

[The Archer class presented here was written by Leonard Lakofka for Dragon 45, with minor editing by DC for his world]

ARCHER

The principal attributes of an archer are strength and dexterity, both of which must be 15 or better. Intelligence, wisdom and charisma must all be at least 6, and constitution at least 9. Archer-rangers require even higher intelligence, wisdom and constitution -- a minimum of 14 in each. Archers whose strength and dexterity are both 16 or better gain +10% to earned experience. Archer-rangers require a strength, intelligence, wisdom and dexterity of 16 or greater to earn this 10% bonus.

While archers may be of any alignment, archer-rangers must be good, just as rangers.

Archers may be human, elf, half-elf or half-orc, as well as some other humanoid races. Humanoids are limited in level as an archer as follows: Orcs can become 3rd level archers, gnolls can become 5th level archers, and hobgoblins can become 4th level archers. Kobolds, goblins, dwarves and gnomes cannot become archers, while hobbits can be short bow using archers with a level limit as if they were fighters. Half-orcs are limited to their fighter level limit minus one, while elves have a level limit one level higher as an archer. Only humans, elves and half-elves can be archer-rangers, their level limits are all the same as if they were rangers.

Archers and archer-rangers use 8-sided dice for determination of hit points. At first level, ONE 8-sided die is thrown for archers, TWO for archer-rangers. All archers add 2 hit points per level after 9d8 are gained.

All archers may use a wide selection of armor, but the use of plate armors, or any armor more movement inhibiting than chain mail, will negate an archer's "to hit" bonuses, and thus he/she will surely decline to use this type of armor. A shield can be carried, but obviously it must be set aside when arrows are fired. Archers have a great selection of weapons available, the same as a fighter, although there are certain weapons they tend not to use. Archers rarely use blunt weapons like a mace, hammer or flail. Normally, archers do not use pole arms except for the throwing spear. It is very rare for an archer to use a short bow (unless he/she is a hobbit) or any type of crossbow. Archers gain no bonuses to hit or damage when using any missile weapon other than long/composite/great bow (short bow for hobbits).

Archers and archer-rangers gain the same saving throws as fighters. They melee on the fighter table. All archers begin with three weapons of proficiency; a bow and almost always some type of sword. Thereafter they may add one weapon for every three levels attained, just as other fighting classes do. However, their non-proficiency penalty is -3. Archers begin with only one non-weapon skill, plus bowyer/fletcher. All archers make hand-to-hand attacks as per rangers of the same level. In addition, archers may fire TWO arrows per round, gaining another arrow at 7th and a fourth at 13th. All archers can employ those magical items usable by all classes plus many other items as well, most notably those used by fighters. A magic bow and/or arrows operate at +1 in an archer's hands, over and above any magical bonuses to hit and/or damage it may already have.

At 9th level, an archer can establish a freehold just as a fighter can (see Player's Handbook, page 22). However, archer-rangers are limited as rangers are.

The following applies only to archer-rangers. In melee, archer-rangers gain +1 to damage vs. "giant-class" creatures, just as rangers do. An archer-ranger is as stealthy as a ranger and is able to track as a ranger does. An archer-ranger attracts a body of 2-24 followers, just as a ranger does. However, archer-rangers only gain druid spells, except for some very specific magic user spells outlined hereafter for both archer-rangers and archers. Druid spells are gained at 8th level and follow the chart given for rangers. An archer-ranger does NOT gain any special advantage from non-written magical items pertaining to clairaudience, clairvoyance, ESP and telepathy, such as a ranger can.

All archers can learn some specific magic-user spells, but to do this their intelligence must be 9 or higher. When the spell is to be taught by a magic user, the archer must check to see if he can learn it, as if he were a magic user. Failure to succeed on this check forever negates that particular spell. Archers cannot read spells from scrolls in any case and neither can they pen their own scrolls.

Archers may use particular spells beginning at the 7th level of ability. The number of spells usable and the list from which the archer may choose changes as the archer's level increases:

| Level of archer | # of spells | Spells available |
|------------------------|--------------------|---|
| 7th - 8th | 1 | <i>magic missile & shield</i> |
| 9th - 10th | 2 | plus <i>strength & mirror image</i> |
| 11th - 12th | 3 | plus <i>flame arrow & protection from normal missiles</i> |
| 13th and up | 4 | plus <i>enchanted weapon</i> (bows & arrows only) |

At 1st level any archer can make arrows for his bow, assuming the proper raw material is obtained. He can craft a dozen arrows in an 8-hour day. An archer can also craft a long, composite or great bow. This process takes 9-14 days and also assumes the proper materials are at hand. A crude bow that is -2 to hit and from which the archer gains no bonuses whatsoever can be crafted by an archer in less than an hour.

An archer's major attribute is an enhanced ability to hit and damage a target with bow and arrow. This bonus applies only if an archer is not wearing inhibiting armor, as previously noted. He must be using a well-made bow and well-crafted arrows. The bonus applies to any target of human size and may be further modified upward or downward depending on the target size and relative motion of archer and target (see preceding discussion). The bonuses to hit and to damage must be awarded at each level promotion of the archer. Remember also that a +1 bow is +2 in the hands of an archer, over and above those given here. The same "extra +1" is true of arrows. This bonus in no way affects what kind of creatures a given weapon will hit/hurt (i.e. +1 arrows still will not harm an elemental).

Archers use the range of "point blank" in addition to the short/medium/long ranges for most missiles. For an archer, point-blank range is from 10 to 50 feet. Other ranges remain the same (Hereafter are given ranges changes for exceptionally strong characters, which may be used).

Note: The bonuses to hit/damage given below do NOT include the -2 and -5 adjustments to armor class which must always be applied at medium and long ranges, respectively.

Bonus to hit/damage at the range given: Archer

| level | Point-blank | | Short | | Medium | | Long | |
|-------|-------------|-----|-------|-----|--------|-----|------|-----|
| | Hit | Dam | Hit | Dam | Hit | Dam | Hit | Dam |
| 1 | +1 | | | | | | | |
| 2 | +1 | +1 | +1 | | | | | |
| 3 | +2 | +1 | +1 | +1 | | | | |
| 4 | +2 | +2 | +1 | +1 | +1 | | | |
| 5 | +3 | +2 | +2 | +1 | +1 | +1 | | |
| 6 | +3 | +3 | +2 | +2 | +1 | +1 | +1 | |
| 7 | +4 | +3 | +3 | +2 | +2 | +1 | +1 | |
| 8 | +4 | +4 | +3 | +3 | +2 | +2 | +1 | +1 |
| 9 | +5 | +4 | +4 | +3 | +3 | +2 | +2 | +1 |
| 10 | +5 | +5 | +4 | +4 | +3 | +3 | +2 | +2 |
| 11 | +6 | +5 | +5 | +4 | +4 | +3 | +2 | +2 |
| 12 | +6 | +6 | +5 | +5 | +4 | +4 | +3 | +2 |
| 13 | +7 | +6 | +6 | +5 | +5 | +4 | +3 | +2 |
| 14+ | +7 | +7 | +6 | +6 | +5 | +5 | +3 | +3 |

Note that any non-archer always misses on a 1, although an archer does NOT necessarily do so. Using a bow against a target in melee with another foe usually requires at least a -4 penalty to hit. Rolls not hitting AC 10 must then be rolled against the other foe.

Any trained figure with a long, composite or great bow can also do extra damage and gain greater accuracy through use of physical strength. This can only be accomplished by the use of specially made bows and arrows with a greater "pull." Normal bows and arrows cannot be used nor can any short bows or any type of crossbow. Such a bow must be crafted by an archer or archer-ranger of sufficient level. To determine the maximum strength pull-bow an archer can make, add 10 to his/her level. This is the strength rating of the bow. At 9th level, however, an archer can make a 18/01 strength pull-bow, 18/51 at 10th level, 18/76 at 11th, etc. An archer CANNOT make a pull-bow of greater strength that he can bend (a bow may be bent by anyone of sufficient strength to use a given pull-bow or one category lower).

The strength bonuses do not apply at long range and are halved at medium range, just as for any missile weapons. These bonuses are at full power at short and point-blank ranges. This bonus is in addition to an archer's bonus for skill.

The paragraph for extended range has been dropped as it does not match with Dnd game logic

Only archers and archer-rangers who have reached 8th level or above can craft arrows that can later be magicked to become Arrows of Slaying. The magic must be accomplished by a magic user with the following spells; Enchant an Item, Trap the Soul and Wish. Fresh blood from the figure type to be slain must be available. Thus it is virtually impossible to craft an arrow for use against a unique character like Bahamut, Tiamat or a deity or demigod.

Archers archer-rangers use the same experience tables as paladins do. Level titles are; Bowman, Master Bowman, Fletcher, Master Fletcher, Bowyer, Master Bowyer, Sharpshooter, Arrowsmith, Archer, Archer Esquire, Archer Knight, Archer Lord, Archer Master and Archer Grandmaster for 14th and above levels.

It is not uncommon for archer-rangers to have a double level title, like Fletcher-Scout or Ranger-Archer. Note that the ranger class title is usually given first. Any individual might only state part of his title.

Archers cannot specialize in any weapon other than bow. If an archer does specialize, then he/she is considered 3 levels higher on the above table and to determine number of arrows fired per round. An archer may even double specialize, giving him/her a 6 level boost with respect to skill and arrows per round. Under no circumstances is the above table to be projected for higher levels.

Spell-using archers are allowed to keep a small traveling spell book for their personal use only. This book, however, must be constructed with the help of a magic user (as per rangers). Since the breadth of magical knowledge is so vast, there may be spells which suit archers which are not normally associated with the class. If an archer would like, he/she is welcome to research certain archery-based spells with the aid of a magic user. Subject to DM approval, these spells can be added FOR THAT ARCHER ONLY to his/her list of spells. In addition, 13th level archers may study for Enchant An Arrow. This spell is a modified version of Enchant and Item, allowing the archer to place a simple dweomer upon an arrow, such as +1 to hit/damage or flaming, etc. although Arrows of Slaying MUST be made in concert with a magic user.

Archers do not usually wear helms.