Rulebook
You Are a Ranger

You protect the kingdom from both the inside and out.

Normally solitary, Rangers are assigned to a Hold which is their sole responsibility - until they are called to action elsewhere.

The people of the kingdom do not see Rangers often. Many are known to disappear from social situations suddenly and silently using their honed skills and camouflaging cloaks.

Most Rangers are fond of the delicacy known as coffee. Running out of it will usually put one in a sour mood until their need is quenched.

Today you are called upon by your Commander for a mission. Maybe you have to solve a mystery, or deescalate a hostile situation, or prevent an assassination, or just attend a banquet. Maybe you're working alone, or maybe you're in good company.

This System

This system is intended to be used in one-shot, few-shot, and adventure-length campaigns. As Rangers, the player characters have unparalleled skill in stealth and marksmanship. Their duty is always to the kingdom, its ruler, and its people.

This system's focus is on tactics, travel, and simplicity. Storytelling, character building, and worldbuilding are not covered in great detail because it is mostly left up to the players and Narrator.

Player characters are powerful in some ways but not in others. Every Ranger has some weakness as a result of opportunities lost. The power curve is quite flat and does not go very high. Generally, greater experience is met with greater challenge, and more tools to overcome those challenges.

Combat is fast and tactical, and relatively insulated from the rest of the game. Attrition and extermination is *never* the objective when the players initiate combat. A grid is heavily suggested, plus distinct miniatures whose front and back are clearly defined. Battlefields are suggested to be plausible locations with some verticality and a lot of cover and places to hide. Players can only take a few hits before going down and potentially dying. Most players will want to maintain distance, though some builds allow for great close-range performance; every Ranger has their own twist on the formula.

Travel is meant to be at least somewhat engaging. A detailed map with

accurate scale is *heavily* suggested to be provided to the players. If the players make an unwise routing decision or simply have a run of very bad luck, it has the potential to jeopardize their mission or even kill them. Additionally, there is potential for encounters in the wild. And every day spent puts a dent in the party's coffee supply...

The Narrator

The Narrator sets the stage and acts out NPCs in both dialogue and combat. They also make rulings when they are not clear from these rules.
They may also be responsible for building and keeping track of the world, coming up with missions, and drawing up combat arenas. It's a whole lot of work, but the mission-by-mission structure along with the premise of the system should help keep things manageable in the moment.
The Narrator should have on hand: a detailed map of the region or world, preplanned combat arena layouts and the ability to draw up new ones, several wilderness and/or NPC encounters in mind, and most of all the ability to say "no".

Missions

Missions serve as the pacing method of the campaign. It may last one mission or several; in any case, a mission ending signifies a bookend to one chapter of a story.
The mission is usually given by either the Ranger Commander, another figure of official authority, or a messenger thereof. They will give an objective and a place or direction to start.
At the end of a mission, each party member receives 1-3 RP depending on how difficult it ended up being. This can generally be measured by the number of sessions it took.

Stats

There are three core stats:

BODY 0-3

- physical exertion
- athletic feats

- hazard resistance

MIND 0-3

- knowledge checks
- tracking
- medicine

WIT 0-3

- diplomacy and charm
- danger sense and perception
- instinct

There are also combat stats:

Hitpoints 1-5 (starts at 1)

Dodge 5-8 (starts at 5)

At character creation, each player begins with 8 **Ranger Points (RP)**. Each mission rewards a player a number of RP. RP can be spent between missions. One RP can be spent on one stat (core or combat). Talents' costs are listed in the Talents section. Core stats and dodge can have a maximum of 3 points put into them, and hitpoints have a maximum of 5. There is no limit to the number of talents.
A player can also spend 4 RP on an **animal companion**.

Checks

Checks are made when the player chooses to or is required to make an action that they can potentially fail at.
Here are the things that a Ranger will never fail at except under dire circumstances:

- Preparing and maintaining their own equipment
- Hitting a target within range with an arrow
- Finding food and drinkable water
- Interacting with their animal companion(s)

To make a check, roll an eight-sided die (1d8), take into account any advantage or disadvantage (rerolling as necessary), add the relevant stat, and

check if the resulting number is **6** or above (a 3/8 (37.5%) chance). If it is, the player succeeds; if not, the player fails.

Modifier	Dbl. Disadv.	Disadvantage	Neutral	Advantage
-3	0%	0%	**0%**	0%
-2	0.2%	1.6%	**12.5%**	23.4%
-1	1.6%	6.3%	**25%**	43.8%%
0	5.3%	14.1%	**37.5%**	60.9%
+1	12.5%	25%	**50%**	75%
+2	24.4%	39.1%	**62.5%**	85.9%
+3	42.2%	56%	**75%**	93.8%

Advantage/Disadvantage

If the circumstance suggests that a player may have a helping or hindering factor in their attempted action (whether a check or attack), the Narrator may impose advantage or disadvantage on the roll.

- Advantage: roll twice and take the higher result (base 61% chance)
- Disadvantage: roll twice and take the lower result (base 14% chance)

Sources of advantage and disadvantage can stack, but the final result is whichever type has more sources. If the number of sources of advantage and disadvantage are equal, they cancel out and the roll is made normally.

Double Disadvantage

If the player wants to attempt an extremely foolhardy action that still has a slim chance of succeeding, the Narrator may impose double disadvantage on the roll. As the name implies, this entails rolling *three times* and taking the lowest result.
It is recommended this only be an option if the player has a neutral bonus or above to the roll.
There is no double advantage.

Critical Success

If the final die rolled an 8 on its face, the player has made a critical success. If the roll is for a check, the result of the check comes with a little extra benefit, courtesy of the Narrator. A critical successes on an attack means the die can be rolled again and added to the damage. The extra die cannot be a critical success even if it rolls 8.

Critical Failure

If the final die rolled a 1 on its face, the player has made a critical failure. This means the result of the check comes with some kind of hindrance or complication, which may either come from the Narrator or be coordinated between the Narrator and player. Attacks (normally) do not critically fail.

Combat

Actions

One turn represents a "beat" of combat, enough time for a single exchange of blows to happen before both sides need a quick breather.
Every turn consists of two actions.
Moving is an action.
Attacking is an action.
Kicking open a door, dropping an object or weapon, drawing a one-handed weapon, pushing a button, saying a quick sentence, signaling, doing a fancy flourish, and dropping prone take no actions.
Picking up an object or weapon, opening a door quietly, throwing something, cutting through foliage, getting on a horse, pushing something over, retrieving equipment on your person, stowing a bow, getting up from a prone position, and most checks take one action.
Stringing a bow and picking a lock take two actions in a single turn.
Other activities' action cost are up to the narrator.
If an action remains after a player's turn, they take a defensive stance and give a -1 penalty to all attacks made against them.

Attacking

Rangers never miss their target when using their bow. In fact, players do not roll "to hit" in this system. Instead, they roll dice to determine damage.

- **Bow** - d8 (optimal range: long)
- **Throwing knife** - d8-1 (optimal range: short; limit 1; requires one hand free; can be retrieved)
- **CQC** - d8-2 (choose a small melee weapon; requires two hands free)

Getting a total result of 0 or below indicates that an attack missed completely. Getting a critical success on an attack (rolling an 8 on the die) means the player can roll the die again and add it to the damage, though this extra roll cannot be another critical success.
Attacks made while the enemy's back is turned or while the enemy is not on high alert is a **sneak attack** and will sum two rolls (before adding/subtracting bonuses). Both rolls are capable of being a critical success.

Moving

In natural terrain and in darkness, when not moving or moving slowly, Rangers cannot be seen. Elsewhere, and when moving quickly, a Ranger can be spotted if they cross an enemy's sight.
Rangers are never heard unless they want to be.
First players move (simultaneously), then enemies, unless the players are caught by surprise, in which case the order reverses.
Move 8 spaces per action; 4 if trying to move unseen or climb something.
One grid space represents either 5-10 feet or the immediate threat range of a combatant. Characters can move through a space occupied by an ally but cannot end their turn on it.

Enemies

The players' foes work somewhat differently.
When an enemy attacks a player, the Narrator rolls a d8 (taking into account any advantage or disadvantage), adds the total bonus or penalty, and compares it to the player's dodge stat. If the result is equal to or greater than the dodge stat, it hits the player.
A player hit by an enemy attack loses exactly one hitpoint.
Enemies only have two stats: **attack bonus** and **health**.
Enemies, meanwhile, can have a health value ranging from pitifully small to downright tanky. A standard goon might have 5 health, a rampaging boar might have 20.
Enemies also have two actions each, but they are mostly limited to move

(usually 8 spaces max), get up from prone, switch weapons, and attack. If an enemy needs to make a check, it is a flat d8 roll.

An enemy who reaches 0 health dies *unless* the player who attacks them declares beforehand that the attack is aimed to be nonlethal. In other words, attacks are considered lethal by default.

These limitations apply to all enemies except for bosses.

Enemies have a **field of vision** which occupies all unobscured spaces in front of them. Imagine a straight line perpendicular to their cardinal facing lining up with the edge of their space directly in front of them. All spaces they have line of sight to *across* that line are in their field of vision.

However, they can only *spot* objects and movements within long range of them in daylight, and within medium range in any other light level. It may be worth it to produce several semicircles with long and medium range radii to represent this spotting range in play.

Enemies can face any of the cardinal directions. This direction is important to know for sneak attacks.

An enemy aware that a Ranger is present will generally go into **high alert**, preventing sneak attacks coming from their field of vision.

Bosses

These characters are usually the ultimate enemy of a mission. But this isn't a hard rule! They are much more deadly and flexible than the usual fodder.

Bosses have stats, including BODY, MIND, and WIT, as well as "**boss health**". This is on top of armor and the normal health pool.

Boss core stats come into effect whenever the boss should make a check.

Boss health is a pool of health that lies "above" their normal health. If an attack would bring their boss health to zero, the remaining damage is not carried over into their normal health. This can serve as a "health gate" to prevent them from being one-shot by sneak attacks.

Bosses may also have access to talents both familiar and unfamiliar.

When a boss's health reaches 0, they are **incapacitated**. Whether or not they fall unconscious, or even die, depends on either the Narrator's fiat or the attacking player's intent.

Armor

Armor is a number starting from 0 and going all the way up to 5 which subtracts from final damage. Players do not have armor.

0 is unarmored, 5 is nearly impervious.

An enemy may also be **heavily armored**, which means they are *truly* impervious to all *conventional* attacks a Ranger can make.

Range Bands

Melee range is within an adjacent space
Close range is within sneaking distance (4 spaces)
Medium range is within running distance (8 spaces)
Long range is within sprinting distance (16 spaces)
Extreme range is anything outside of long range
Weapons roll normally within their optimal range, and are viable for one range band outside of it, though making an attack from that distance will have disadvantage.
Reminder: optional range for bow is long range, and for throwing knife is short range.

Maimed

When a Ranger hits 0 hitpoints, they become maimed. A maimed Ranger makes all attacks and checks with a -1 penalty and can only move 1d8 spaces when running (rolled every time they make a move action), or 1 space stealthily.

Unconscious

If a Ranger takes damage while maimed, they fall unconscious and prone, and can no longer take actions, but they also no longer occupy a space, meaning another character standing in their space will prevent others from targeting them with melee attacks.
An unconscious Ranger cannot be revived except through specific means.

- Another Ranger's help: whether through smelling salts, a slap on the cheek, a slash of cold water, or perhaps the simple smell of coffee, a Ranger in melee range can spend two actions in a single turn reviving an unconscious Ranger. (*Note: animal companions can also revive a player using this method*)
- The Capsule: a specific talent.

A Ranger revived after being reduced to 0 hitpoints will do so with 1 remaining hitpoint and be unable to perform an action until their next turn.
An unconscious Ranger hit with a melee attack of harmful intent will begin bleeding out and will die after their next turn if they do not receive urgent medical attention.

Prone

A prone character gives disadvantage to all ranged attacks made against them. A prone character cannot move before getting up. Bows and thrown weapons cannot be used while prone.

Cover

A character that is only partially visible to some combatants gives disadvantage to all ranged attacks made against them coming from those combatants.

Stealth

Ranger stealth during combat encounters has already been detailed. In more narrative situations, it suffices to assume players cannot be seen if they are trying not to be, or secretly roll NPC checks at disadvantage behind the screen. Rangers are extremely well-practiced at avoiding detection even when not actively trying - even their camps tend to blend into the environment. However, that is not to say they *can't* be caught by surprise. If a character or group of characters is attempting to avoid detection unbeknownst to the party, roll a check against each party member using their WIT stat as the target to beat. Whoever a check rolls low against becomes aware of the character(s).
If a player is attacked by a character they are not aware of, the attack roll is made at advantage.
If one or more players are not aware of oncoming enemies when combat starts, they are **surprised** and cannot act for the first round.

Talents

Talents are special features a Ranger has which give benefits such as advantage, bonuses in certain situations, or even unique abilities. They cost a

certain amount of Ranger Points (RP) to get, and can only be gained between missions. To see a detailed list of all available talents, refer to `Talents.md`.

Travel

The kingdom is huge. Travel across even a single Hold can take days using a mount or weeks on foot. But a Ranger should know the wilderness like the back of their hand.
Travel occurs day by day. Every day, the party nominates one member to lead the group (or agrees on a single leader for the entire journey). The leader rolls a MIND check.

- Success: travel proceeds at normal pace with no interruptions
- Failure: travel proceeds at half the normal pace and the leader must roll a d8. Depending on the result of that d8, the Narrator may spring an encounter on the party which takes place during that leg of the journey.

Travel pace is as follows:

Terrain	Miles/day (mount/on-foot)	Conditions	Modifier
Grassy	50/30	Rain	-10
Forest	30/20	Snow	-20
Rocky	40/30	Dehydratation	-20
Icy	20/10	Hunger	-10
Desert	40/20	High Elevation	-10
Mountain	30/20	Sprint	x2

If, by circumstance, the party cannot travel more than 10 miles in a day, it suggests there are extreme circumstances besetting them. Thus, the leader must also roll a WIT check to ensure the party does not fall hungry. If the check fails, the party becomes hungry as they fail to find enough food to eat. This condition lasts until the party is able to move more than 10 miles in a day.
Additionally, desert terrain will elicit an additional MIND check from the leader to ensure the party does not become dehydrated. If the party is dehydrated for three days in a row, they will all die. Therefore, dehydration is a strong sign that it is time to turn back.

The party may decide that speed is of the essence. In such a case, the party can sprint. This doubles total travel speed, but guarantees the encounter die will be rolled each day the party is sprinting.

Coffee

Each Ranger has a supply of coffee beans which is replenished after every mission. This is represented by a coffee count of 3 per player.
At the beginning of each day, the party decides who will donate enough of their bean stash to make a full pot (in other words, one party member must decrease their coffee count by one).
Drinking coffee at the beginning of the day gives the Ranger one Rush (explained below).
If, for whatever reason, a Ranger goes without coffee in the morning, they must roll a WIT check. If they fail, they are tired and grumpy for the whole day, suffering a -1 to their highest stat (choose one if there's multiple).

Rush

Rush is given to players by the Narrator at various points in the game. All Rush wears off by the morning. It is given:

- When a player's Ranger drinks coffee in the morning.
- When one or more players make an incredibly immersive in-character roleplay moment.
- When a player makes a deeply clever and surprising action.
- Whenever the Narrator damn wants.

Rush can be used by players whenever *any* die has been rolled to:

- give a +1 or -1 bonus/penalty to the roll
- reroll the die and use either the higher or lower value between the original roll and the reroll

Animal Companions

If a player so chooses, they may spend 4 RP on an animal companion at character creation and at any point between missions during the campaign. A player can have as many animal companions as they want, but they are solely

the player's responsibility. Animal companions may also be given as part of a mission or story, the stats of which are decided by the Narrator.

Animal companions share Rush with their owner and can use it in all the same ways. They act during the players' turn and do *not* have to act at the same time as their owner. They share all combat rules with players except for stealth; it is not a given that they are undetectable.

An animal companion can be any creature of reasonable size plausible to the setting. *Ask the Narrator*. Choose either a **small** or **large** creature, then give them a talent from the lists below.

Small

Less than the size of a labrador
Core stat bonus: WIT +2
Movement per action: 4 spaces
Hitpoints: 1
Dodge: 7
Attack: 1d8-2
Special quality: cannot be detected in natural terrain or when prone
Available talents:

- Bean Hoarder
- Quick Fingered
- Born Ready
- Back Never Turned
- Voice of Reason
- Keen Eye

Large

Larger than an average hog
Core stat bonus: BODY +2
Movement per action: 8 spaces
Hitpoints: 5
Dodge: 4
Attack: 1d8+1
Special quality: can be used as a mount if plausible; acts as partial cover
Available talents:

- Born Ready
- Back Never Turned
- Spectre of Death
- Keen Eye
- Trippy
- Adrenaline Rush

Magic

Magic is an optional system.
It is *intended* for magic to be absent from play using this system. However, rangers and ranger-coded characters in other games and media often have explicitly magical abilities, and as such I feel a duty to offer at least some of that fantasy as an option.
Magic abilities are the same as talents, but often are more versatile and/or powerful, so they cost much more RP. They are not supposed to be flashy nor destructive, merely meant to communicate a Ranger's connection with the land.