

# RANGER VARIANT

## *ANIMAL COMPANION FOCUSED RANGER*



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## RANGER

Obscured by the underbrush, an elf carefully lines up her shot. With a slow exhale, she releases her arrow into an unsuspecting manticore. The monstrosity screams and charges, but is stopped short by the swipe of a bear. The elf deftly springs to a new vantage point and continues her assault, while her companion roars and presses the attack.

A human examines fresh tracks as he stalks through the jungle, a panther by his side. Waiting for nightfall, he and his panther pounce on the poacher camp, swords and claws cutting down foe after foe.

A wild looking dwarf crouches behind a stalagmite on the edge of the Underdark, indistinguishable from his surroundings. A boar races by, snorting at the dwarf, who whispers an incantation, preparing to engage the aberration lumbering down the tunnel.

From the depths of the Underdark to the highest mountains, tropical oceans to bleak deserts, rangers and their beast allies patrol the boards of nature and civilization, protecting both worlds from the other.

## BORDERLAND PREDATORS

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While rangers may do odd jobs as guides or trackers, their true calling is as the stewards of the frontier. Rangers stalk the edges of civilization, hunting monstrosities, aberrations, and humanoid raiders. When a ranger sets her sites on a target, she is nearly unstoppable. Hunting for days, even weeks at a time, until she has felled her prey.

Sometimes, though, a ranger may find herself pitted against more civilized races that seek to destroy and exploit the wildness she calls home.

## WILD COMPANIONS

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Occasionally, rangers gather into conclaves, or associate with Druidic circles if a situation

demands it, but most spend the majority of their lives away from the company of other humanoids. That doesn't mean they are alone, however. Rangers understand and bond with nature in ways other civilized beings don't truly understand. This bond manifests most clearly in their connection with the beasts of the wilderness. The bond between rangers and their animal companions may be fleeting or lifelong, but they represent the mutual respect and cooperation nature and civilization should hold.

## CREATING A RANGER

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While creating your ranger character, think about how you came by your skills. Did you train with a conclave of other rangers or a druidic circle? Did you have a mentor or a master? Or maybe you grew up alone, learning what you needed to survive.

Consider your relationships with your animal companions. Does your choice of companion say something about you or where you came from? Do you find a new companion every time you enter a new locale? Or do you have one companion you will stick with to the death?

Why have you started adventuring? Was there a monster that you couldn't handle on your own? Perhaps a local ruler forced you from your home? What do you think of your new adventuring companions and their relationship to nature?

## 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 melee fighting make Strength higher than Dexterity.) Second, choose the outlander background.

## The Ranger

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Mark Quarry Damage	Features
1st	+2	1d6	Trailblazer, Mark Quarry
2nd	+2	1d6	Call Beast Companion, Primeval Awareness
3rd	+2	1d6	Ranger Discipline
4th	+2	1d6	Ability Score Improvement
5th	+3	2d6	Coordinated Attack
6th	+3	2d6	Exceptional Training
7th	+3	2d6	Discipline Feature
8th	+3	2d6	Ability Score Improvement
9th	+4	3d6	Vanish
10th	+4	3d6	Improved Companion
11th	+4	3d6	Discipline Feature
12th	+4	3d6	Ability Score Improvement
13th	+5	4d6	Study Prey
14th	+5	4d6	Ferocious Defense
15th	+5	4d6	Discipline Feature
16th	+5	4d6	Ability Score Improvement
17th	+6	5d6	Step of the Wild
18th	+6	5d6	Predatory Senses
19th	+6	5d6	Ability Score Improvement
20th	+6	5d6	Slayer

## CLASS FEATURES

As a ranger, you gain the following class features.

### HIT POINTS

**Hit Dice:** 1d8 per ranger level

**Hit Points at 1st Level:** 8 + your Constitution modifier

**Hit Points at Higher Levels:** 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per ranger level after 1st

### PROFICIENCIES

**Armor:** Light armor, medium armor, shields

**Weapons:** Simple weapons, martial weapons

**Tools:** None

**Saving Throws:** Dexterity, Wisdom

**Skills:** Choose two from Animal Handling, Acrobatics, Athletics, Insight, Investigation, Nature, Perception, Stealth, and Survival

### EQUIPMENT

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

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

### TRAILBLAZER

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You are a master of navigation and you react with swift and decisive action when attacked. This grants you the following benefits:

- You ignore non-magical difficult terrain.
- You have advantage on initiative rolls.
- You have advantage on all Intelligence (Nature) and Wisdom (Survival) checks.

You are especially adept 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.

### MARK QUARRY

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Rangers are excellent hunters and once they have chosen their prey, they rarely lose them. As a bonus action on your turn, choose a creature you can see within 90 feet to mark as your quarry. The first time you hit your target with a weapon attack in a round you deal an extra 1d6 damage. The amount of extra damage increases as you gain levels in this class, as shown in the Mark Quarry column of the Ranger Table.

Your quarry remains marked for 1 hour. The duration increases to 8 hours at 9th level and 24 hours at 17th level. As long as the quarry is marked, you have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) and Wisdom (Survival) checks made to track and find it.

### CALL BEAST COMPANION

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At 2nd level, your familiarity with the natural world enables you to create a special bond with a wild beast. When you spend 4 hours in the wilderness and expend 50 gp of fine food, you can find and bond with a powerful beast that becomes your animal companion.



Common companions include: an **ape**, a **black bear**, a **boar**, a **giant badger**, a **giant weasel**, a **mule**, a **panther**, or a **wolf**. Work with your DM to select a beast that reflects your character as well as the area you are in when you call it. You may only have one companion at a time. If you call for a new companion your current one will depart when the new one arrives.

### 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  $\frac{1}{4}$  or less, but there are exceptions.

Your companion takes its turn on the same initiative as you, and you may choose whether you or your companion goes first each round.

The beast loses any Multiattack action it has, but does benefit from your Adaptable Explorer feature while it is with you. 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 new 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 2nd, your animal companion gains an additional hit die and increases its hit points accordingly. When you call a new companion make sure to increase its hit points and hit dice to the appropriate level.

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.

## PRIMEVAL AWARENESS

Beginning at 3rd level, your mastery of the wilds allows you to establish a link to the beasts and 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.

Your connection to the land will also reveal the presence of the following types of creatures within 6 miles: aberrations, celestials, dragons, elementals, fey, fiends,

and undead. This feature does not reveal the creatures' number or location.

## RANGER DISCIPLINE

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At 3rd level you choose your ranger discipline: Hunter, Skirmisher, or Feral Caster. Your choice grants you features at 3rd level and again at 7th, 11th, and 15th level.

## ABILITY SCORE IMPROVEMENT

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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.

## COORDINATED ATTACK

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Beginning at 5th level, you and your animal companion form a more potent fighting team. When you hit a target with an attack, your companion has advantage on their next attack against the same target as long as it makes the attack before the beginning of your next turn.

## EXCEPTIONAL TRAINING

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Beginning at 6th level, while within 60 feet of you, your beast companion can use its bonus action to Dash, Disengage, Dodge, or Help.

## VANISH

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At 9th level you can disappear into the wilderness. While not in civilization, you and your beast companion can each use the Hide action as a bonus action on your turn. Also, you can't be tracked by nonmagical means, unless you purposefully leave a trail.

Finally, if you and your animal companion take one minute to camouflage yourselves, 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.

## IMPROVED COMPANION

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Starting at 10th level, your companion has advantage on all saving throws. Additionally, its attacks count as magical for the purposes of overcoming resistances.

## STUDY PREY

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Beginning at 13th level, you can use an action to study a creature and gain insight into its capabilities. Choose a creature you can see within 120 feet. You learn the target's damage vulnerabilities, damage resistances, damage immunities, and condition immunities.

Once you use this ability, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

## FEROCIOUS DEFENSE

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At 14th level, when you're within 5 feet of each other, you and your animal companion can use a reaction to impose disadvantage on an attack roll against the other.

## STEP OF THE WILD

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At 17th level, you appear to be everywhere in battle. While not in civilization, you can expend your movement to disappear from behind cover and appear behind cover in any other spot within 500 feet. You must have at least 5 ft of movement left to use this ability. The cover must grant you at least half-cover and it must be natural (a tree, a bush, a rock, etc.) Man-made objects, like a wagon or crate, will not work with this ability. You arrive at exactly the spot desired. It can be a place you can see or one you can visualize.

You can bring along objects, as long as their weight doesn't exceed what you can carry. You can also bring your animal companion, though it must be within 5 feet of you when you move.

If you would arrive in a place already occupied by an object or a creature, you appear within 5 ft of your target space and the creature is surprised. If there is no room you fail to move and your movement is expended.

You must finish a short or a long rest before using this feature again.

## PREDATORY SENSES

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By 18th level, you and your animal companion have honed your senses to a preternatural degree. You both gain blindsight out to a radius of 30 ft. If you or your companion already have blindsight, its range increases by 30 ft.

## SLAYER

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At 20th level, you become unparalleled at dropping your chosen foe. When you score a critical hit against your marked quarry, calculate critical hit damage as normal. If the target still has more than 0 hit points, you can force the creature to make a Constitution saving throw with a DC equal to 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier.

On a failure, the target immediately drops to 0 hit points. On a success, the creature loses half its remaining hit points and is stunned for one round. Once you use this ability, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

## RANGER DISCIPLINES

### HUNTER

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Rangers of the Hunter discipline specialize in bringing down single powerful enemies. Hunters generally keep to the solitude of nature, making sure monstrosities like owlbears and umber hulks stay far from towns and tracking the movements of more dangerous creatures such as dragons or giants.

### NO ESCAPE

When you choose this Discipline at 3rd level, you become relentless in pursuit of your quarry. When your marked quarry moves away from you, you can use your reaction to move the same number of feet as your quarry (up to your movement speed) towards them. You can choose to use this ability at the end of your mark's turn.

### HUNTER'S COMPANION

Beginning at 7th level, your animal companion does more damage to the enemy you've marked with your Mark Quarry feature. The first time your companion hits your quarry in a round, it deals 1d6 extra damage. The extra damage increases to 2d6 at 13th level.

### FOLLOW UP

Starting at 11th level, when you hit an enemy with a weapon attack your beast can use a reaction to melee attack the same enemy.

### RESTRAINING STRIKE

At 15th level, you gain the ability to pin your mark in place. When you hit the creature you have marked, you can choose to forgo damage and restrain the creature instead. Once restrained, the target can use its action to make a Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) (its choice) check to break free. The DC equals 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier.

Once you use this ability, you can't use it again until you've take a short or long rest.

### SKIRMISHER

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Rangers of the Skirmisher Discipline prefer to be in the middle of things and so focus on taking on hordes of enemies. They most often tangle with orcs, goblins, and the like, but they won't hesitate to go toe to toe with



groups of humans or dwarves that penetrate too far into the wilderness.

### SLIPPERY TARGET

Starting at 3rd level, you are difficult to pin down during a fight. You can move up to half your speed as a reaction when an enemy ends its turn within 5 feet of you. This movement doesn't provoke opportunity attacks.

### NOT SO FAST

Beginning at 7th level, you can use your reaction to make a ranged attack against your marked quarry if they move more than 5 feet on their turn.

Once you use this ability, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

### 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.

### STAND AGAINST THE TIDE

At 15th level, 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.

## FERAL CASTER

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Some rangers choose to supplement their martial prowess with the divine power of the wilds. These casters may have learned their skills from a wandering druid or fey, or sometimes these rangers gather together to teach and learn from each other.

### SPELLCASTING

When you reach 3rd level, you gain the ability to cast spells. See chapter 10 for the general rules of spellcasting and chapter 11 for the druid spell list.

**Cantrips.** You learn two cantrips from the druid spell list. You learn an additional druid cantrip of your choice at 10th level.

**Spell Slots.** The Feral Caster Spellcasting 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 *longstrider* and have a 1st-level and a 2nd-level spell slot available, you can cast *longstrider* using either slot.

**Spells Known of 1st-Level and Higher.** You know three 1st-level druid spells of your choice, two of which you must choose from the conjuration and transmutation spells on the druid spell list.

The Spells Known column of the Feral Caster Spellcasting table shows when you learn more druid spells of 1st level or higher. Each of these spells must be a conjuration or transmutation spell of your choice, and must be of a level for which you have spell slots. For instance, when you reach 7th level in this class, you can learn one new spell of 1st or 2nd level.

The spells you learn at 8th, 14th, and 20th level can come from any school of magic. Whenever you gain a level in this class, you can replace one of the druid spells you know with another spell of your choice from the druid spell list. The new spell must be of a level for which you have spell slots, and it must be a conjuration or transmutation spell, unless you're replacing the spell you gained at 8th, 14th, or 20th level.

**Spellcasting Ability.** Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for your druid spells, since you learn your spells through your attunement to the ferocity of 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 druid 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

### VICIOUS CANTRIP

At 7th level, your cantrips become more deadly. You can add Mark Quarry damage to cantrips.

### LEAFWALKER

Starting at 11th level, your communion with nature allows you to travel great distances in the blink of an eye. You can cast *transport via plants* without expending a spell slot or material components. You can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

### 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.

### Feral Caster Spellcasting

Ranger Level	Cantrips Known	Spells Known	Spell Slots per Spell Level			
			1st	2nd	3rd	4th
3rd	2	3	2	—	—	—
4th	2	4	3	—	—	—
5th	2	4	3	—	—	—
6th	2	4	3	—	—	—
7th	2	5	4	2	—	—
8th	2	6	4	2	—	—
9th	2	6	4	2	—	—
10th	3	7	4	3	—	—
11th	3	8	4	3	—	—
12th	3	8	4	3	—	—
13th	3	9	4	3	2	—
14th	3	10	4	3	2	—
15th	3	10	4	3	2	—
16th	3	11	4	3	3	—
17th	3	11	4	3	3	—
18th	3	11	4	3	3	—
19th	3	12	4	3	3	1
20th	3	13	4	3	3	1

