companion for whom I would gladly give my life."

Why No Multiattack?

Multiattack is a useful design tool that keeps monsters simple for the DM. It provides a boost in offense, but that boost is meant to make a beast threatening for one battle—a notion that doesn't mesh well with a beast intended to fight with the party, rather than against it. Project Multiattack across an entire adventure, and an animal companion runs the risk of outclassing the fighters and barbarians in the party.

So in story terms, your animal companion has traded in some of its ferocity (in the form of Multiattack) for better awareness and the ability to fight more effectively in concert with you.

Expanding Companion Options

Depending on the nature of your campaign, the DM might choose to expand the options for your animal companion. As a rule of thumb, a beast can serve as an animal companion if it is Medium or smaller, has 15 or fewer hit points, and cannot deal more than 8 damage with a single attack. In general, that applies to creatures with a challenge rating of 1/4 or less, but there are exceptions.

Your animal companion gains the benefits of your Favored Enemy feature, and of your Greater Favored Enemy feature when you gain that feature at 6th level. It uses the favored enemies you selected for those features.

d6 Trait

- 1 I'm dauntless in the face of adversity.
- 2 Threaten my friends, threaten me.
- 3 I stay on alert so others can rest.
- 4 People see an animal and underestimate me. I use that to my advantage.
- 5 I have a knack for showing up in the nick of time.
- 6 I put my friends' needs before my own in all things.

d6 Flaw

- 1 If there's food left unattended, I'll eat it.
- 2 I growl at strangers, and all people except my ranger are strangers to me.
- 3 Any time is a good time for a belly rub.
- 4 I'm deathly afraid of water.
- 5 My idea of hello is a flurry of licks to the face.
- 6 I jump on creatures to tell them how much I love them.

Coordinated Attack

Beginning at 5th level, you and your animal companion form a more potent fighting team. When you use the Attack action on your turn, if your companion can see you, it can use its reaction to make a melee attack.

Beast's Defense

At 7th level, while your companion can see you, it has advantage on all saving throws.

Storm of Claws and Fangs

At 11th level, your companion can use its action to make a melee attack against each creature of

its choice within 5 feet of it, with a separate attack roll for each target.

Superior Beast's Defense

At 15th level, whenever an attacker that your companion can see hits it with an attack, it can use its reaction to halve the attack's damage against it.

Hunter Conclave

Some rangers seek to master weapons to better protect civilization from the terrors of the wilderness. Members of the Hunter Conclave learn specialized fighting techniques for use against the most dire threats, from rampaging ogres and hordes of orcs to towering giants and terrifying dragons.

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.

Extra Attack

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

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 melee attacks 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. When you are subjected to an effect, such as a red dragon's fiery breath or a *lightning bolt* spell, that allows you to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, you instead take no damage if you succeed on a 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.

Deep Stalker Conclave

Most folk descend into the depths of the Underdark only under the most pressing conditions, undertaking some desperate quest or following the promise of vast riches. All too often, evil festers beneath the earth unnoticed, and rangers of the Deep Stalker Conclave strive to uncover and defeat such threats before they can reach the surface.

Underdark Scout

At 3rd level, you master the art of the ambush. On your first turn during combat, you gain a +10 bonus to your speed, and if you use the Attack action, you can make one additional attack.

You are also adept at evading creatures that rely on darkvision. Such creatures gain no benefit when attempting to detect you in dark and dim conditions. Additionally, when the DM determines if you can hide from a creature, that creature gains no benefit from its darkvision.

Deep Stalker Magic

At 3rd level, you gain darkvision out to a range of 90 feet. If you already have darkvision, you increase its range by 30 feet.

You also gain access to additional spells at 3rd, 5th, 9th, 13th, and 15th level. Once you gain a deep stalker spell, it counts as a ranger spell for you but doesn't count against the number of ranger spells you know.

Deep Stalker Spells

Ranger Level	Spells
3rd	<i>disguise self</i>
5th	<i>rope trick</i>
9th	<i>glyph of warding</i>
13th	<i>greater invisibility</i>
17th	<i>seeming</i>

Extra Attack

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

Iron Mind

At 7th level, you gain proficiency in Wisdom saving throws.

Stalker's Flurry

Starting at 11th level, once on each of your turns when you miss with an attack, you can make another attack.

Stalker's Dodge

At 15th level, whenever a creature attacks you and does not have advantage, you can use your reaction to impose disadvantage on the creature's attack roll against you. You can use

this feature before or after the attack roll is made, but it must be used before the outcome of the roll is determined.