

Steel Dragons' Guide to **(another) 5e Ranger**

*Subclasses and additional character options.
"Old School" sensibilities for "New school" systems.*



*A supplement for Players & Dungeon Masters of
the 5th edition of the world's first role-playing game.*

The Ranger

A half-elf scouts silently along the forest path, long bow in hand. He makes sure to keep to the dappled shadows and adjusts his position with the wind. As he nears the lair of the rampaging owlbear he's been tracking for days, he climbs a tree and nocks an arrow to take down the mad beast before it can kill any more villagers.

A human charges through the swamp and stops for a moment as a small sprig of bright yellow catches her eye. She plucks the "muckgold" and hastily mashes it into a paste as she returns to camp. After applying the remedy to the fighter, poisoned by a giant viper, falls into a restful sleep. She knows he will survive.

A gnome wipes his axe in the grass, removing the foul-smelling kobold blood from the blade. He hardly flinches when a panther returns to his side and nudges him with a growling purr. The gnome surveys the dozen dead kobolds strewn about the clearing and rubs the panther's head, between her ears. "Well done, Splotch," he says.

An elf crouches behind a rocky outcropping and looks to the old fortress on the neighboring hilltop. The evil mage that has been creating undead horrors to terrorize the countryside rests there. She knows the mage will be unable to find her with his magic and reaches into the natural ether to conjure a mist to mask her approach from mundane eyes.

The Ranger is a warrior class that lives "on the edge", quite literally. Roving the wild borderlands between civilized realms or along the outskirts of settlements of any size, the ranger seeks out persistent, recurring and imposing threats to their lands and the people they care about. Incredibly self-reliant, they possess an array of skills that help them live and fight, surviving across great distances and spans of time away from comfort and convenience. With their knowledge and skills, combat prowess, instincts and bond with the natural world, a ranger is cause for concern to any who would cross the ranger's path, from sniveling goblins to the mightiest monstrosities.

Dwellers on the Fringe: The ranger...well, *ranges*. Traveling the stretches of their terrain observing, assessing, and dealing with threats they find are the ranger's bread and butter. Kings and nobles often engage rangers as scouts, spies or monster hunters, acting as eyes and ears at the outer edges of their domain. Common town or city-folk often lend rangers a dubious eye for their questionable nature of living "out there", where respectable folk would refuse to go. In more rural surroundings, rangers often enjoy or earn reputations as great heroes and defenders.

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Ambush Predators: The ranger's primary modes of combat are the ambush and skirmish. They are not often heavily armored and prefer the freedom of movement and speed afforded by lighter armors. To strike from cover and retreat to same is a standard or preferred tactic for nearly all rangers, especially effective from range. That is not to say a ranger is not capable of close-quarters, hand-to-hand combat. Far from it. When melee is desired or unavoidable, the ranger is a force of nature swathed in steel, with little hold barred. Their ferocity against their enemies can be as effective as any fighter or raging barbarian.

Class Features

HD: d10 per level.

HP at 1st level: d10. So start with 10 + Con mod.

HP at Higher Levels: d10 + Con. mod. at every level.

Proficiencies

Armor: Light and Medium armors. Shields.

Weapons: Any.

Tools: Herbalism Kit

Saving Throws: Wisdom & Dexterity

Skills: Choose any 3 of the following: *Acrobatics, Animal Handling, Athletics, History, Intimidate, Insight, Investigation, Medicine.*

Equipment

The Ranger begins with the following in addition to the equipment granted by your background.

- a) light crossbow or b) short bow with 20 bolts or arrows, respectively.
- Explorer's Pack and Herbalism Kit.
- a set of leather armor and a single-handed melee weapon.
- a simple weapon.

1st: Natural Explorer

Proficiency bonus doubled for skills you are proficient in, when in a preferred terrain, as written.

Unspoiled Trail

At 1st level, you have devoted yourself to upholding a particular path to living, fighting, and traversing the wilderness of the realms you hold dear. Choose a trail: *the Hunter, the Scout or the Warden*. This is the primary direction of your character, their initial forays into the wild, as it were. Your trail is the mode in which they seek to train and expand your abilities, the initial direction of the ranger's preferred tactics.

Hunter's Trail: Rangers of the Hunter's trail are, unsurprisingly, great hunters and trackers. They are the most martially-minded of the ranger trails and make excellent warriors.

You have proficiency with Survival [Wis] and Perception [Wis] rolls in *all* terrains.

Wilderness Expertise: You gain a number of Wilderness Expertise dice equivalent to your ranger level. These dice are d6. You regain any expended dice after a long or short rest. To use the Expertise dice roll one or some, up to a maximum of 5d6, and add the results to one of the following effects, as the ranger wishes:

- add to damage to a successful hit.
- add to the HP restored when HD are spent to regain hit points.
- add to a Survival [Wis] roll for the purposes of tracking or any Perception check dependent on sight or hearing (including Passive Perception rolls against being surprised).

Scout's Trail: Rangers on the Scout's trail are, unsurprisingly, great scouts, spies, and wilderness guides (and guards). Their ability to move and attack with speed and stealth are unparalleled.

You have proficiency with Survival [Wis] and Stealth [Dex] rolls in all terrains.

Ranging Recourse: You gain a number of bonus actions (your Recourse) equal to your ranger level. As a bonus action at the end of your turn you can take the Dash, Dodge, Disengage or Hide action until the beginning of your next turn. You regain 1 Recourse action used with each HD spent at the end of a short rest (in addition to the recovered hit points). You regain the full amount of uses after a long rest.

Warden's Trail: Rangers on the trail of the Warden delve and excel in the more esoteric and mystical side of nature than other rangers. They are great knowledge keepers and seekers, and often sought out by those looking to hunt down and defeat supernatural threats.

You have proficiency with Survival [Wis] and Arcana [Int] rolls.

Nature's Adept: You choose three cantrips: one from the druid spell list, one from the wizard spell list, the third may be from either. Wisdom is your casting ability for these spells and your save DC is 8 + proficiency bonus + Wisdom modifier. These cantrips do not count against a ranger's known cantrips if they are otherwise a spellcaster.

TABLE X.X: RANGER FEATURE PROGRESSION

Ranger lvl.	Prof. Bonus	Wilderknacks	Features
1	+2	-	Unspoiled Trail, Natural Explorer
2	+2	2	Wilderknacks, Keen Senses
3	+2	2	Ranger's Lodge, Ranging Stride
4	+2	3	Ability Boost
5	+3	3	Natural Healer
6	+3	4	Natural Explorer new terrain, Lodge feature
7	+3	4	Extra Attack
8	+3	5	Ability Boost
9	+4	5	Unspoiled Trail feature
10	+4	5	Natural Explorer new terrain
11	+4	6	Lodge feature
12	+4	6	Ability Boost
13	+5	6	
14	+5	7	Vanish
15	+5	7	Lodge feature
16	+5	7	Ability Boost
17	+6	8	
18	+6	8	Feral Senses
19	+6	8	Ability Boost



2nd: Wilderknacks

You are a specialized warrior, trained and tried in techniques, tactics, and abilities. Whether through your connection to the natural world, acquired along your Trail or (eventually) trained by your Lodge, you pick up some tricks, secrets, and forgotten craft and lore that imbue you with abilities beyond the typical warrior or other outlanders.

Choose two Wilderknacks from the list at the back of this class section. As you gain levels you pick up additional Wildercrafts as shown on the Ranger Feature Progression table.

Fighting Style

Choose your combat specialty:

- **Archery:** You are +2 to hit with ranged weapons.
- **Dueling:** You are +2 to damage when wielding one single-handed melee weapon and no other weapon.
- **Two-Weapon Fighting:** You fight with two light, single-handed weapons and add your ability modifier to the damage of the second attack.

3rd: Ranger's Lodge

At 3rd level, you devote yourself to a path to living, fighting, and traversing the wilderness of the realms you hold dear. This is not, necessarily, a physical place or fellowship,



though certainly could be with your DM's cooperation, as appropriate for the campaign and setting. It is, like your trail, a metaphor for the direction of the ranger's preferred tactics and abilities. Choose to become a [figurative] member of the Lodge of: *the Guardian, the Wanderer, or the Seeker*.

Once chosen, this can not be changed. Your choice of lodge grants you features at levels 3, 6, 9 & 15.

4th: Ability Boost: as normal. Increases at 8th, 12th, 16th, 19th.

5th: Perforce Healer

At 5th level, you use your knowledge of flora and fauna to treat yourself and others. On a short or long rest, you can spend HD to produce herbal remedies that can be used to heal others. With these healing salves and poultices, a single HD worth of healing can be split among different creatures.

The healing remedies can also be used to slow the effects of poison in one creature. Instead of healing HP, these poultices slow the effects of one poison for a total of 1 hour per ranger level. The afflicted character suffers no further damage or detrimental effect for that time, though damage and conditions already affecting the character are not reversed. This poison slowing will only work once on a given poisoning.

To use against poison, the ranger spends an HD to add their Wisdom modifier to the d20 roll to beat the poison's DC. The DC of the roll is based on the poison and dependent on the DM to determine. If the roll exceeds the DC by 6 or more, the poison condition is *removed*. The ranger knows if they succeed in removing the poison or simply delay it.

This feature requires one use of an Herbalist Kit per HD spent **or** a successful *Nature* or similar check (*Wilderness Expertise* applies) to successfully find the needed plants prior to expending the HD.

7th: Extra Attack: You attack twice, instead of once, when you take the Attack action on your turn.

14th: Vanish.

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.

18th: Feral Senses

At 18th level you gain preternatural senses to fight things you can't see. You do not suffer disadvantage for attacking a creature you can't see. You are also aware of the location of any invisible creature within 30' of you, provided that the creature isn't hidden from you and you aren't blinded or deafened.

20th: Foe Slayer

You add your Wis. mod. to all attack or damage rolls.

Ranger's Lodge

The Guardian

The Guardian's primary concern is the safety and protection of their lands, their people, and their allies. They are found within civilizations, typically among frontier communities, and/or the immediate hinterlands of civilized lands. Guardian rangers are the most apt to work with a group or form organizations (actual ranger lodges), albeit often secretive. They gladly join other individuals in pursuit of a shared cause or defeating a common threat.

3rd: Enhanced Armor Proficiency

You gain proficiencies in Ring and Chain mail armor. Furthermore, the guardian does not suffer disadvantage to Stealth rolls for wearing any type of armor.

6th: Colossal Strike: When you hit a creature that is below its hit point maximum, you deal an additional d8 of damage. This extra damage can only be used with one of your attacks per turn.

9th: Defensive Posture: When you are hit and take damage from an attack, you gain +2 to your AC and opportunity attacks against you are made with disadvantage until the end of your next turn.

15th: Uncanny Dodge: When you take damage from an attack, you can use your reaction to "roll with" the blow and halve the damage received.

The Wanderer

The Wanderer's Lodge is for those that prefer a more mobile existence and often travel further afield than guardians would typically go. Staying in one place very long is not the Wanderer's way. Rather, they prefer to range far and wide, hunting down monsters, ferreting out evils, or just experiencing the thrill or curiosity of a new land. The Wanderer roams the realms, meeting threats (be it to people or places or things) and ending them.

3rd: Ranging Stride

Your base movement rate is increased by 5'. Also, your speed is not slowed while moving through non-magical difficult terrain. When moving through (again, non-magical) thorns, briars, and the like, you take no damage. You also gain advantage on saving throws against plants that are magically created or manipulated to impede movement, such as the *Entangle* or *Wall of Thorns* spells. If failed, the magical plants effect the ranger as normal.

6th: Retributive Strike: As a reaction when you take



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damage, you may make one extra attack with a weapon already in your hand.

9th: Twilit Eagle Eyes: Your attacks are not inhibited by partial cover or lightly obscured areas. You also see in dim light as if it were bright light, though are still impeded by darkness (unless your race's vision permits it).

15th: Unimpeded Stride: You can not be slowed or require extra movement by difficult terrain whether it is enchanted or not.

The Seeker

The Seeker ranger is the champion of the wild, the defender of nature and its inhabitants, both civilized and wild. They are often the rangers that rove the furthest from civilization, preferring distant, remote and secluded surroundings of natural majesty or powerful magic. Consorting with fae, protecting the hidden sacred sites of druids, saving rural farmlands from the feral and fantastic, the Seeker blends ranger skill with a focus on magic use to enhance their abilities.

3rd: Spell Casting

Cantrips: You know 3 cantrips chosen from the Druid and Wizard spell lists. You gain new cantrips known as shown on the Seeker Spell Progression chart, below.

TABLE X.X: SEEKER SPELL PROGRESSION

Ranger lvl.	Cantrips Known	Spells Known	Slots:			
			1	2	3	4
3	3	2	2			
4	3	2	3			
5	3	3	3			
6	3	3	3			
7	3	4	4	2		
8	3	4	4	2		
9	3	5	4	2		
10	4	5	4	3		
11	4	6	4	3		
12	4	6	4	3		
13	4	7	4	3	2	
14	4	7	4	3	2	
15	4	8	4	3	2	
16	4	8	4	3	3	
17	4	9	4	3	3	
18	4	9	4	3	3	
19	4	10	4	3	3	1
20	4	10	4	3	3	1

Spell Slots: You gain spell slots as shown on the Seeker Spell Progression chart. These slots are used to cast your 1st level or higher known spells. You regain all slots at the end of a long rest.

Spells Known 1st level and higher: You know 2 1st level spells, one from the Druid spell list and one from the Wizard spell list. Following these initial spells, the ranger may choose from either list, as desired. Your Wizard spells must be kept in a spellbook for study and preparation, as normal. If Druid spells are used, you may change your selection at the end of a long rest. Spells selected must be of spell level you can cast.

Spellcasting Ability: Wisdom is your spellcasting ability. Your Save DC is 8 + proficiency bonus + Wisdom modifier. Attack DC = proficiency bonus + Wisdom modifier.

6th: Casting Strike: When you use your action to cast a cantrip or spell, you can cast another cantrip or make a weapon attack with a weapon in hand as a bonus action.

9th: Primeval Awareness: You use your full action and one spell slot to focus your awareness on the region around you. For one minute per level of the slot you expend, you can sense whether any of the following creatures are within 1 mile per slot level expended of you: aberrations, celestials, dragons, elementals, fae, fiends, or undead. This feature provides a general direction (north, south, east, west) but does not reveal the creature's location or number.

15th: Seeking Step: You can spend a spell slot to teleport yourself to a location you have previously been or can see. You can teleport a maximum distance of up to 30' +10' per level of the spell slot expended.

Wilderknacks

Animal Companion

The ranger has acquired, bonded with, and/or trained a beast companion that accompanies them on adventures, aiding them as their natural abilities allow. Choose a beast that is Medium or smaller with a CR of 1/4 or lower. This creature is your animal companion and will travel with and protect you, as well as it can, while it is well-treated and has a choice.

- You have advantage on all Wisdom- and Intelligence-based rolls pertaining to this type of animal and similar species.
- Your animal companion adds your proficiency bonus to its AC, attack and damage rolls, save rolls, and hit point maximum.
- You direct your animal's movement, if you so choose, at no action cost to you.
- Choose 3 of the following action types: *Attack, Dash, Disengage, Dodge, Help, Hide*. If you are taking one

of the chosen actions, the animal companion can take the same action with you, at no action cost to you. When not in combat or given specific direction, the animal acts as normal for a creature of their type, remaining close to the ranger's general location.

Beast Champion

Prerequisite: Possess the Animal Companion Wilderknack. This secondary 'knack let's the ranger take on animal companions up to size Large with a CR of 1 or less. Otherwise, the 'knack functions the same as the Animal Companion.

Bestial Fury

Prerequisite: Possess the Animal Companion Wilderknack. When your animal companion takes the Attack action, it can now attack twice instead of once on its turn.

Concealment

The ranger can use natural materials (mud, soot, leaves, etc...) to provide concealment for themselves and, possibly others. With this handcrafted camouflage, the ranger rolls a Wisdom check with advantage. If successful, the ranger is completely considered hidden from sensory perceptions, as by a success Stealth check or Hide action, as long as they do not move or make a sound. Any movement or action negates the concealment.

Also, given a mimum of 10 minutes and the necessary materials, the ranger can conceal a 10' x 10' area via screens, blinds, camouflage lean-to's or tents or cover traps that will be similarly unnoticable to those no closer than 10' away. For the ranger or area, those closer than 10' receive a Passive Perception check at disadvantage to notice something amiss. If successful, they may make active Perception or Investigation checks and otherwise act as normal (at which point, typically, the ranger would move/attack).

Covert Observation

You can discern what others are communicating, via body language, lip movments, tone, etc..., as long as they can see the mouths of those interacting. On a successful Wisdom check, the ranger gets the gist of the conversation. If the communication is in a language the ranger understands, you know exactly what was said.

Decipher Magical Writings

The ranger can read magic writings and cast spells from scrolls or other written forms if they are of a slot level no more than half the ranger's level (minimum 1).

Favored Enemies

The ranger chooses two specific creatures they have significant knowledge and/or training in fighting.(Goblins & Orcs, Black Dragons & Lizardmen, Hill Giants & Dire Wolves, etc...)

- You have advantage on all Wisdom- and Intelligence-based rolls pertaining to these creatures.
- You know the language of one of your Favored Enemies.



If neither of your chosen enemies have a language, per se, you have an intuitive knowledge for interpreting their actions/behavior.

- You add your Wis. modifier to attack rolls against this type of creature.
- You add an extra die of damage to any successful hit against this category of monster.

Fey Friend

The ranger has significant experience finding and dealing with fey beings and creatures.

- You have attracted the interest and loyalty of a small or tiny fey creature of CR 1 or less. that enjoys your company (regardless of whether you enjoy its) and follows you around, assisting you as it can. If the creature is ill-treated or attacked by the ranger it will disappear forever, as will any other abilities gained from this Wilderknack and any future interactions with fey beings will have disadvantage.
- You have advantage on all Wisdom- and Intelligence-based rolls pertaining to this type of creature.
- While the fey friend is with you, you have advantage to any Charisma-based rolls to interact with fey creatures.
- Whether shared by a friendly fey, figured out through your own observations or innate ability picked up from repeated visits to the land of fairy, you can use the Misty Step spell, as a reaction, once per long rest.

Hinterland Resilience

The ranger doubles the result of one HD spent to regain hit

points at the end of a short rest. The ranger must decide to which die roll will be doubled before rolling the die.

Hunter's Mark

As a bonus action, the ranger selects a foe who is then "marked" as their quarry. A ranger can use Hunter's Mark a number of times equivalent to the ranger's level before requiring a long or short rest. The ranger may only mark one creature at a time. Until the end of the ranger's next turn Hunter's Mark grants the following benefits:

- You add +2 to hit the target.
- You add 2d6 damage to any successful hit.

Horde Breaker

The ranger is adept at finding groups of maurauders and breaking through large bands of humanoids. On a successful attack against a humanoid or swarming foe, you can make an extra attack against another target within 5' of the first as a bonus action.

Longstrider

The ranger adds 5' to their movement rate.

Scrying Lore

The ranger is adept in the use of magic items that involve clairvoyance, scrying, reading minds, etc... or other divination magics. If an item of this type requires attunement, the ranger can make an Intelligence roll, with proficiency bonus, to make the item function without attuning to it.

Monster Slayer

Prerequisite: Possess the Favored Enemies Wilderknack for at least one creature of the Monster's category or be a member of the Guardian Lodge.

This secondary 'knack let's the ranger choose a category of monster from the following: *Aberrations, Beasts, Dragons, Fey, Fiends, Giants, Monstrosities, Oozes, Plants, Undead.*

- You have advantage on all Wisdom- and Intelligence-based rolls pertaining to this type of creature.
- You add your Wis. modifier to attack rolls against this type of creature.
- You add an extra die of damage to any successful hit against this category of monster.

Ranger-Knight

Prerequisite: Possess the Hunter's Mark Wilderknack.

The ranger lends their expertise to allies, instructing and/or inspiring them to greater feats. When you use Hunter's Mark you can choose to let allies within a 20' radius who can see and hear you add the *Hunter's Mark* bonus to *their* attack and damage rolls until the end of their next turn.

Ritual Casting

Prerequisite: Possess the Decipher Magical Writings Wilderknack or be a member of the Seeker Lodge.

The ranger can cast spells they have access to (either through their own spellcasting or possess in written form) that have the ritual tag as rituals without using any spell slots.

Ranger's Cant

The ranger can relay information to others who can see them, through hand movements, body languages, looks, etc... silently. On a successful Dexterity roll, you relay basic movement instructions to those who can see you. If signalling other rangers or companions whom you have spent time teaching you basic hand symbols/signals, you can make your message known even in lightly obscured areas.

Sixth Sense

Prerequisite: Possess the Favored Enemy Wilderknack or be a member of the Wanderer Lodge.

You are preternaturally aware of the presence of any hostile creature (and/or *Favored Enemy* types, if applicable) that are within 50' per ranger level of your location. You have a sense of a general direction (north, south, east, west, up, down), but not exact location or number.

Outdoorsman Endurance

The ranger adds their proficiency bonus to Constitution-based rolls. Also, the ranger ignores rolls of 1 or 2 when rolling hit points gained at a new level.

Wild Empathy

The ranger knows how to read and influence the motivations and behaviors of animal and plant-based creatures. As an action the ranger can make an Insight [Wis.] roll to understand the attitudes or behavior of beasts (including giant types) or plant-based creatures. If successful, they can make a Charisma or Wisdom roll (whichever is higher) to calm the creatures, making them more "friendly" toward the ranger and their companions, as detailed below. Note the influencing ability does not function on creatures under some other form of charm or magical control. The ranger can use this ability to effect a total CR of up to half [rounded down] their ranger level. Any hostile or aggressive behavior by the ranger or any of their companions will negate these efforts.

Neutral or domestic creatures will be helpful and/or docile with the ranger, assisting them within the limits of their natural ability (a horse will go as fast and far as it can, a hound will follow a scent, etc...). Wild animals of hostile intent are soothed by the ranger's careful non-threatening sounds and actions, adopting a neutral attitude toward the ranger and those accompanying them.

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