

The Ranger Revisited

A variant class by Monte Cook

I was always worried about the ranger. The fact that his abilities kick in when the DM wants them to (when the adventure contains his favored enemies) rather than when the player wants them to, like the barbarian, always seemed to me to be a drawback.

So, I took a second stab at the ranger.

While I did not change the way favored enemies work in this version, I did add more skill points, bonus feats, better saves, and a slightly more generous spell progression and spell list. There are even some new ranger-specific feats and spells.

By this point, I decided I'd gone a little too far. To scale him back a bit, he uses d8s for hit dice rather than d10s—a bit of a throwback to the old ranger of 1st Edition.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Rangers have the following game statistics.

Alignment: Any.

Hit Die: d8.

CLASS SKILLS

The ranger's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha, exclusive skill), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Use Rope (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore (Wis). See Chapter 4 in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (6+Int modifier) × 4

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 6 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the ranger.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A ranger is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light armor, medium armor, and shields. Note that wearing armor heavier than leather imposes a penalty to the ranger skills Climb, Hide, Jump, and Move Silently. Swim checks also suffer a –1 penalty for every 5 lbs. of armor or equipment carried.

Spells: Beginning at 4th level, a ranger gains the ability to cast a small number of divine, nature or wilderness-related spells. To cast a spell, the ranger must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 plus the spell's level, so a ranger with a Wisdom of 10 or lower cannot cast these spells. Ranger bonus spells are based on Wisdom, and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 plus spell level plus Wisdom modifier

When the ranger gets zero spells of a given level, such as zero 1st-level spells at 4th level, the ranger gets only bonus spells. A ranger without a bonus spell for that level (see the *Player's Handbook* Table 2–1: Ability Modifiers and Spells) cannot cast a spell of that level yet. The ranger's spell list appears in a list provided below. A ranger has access to any spell on the list and can freely choose which to prepare. A ranger prepares and casts spells just as a cleric does (though the ranger cannot use spontaneous casting to lose a spell and cast a *cure* or *inflict* spell in its place).

For all spell effects dependent on the caster's level (such how many Hit Dice worth of animals he or she can befriend with *animal friendship*), treat the ranger as one-half the character's actual level, rounded down.

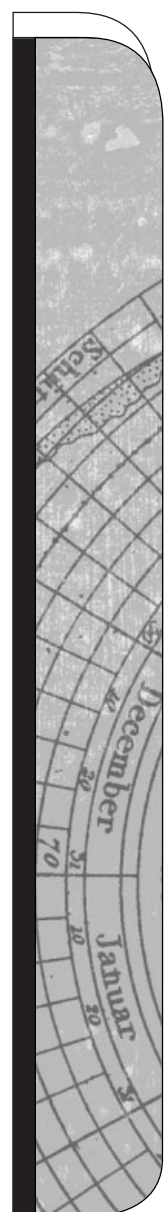
Track: A ranger gains Track as a bonus feat (see the Track feat description).

Bonus Feats: At 1st level, the ranger gets a bonus feat in addition to the feat that any 1st-level character gets or the bonus feat granted to humans. The ranger gains an additional bonus feat at 4th level and every three levels thereafter (7th 10th, 13th, 16th, and 19th).

These bonus feats must be drawn from the following list: Ambidexterity, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack), Exotic Weapon Proficiency, Expertise (Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Whirlwind Attack), Favored Enemy Critical Strike, Favored Enemy Strike, Mounted Combat (Mounted Archery, Trample, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge), Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run), Quick Draw, Two-Weapon Fighting (Improved Two-Weapon Fighting), Weapon Finesse*, and Weapon Focus*.

Feats dependent on other feats are listed parenthetically under the prerequisite feat. A character can select feats marked with an asterisk (*) more than once, but it must be for a different weapon each time. Characters must still meet all prerequisites for a feat, including ability score and base attack minimums (see Chapter 5 in the *Player's Handbook* for descriptions of feats and their prerequisites).

Important: These feats are *in addition* to the feat that a character of any class gets every three levels (per *Player's Handbook* Table 4–2: Experience and Level-Dependent



Benefits). The ranger is not limited to the list given here when choosing those feats.

Favored Enemy: At 1st level, a ranger may select a type of creature (dragons, giants, goblinoids, undead, etc.) as a favored enemy. (Only evil rangers can select their own race as a favored enemy.) Due to their extensive study of their foes and training in the proper techniques for combating them, rangers gain a +1 bonus to Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Wilderness checks when using these skills against this type of creature.

Likewise, rangers get the same bonus to weapon damage rolls against creatures of this type. A ranger also gets this damage bonus with ranged weapons, but only against targets within 30 feet (the ranger cannot strike with deadly accuracy beyond that range). The bonus doesn't apply to damage against creatures that are immune to critical hits.

Every five levels (at 5th, 10th, 15th, and 20th level), the ranger may select a new favored enemy, and the bonus associated with every previously selected favored enemy goes up by +1. For example, a 15th-level ranger will have four favored enemies, with bonuses of +4, +3, +2, and +1.

The Ranger Favored Enemies table that follows lists possible categories for a ranger's favored enemy.

RANGER FAVORED ENEMIES LIST

Type	Example
Aberrations	Beholders
Animals	Bears
Beasts	Owlbears
Constructs	Golems
Dragons	Black dragons
Elementals	Xorns
Fey	Dryads
Giants	Ogres
Humanoid type	*
Magical beasts	Displacer beasts
Oozes	Gelatinous cubes
Outsider type	*
Plants	Shambling mounds
Shapechangers	Werewolves
Undead	Zombies
Vermin	Giant spiders

* Rangers may not select "humanoid" or "outsider" as a favored enemy, but they may select a more narrowly defined type of humanoid (such as goblinoids, humans, or reptilian humanoids) or outsider (such as devils, efreet, or slaadi). See the *Monster Manual* for more information on types of creatures. A ranger can only select his own race as a favored enemy if the character is evil.

NEW FEATS

The feats in this section will prove particularly helpful to this new ranger class.

FAVORED ENEMY STRIKE (GENERAL)

You can inflict greater damage against your favored enemies.

Prerequisite: Favored enemy

Benefit: When striking a foe designated as your favored enemy, you inflict an additional 1d6 points of damage every time you hit. This damage is not multiplied if a critical hit is scored against the enemy (like a rogue's sneak attack bonus damage).

FAVORED ENEMY CRITICAL STRIKE (GENERAL)

You can inflict telling blows with even greater accuracy upon your favored enemies.

Prerequisite: Favored enemy

Benefit: When inflicting a critical hit upon a foe designated as your favored enemy, you inflict an additional 1d10 points of damage, in addition to the damage you would normally inflict.

Note: This feat does not allow you to make critical hits on creatures that are immune to critical hits.

RANGER SPELLS

Spells marked with an asterisk (*) in the lists at right are new additions to the ranger's spell list. Three of these are all-new spells, described on the next page.

1ST-LEVEL RANGER SPELLS

Alarm. Wards an area for two hours/level.

Animal Friendship. Gains permanent animal companions.

Delay Poison. Stops poison from harming subject for one hour/level.

Detect Animals or Plants. Detects species of animals or plants.

Detect Snares and Pits. Reveals natural or primitive traps.

Entangle. Plants entangle everyone in 40-ft.-radius circle.

Magic Fang. One natural weapon of subject creature gets +1 bonus to attack and damage.

Pass without Trace. One subject/level leaves no tracks.

Read Magic. Read scrolls and spellbooks.

Resist Elements. Ignores first 12 damage from one energy type each round.

Speak with Animals. You can communicate with natural animals.

Summon Nature's Ally I. Calls animal to fight for you.

2ND-LEVEL RANGER SPELLS

Animal Messenger. Sends a Tiny animal to a specific place.

**Barkskin.* Grants +3 natural armor bonus (or higher).

**Blight Enemies.* Harms favored enemies, 1d6/level damage

Cure Light Wounds. Cures 1d8 +1/level damage (max +5).

Detect Chaos/evil/Good/Law. Reveals creatures, spells, or objects.

Hold Animal. Holds one animal helpless; 1 round/level.

Protection from Elements. Absorb 12 damage/level from one kind of energy.

Sleep. Put 2d4 HD of creatures into comatose slumber.

Snare. Creates a magical booby trap.

Speak with Plants. You can talk to normal plants and plant creatures.

Summon Nature's Ally II. Calls animal to fight for you.

3RD-LEVEL RANGER SPELLS

Control Plants. Talk to and control plants & fungi.

Cure Moderate Wounds. Cures 2d8 +1/level damage (max +10).

Diminish Plants. Reduces size or blights growth of normal plants.

Greater Magic Fang. One natural weapon of subject creature gets +1 bonus to attack and damage per three caster levels (max +5).

Neutralize Poison. Detoxifies venom in or on subject.

Plant Growth. Grows vegetation, improves crops.

Remove Disease. Cures all diseases affecting subject.

Summon Nature's Ally III. Calls animal to fight for you.

Tree Shape. You look exactly like a tree for one hour/level.

Water Walk. Subject treads on water as if solid.

**Wild Stealth.* You gain a +10 bonus to Hide and Move Silently outdoors.

4TH-LEVEL RANGER SPELLS

**Commune with Nature.* Learn about terrain for 1 mile/level.

Cure Serious Wounds. Cures 3d8 +1/level damage (max +15).

Freedom of Movement. Subject moves normally despite impediments.

Nondetection. Hides subject from divination, scrying.

Polymorph Self. You assume a new form.

Summon Nature's Ally IV. Calls animal to fight for you.

Tree Stride. Step from one tree to another far away.

**Wall of Thorns.* Thorns damage anyone who tries to pass.

Wind Wall. Deflects arrows, smaller creatures, and gases.

**Unite Allies.* Gives allies favored enemy bonus

THE RANGER

Level	Base	Fortitude	Reflex	Will	Special	Spells Per Day			
	Attack Bonus	Save	Save	Save		1	2	3	4
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Bonus feat, Track, 1st favored enemy	—	—	—	—
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	—	—	—	—	—
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	—	—	—	—	—
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Bonus feat	0	—	—	—
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	2nd favored enemy	0	—	—	—
6	+6/+1	+5	+5	+2	—	1	—	—	—
7	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	Bonus feat	1	0	—	—
8	+8/+3	+6	+6	+2	—	1	0	—	—
9	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3	—	1	1	—	—
10	+10/+5	+7	+7	+3	Bonus feat, 3rd favored enemy	1	1	0	—
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+3	—	2	1	0	—
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+4	—	2	1	1	—
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+8	+4	Bonus feat	2	1	1	0
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+9	+4	—	2	2	1	0
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+5	4th favored enemy	2	2	1	1
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+10	+5	Bonus feat	3	2	2	1
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+5	—	3	3	2	1
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+11	+6	—	3	3	2	2
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+11	+6	Bonus feat	3	3	3	2
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+12	+6	5th favored enemy	4	3	3	3

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Special Thanks to Jonathan and Skip, of course

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NEW SPELLS

Here are a few additional spells that will come in handy in ranger-specific situations.

BLIGHT ENEMY

Evocation

Level: Rgr2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One favored enemy

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You draw upon the raw power of nature to create a discordant surge within any one creature of a type that you have designated a favored enemy. The spell inflicts 1d6 points of damage per caster level, to a maximum of 5d6.

UNITE ALLIES

Enchantment (Compulsion)

[Mind-Affecting]

Level: Rgr4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 50 ft.

Area: All allies within 50 ft.

Duration: 1 minute/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

Your allies have a +1 favored enemy bonus (as the 1st-level ranger ability) against a favored enemy you choose. This doesn't stack with existing favored enemy bonuses.

WILD STEALTH

Transmutation

Level: Rgr3

Components: S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Area: You

Duration: 10 minutes/level

Saving Throw: None

You gain a +10 enhancement bonus to Move Silently and Hide checks when out of doors, above ground, in a non-urban environment.

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