**ARCHER / ARCHER-RANGER PC CLASS**

**By Len Lakofka**

**From The Dragon #45 and also Best of Dragon #3**

**A non-player (or if the DM allows player character) character class: Archers and Archer-Rangers**

**This rewrite is predicated on the simple analysis of the subclass system. The Archer is a sub class of the Fighter. The Archer Ranger (or perhaps better called Ranger-Archer) is a subclass of Ranger who is a subclass of the Fighter. The rewrite will deal the Archer first and then the Archer Ranger. The first writing comingled the two throughout the article and sometimes made reading it difficult Mea Culpa. I have decided to more closely parallel the Ranger in this rewrite especially when it comes to level spell casting abilities. If you are already playing an Archer or an Archer Ranger you can adopt the new or changed parts of this article, pick a few changes to adopt or ignore the whole thing and continue as you are. It’s up to you and/or the DM whichever of those two roles you find yourself in.**

**The chief ability of the Archer and Archer Ranger is the ability to fire with great accuracy especially at close range. To accomplish this practice at least five times a week is suggested firing at least a dozen arrows with “Bull’s Eye Accuracy”\* (i.e. nine or more Bull’s Eyes out of 18 at a range of 40 feet.) If this practice is not maintained then bonuses to hit can diminish after 2 to 5 weeks. Of course arrows fired in melee most certainly count as practice. Archers have been practicing their skill from an early age (perhaps as young as 9 or 10) likely for five years or more of almost daily practice before becoming level one. No fighter or ranger can become an Archer or an Archer Ranger once he or she declares his class at first level.**

The principal characteristics of an Archer are strength and dexterity.

 The minimum statistics for an Archer are:

 Str: 15, Int: 6, Wis: 12, Dex; 15, Con; 9 The change here is WISDOM.

 Archer spells will now come only from the Cleric and Druid subclass.

 The Archer cannot cast Magic user spells.

Archers can 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, Hobgoblins can become 4th-level Archers. Kobolds, Goblins, Dwarves, Gnomes and Halflings cannot become archers. Archers use two eight sided dice for their hit points at level one and then an additional eight sided die thereafter up to 9th level. # (see rolling a character’s first Hit Point die).

All Archers add 2 hit points per level after the 9th level.

All Archers may use a wide selection of armor, but the use of plate armor 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, but this selection is not as broad as that of a Fighter. They may use, in addition to their long/composite/great bow, the following weapons: swords of any type including scimitars, daggers, axes of any type, spears or javelins or darts. Archers rarely use blunt weapons like a mace, hammer or flail but they are not prohibited. Archers do not use pole arms except for the throwing spear. It is very rare for an archer to use a short bow or any type of crossbow. Archers gain no bonuses to hit or damage from those latter missile weapons. A sling is rarely used but not prohibited.

Archers have the same saving throws as Fighters. They melee on the Fighter table. All Archers begin with only three weapons, a bow and almost always some type of sword and often a throwable weapon like a dagger, hand ax or spear; of course proficiency is required. Thereafter they may add one weapon every 3rd level, just as other fighting classes do. However, their non-proficiency penalty is -3, except for missile weapons which are at -2. All Archers can make only one hand-to-hand melee attack per round through the 8th level. At the 9th level through 15th levels, they can strike three times in two rounds. They gain two attacks per round only at 16th level and higher. At 7th level and above all Archers can, fire three arrows per round instead of just two with a long bow, great bow or composite bow.

All Archers can employ those magical items usable by all classes. A magic bow and/or a magic arrow operates at +1 in an Archer’s hands, over and above any magical bonus to hit and/or damage it may already have. At 9th level, an Archer can establish a “freehold” just as a Fighter can (see *Players Handbook,* page 22)..

The Archer, as first written over 20 years, could cast specific Magic User Spells. As I thought about that I decided that MU spells do not make sense for the Archer. However, what would make sense, since the archer can be of any alignment, is an array of Clerical Spells or the neutral Archers Druidical spells.

*{Aside: there are no real spells listed for Neutral Lawful and Neutral Chaotic clerics, an oversight which may or may not have been corrected in articles from other authors. If no one has written up Neutral Lawful or Neutral Chaotic clergy – or at least if I can’t find it – I may take that topic up in &Magazine or Gygax Magazine in the near future. I have to research first. }*

Once clerical spells can be cast it should be noted that Good or Evil Archers gain no powers over the Undead.

These are limited to 1st and 2nd level spells but have the advantage of being gained by Prayer. The Archer is not guaranteed this ability but can seek a cleric when the Archer becomes 7th level to teach him some first level spells. The reverse of the spell might be taught based on the alignment of the Archer and the cleric (who must worship the same deity). Spell capacity is as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level of Archer | First | Second | Third |
| 7 | 1 |  |  |
| 8 | 2 |  |  |
| 9 | 3 |  |  |
| 10 | 4 |  |  |
| 11 | 4 | 1 |  |
| 12 | 5 | 1 |  |
| 13 | 6 | 1 |  |
| 14 | 6 | 2 |  |
| 15 | 6 | 2 | 1 |
| 16 | 6 | 3 | 1 |
| 17 and above | 6 | 3 | 2 |

Archers can gain a Wisdom capacity bonus just like a cleric if their Wisdom is 13 or higher.

Praying requires a Holy Symbol and four hours of rest prior to praying 15 minutes for first level spells and 30 minutes for a second level spell and 45 minutes for a third level spell just as a cleric does.

The list of Clerical spells allowed has no real limit but the Cleric teacher may not know every spell nor he may not know the reverse of some spells. For example he may know Cure Light Wounds but not Cause Light Wounds by touch.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Bonus to hit/damage at the range given:** |
| **Archer** | **Point-blank** | **Short****“Close or Target”** | **Medium****Or “Intermediate”** | **Long****Or “Extreme”** |
| **Level** | **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 | +5 | +5 | +4 | +4 | +3 | +3 | +2 |
| 13 | +7 | +6 | +6 | +5 | +4 | +4 | +3 | +2 |
| 14 and up | +7 | +7 | +6 | +6 | +5 | +5 | +3 | +3 |

**Note: The bonuses to hit/damage given above do not include the -2 and -5 adjustments to armor class which must always be applied at medium and long range, respectively. This table will apply to Archer Rangers as well.**

**Close, Target, Intermediate or Extreme range are explained later in this article, they are optional expansions of the possible ranges allowed to anyone shooting a missile or throwing a weapon. Those optional ranges would have to hit adjustment of -1, -3 and -4 in addition to -2 and -5.**

At 3rd level any archer can make arrows for his/her bow, assum­ing the proper raw materials are obtained. He/she can craft a dozen arrows in an 8-hour day. At 5th level any archer can make a long/ composite/great bow. This process takes 9-14 days and also as­sumes 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 skill is an enhanced ability to hit and damage a target with a bow and arrow. This bonus applies only if an archer is not wearing plate armor, as previously noted. He/she 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 any bonus given here! The same “extra + 1” is true of magical arrows. 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 range changes for exceptionally strong characters, which may be used for Archers at the DM’s option)

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No matter how well an Archer is capable of shooting, a roll of 1 on the “to hit” die is always a miss. (Normal missile-firing troops always miss on a 1 or 2.) As an example of how to use the above chart, a 7th-level Archer with a +1 bow firing a +2 arrow at point-blank range would have this bonus to hit and damage: +1 for the bow and +1 more because an archer is firing it; + 2 for the arrow and +1 more because an archer is firing it; +4 to hit due to skill and +3 to damage due to skill at point-blank range for an overall bonus of +9 to hit and +8 to damage!

All archers, and optionally any trained figure with a long/com­posite/great bow, can also do extra damage and gain greater accur­acy through use of physical strength. This can only be accomplished via 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, an Archer-Ranger, or an elf bowmaker who is at least 6th level as an Archer, Archer-Ranger or Fighter. Proper “long arrows:’ must be crafted by an Archer, an Archer-Ranger or an elf fletcher of at least 4th level. Ordinary fletchers can only make normal arrows.

Strenqth applies to point-blank range and short range only! Full strength bonuses as given in the *Players Handbook* will apply to hit and +6 to damage is the maximum bonus allowed due to Strength. Girdles of Strength will NOT provide a further bonus for this purpose. At short range the bonus to hit and damage due to strength is halved (fractions are dropped). This bonus for Strength is in addition to an Archer’s bonus for great skill.

Strength of an Archer or Archer-Ranger may also allow for anexpansion of the long-range end of a bow’s potential. Only specially made bows will give greater range. Only the top end of the long range categoryis expanded; Medium-range distance stays as given in the Player’s Handbook. Given below are ranges for each type of bow allowed to an Archer, Archer-Ranger or strong Fighter, according to the Strength of the character. Remember, the bow and arrows must be special.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Strength** | **Point-blank** | **Short** | **Medium** | **Long Comp.bow** | **Long bow** | **Great bow** |
| 9-15161718 | 10-50feet | 51-210 | 211-420 | 421-630421-630421-640421-640 | 421-630421-640421-650421-660 | 421-630421-630421-640421-650 |
| Up to 18/5018/74 |  |  |  | 421-650 | 421-670 | 421-660 |
| 18/7518/89 |  |  |  | 421-650 | 421-680 | 421-660 |
| 18/9018/98 |  |  |  | 421-660 | 421-690 | 421-660 |
| 18/9918/00 |  |  |  | 421-660421-670 | 421-700421-720 | 421-660421-660 |

Only Archers and Archer-Rangers who reach 8th level or above can craft arrows that can be magicked to become Arrows of *Slaying.* The magic must be accomplished by a Magic-User with the following spells: *Enchant* *an Item, Wish* and *Trap the Soul.* Fresh blood from the figure type to be slain must be available. Thus, it is impossible to craft an arrow for use versus a unique character like Bahamut, Tiamat, any Deity, etc. Undead cannot be Slain. The number of hit dice that can be Slain by an arrow of Slaying could be:

 9th level and lower 5HD or less

 10th to 12 level 6HD

 13th level 7HD

 14th level 8HD

 15th or higher 9HD

|  |
| --- |
| **Archer Table** |
| **Experience Points**  | **Experience Level** | **Accumulated 8 sided** | **Level Title** |
| 0-2,300 | 1 | 2 | Bowman (Bowwoman) |
| 2,301-4,600 | 2 | 3 | Master Bowman |
| 4,601-9,000 | 3 | 4 | Fletcher |
| 9,001-20,000 | 4 | 5 | Master Fletcher |
| 20,001-38,000 | 5 | 6 | Bowyer |
| 38,001-73,500 | 6 | 7 | Master Bowyer |
| 73,500-140,000 | 7 | 8 | Sharpshooter |
| 140,001-265,000 | 8 | 9 | Arrowsmyth |
| 265,001-520,000 | 9 | 10 | Archer |
| 520,001-790,000 | 10 | 10+2 | Archer Esquire |
| 790,001-1,050,000 | 11 | 10+4 | Archer Knight |
| 1,050,001-1,300,000 | 12 | 10+6 | Archer Lord |
| 1,300,001-1,600,000 | 13 | 10+8 | Archer Master |
| 1,600,001-1,900,000 | 14 | 10+10 | Archer Grandmaster |
| 300,000 experience points per level for each additional level beyond the 14th. All of those possible levels would be Archer Grandmasters.Archers gain 2 hit points per level after the 9th. |
|  |

Archers must be trained for their archery skills by a higher ranking Archer and/or Archer Ranger. Weapon proficiencies can be taught by any fighter class. If a new bonus to hit or damage is due after a promotion but the teacher is not another Archer than that bonus is not gained until an appropriate level Archer does the instruction.

**Optional Range Classifications for Missiles**

It is also possible to upgrade the number of range classes for all archers and for Archer and Archer-Rangers in particular. Those possible adjustments might be as follows:

Example: the Long Bow

Point Blank Close Target Medium Intermediate Long Extreme

10-50\* 51-210 211-310 311-420 421-490 491-540 541-630

Archers only no adjust -1 -2 -3 -4 -5

The DM can add Short bows, Composite bows and Crossbows to this list. Recall that Archers do not gain bonuses with Short Bows and Crossbows. (However, it is your game and if you want to include those weapons you want.)

This would change the range schedule for ALL those who can fire a bow or a crossbow. It theory multiple range categories could also be applied to thrown weapons like hand axes, daggers, spears or Javelins

(By the way, Errol Flynn’s “*Robin Hood”* was an Archer Grand-master and *not a* Thief of any type. Consider Flynn’s statistics as follows: S 16, I 17, W 15, D 18, C 18, Ch 17, 14th-level Archer Grandmaster, Ieather +2 for AC: 6/2, HP: 110, Long Sword +2 Long Bow +3.)

**Archer Rangers (or Ranger Archers if you prefer)**

Archer-Rangers whose Strength and Dexterity are both 16 or better gain 10% to earned experience.

Their minimum characteristic scores are: S 15, I 13, W 14, Dx 15, Cn 14, Ch 6

While Archers may be of any alignment, Archer-Rangers must be Good.

Archer-Rangers can be human, half-elf or elf. Archer-Rangers use an 8-sided die for hit point determination. At first level, two 8-sided dice are thrown, just as the Ranger class does. All Archers add 2 hit points per level after the 9th level.

Archer Rangers use the same types of armor as the Archer given heretofore. Most abilities that are allowed to a ranger are given to Archer Rangers as well.

Archer-Rangers have the same saving throws as Fighters. Archer Rangers melee on the Fighter table. All Archer Rangers begin with only three weapons, a bow and almost always some type of sword plus many select a throwable weapon like a dagger, hand ax, spear or javelin. Thereafter they may add one weapon every 3rd level, just as other fighting classes do. However, their non-proficiency penalty is -3, -2 with any missile. All Archers Rangers can make only one hand-to-hand melee attack per round through the 8th level. At the 9th level through 15th levels, they can strike three times in two rounds. They gain two attacks per round only at 16th level and higher. At 7th level and above all Archers can, fire three arrows per round instead of just two. All Archers can employ those magical items usable by all classes plus many other items as well. A magic bow and/or a magic arrow operates at +1 in an Archer’s hands, over and above any magical bonus to hit and/or damage it may already have.

Archer-Rangers cannot build such a freehold *(Players Handbook,* page 25). In melee, Archer-Rangers gain +1 to damage vs. the “giant class” just as Rangers do. Archer-Rangers are as stealthy as a Ranger. Archer-Rangers track like a Ranger does. Archer-Rangers attract a body of 2-24 followers just as a Ranger does. Archer-Rangers gain Druidic spells and Magic-User spells outlined here­after. Druidic spells are gained at the 7th level and is similar to the chart given for Rangers.

Once an Archer Ranger gains Druidic and Magic User spells he may be allowed additional magic items allowed to a Druid or a Magic User. The DM will generally keep those additions to minor items since the Archer Ranger’s training is not extensive. There is a period of time where the Archer Ranger must learn to read from a Magic User’s book (six to twelve months would be reasonable) and also a period of time spent with a Druid to learn his first spells. The Archer Ranger does not gain all Druidic powers and abilities but such things as detecting potable water might be allowed.

Archer-Rangers do not gain any special advantage from non-written magic items pertaining to clairaudience, clairvoyance, ESP, and telepathy, such as a Ranger can. (The DM can allow the Archer Ranger those advantages of course.)

Archer Rangers have a wider variety of spells available and, like other Rangers, can learn Druid spells as well.

Archer Rangers begin learning MU spells at 8th level. Their spell capacity is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Level of Archer Ranger | MU type Spell Capacity |
| First | Second | Third |
| 8th | 1 |  |  |
| 9th and 10th | 2 |  |  |
| 11th and 12th | 2 | 2 |  |
| 13th | 3 | 2 |  |
| 14th | 4 | 2 |  |
| 15th | 5 | 2 |  |
| 16th | 5 | 3 |  |
| 17th and above | 5 | 3 | 1 |

The magic user spells would be the Archer Ranger’s Level MINUS 7. So a 13th level Archer Ranger would throw spells as a 6th level magic user with regard to range, area of effect etc.

There is no limit on what spells the Magic User can teach the Archer Ranger but the Magic user must be of a compatible alignment with the Archer Ranger, i.e. the MU must be Good. Failure to learn a spell is permanent and that spell cannot be attempted at a later time.

Archer Rangers can also learn Druid spells as follows

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Level of AR | Spell capacity |
| Lv 1 | Lv 2 | Lv 3 |
| 7th or 8 | 2 |  |  |
| 9th or 10 | 2 | 1 |  |
| 11th or 12 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13th | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| 14th | 3 | 3 | 2 |
|  | the ability to polymorph self like a 7th level druid |
| 15th | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 16th | 4 | 4 | 3 |
| 17th and above | 5 | 5 | 3 |

There is no limit to what spells the Druid may teach the Archer Ranger

Note: it would not be incorrect to use same number of spells per level given for the Ranger subclass as opposed to the suggestions given here. They are quite similar.

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| --- |
| **Archer-Ranger Table** |
| **Experience Points**  | **Experience Level** | **Accumulated 8 sided** | **Level Title** |
| 0-2,500 | 1 | 2 | Bowman (Bowwoman) |
| 2,500-5,000 | 2 | 3 | Master Bowman |
| 5,000-11,000 | 3 | 4 | Fletcher |
| 11,001-22,000 | 4 | 5 | Master Fletcher |
| 22,001-42,500 | 5 | 6 | Bowyer |
| 42,501-92,500 | 6 | 7 | Master Bowyer |
| 92,501-162,500 | 7 | 8 | Sharpshooter |
| 162,501-240,000 | 8 | 9 | Arrowsmyth |
| 240,001-350,000 | 9 | 10 | Archer |
| 350,001-700,000 | 10 | 10+2 | Archer Esquire |
| 700,001-1,075,000 | 11 | 10+4 | Archer Knight |
| 1,075,001-1,400,000 | 12 | 10+6 | Archerlord |
| 1,400,001-1,750,000 | 13 | 10+8 | Archer Master |
| 1,750,001-2,100,000 | 14 | 10+10 | Archer Grandmaster |
| 350,000 experience points per level for each additional level beyond the 14th.Archer-Rangers gain 2 hit points per level after the 9th. |
|  |

It is not uncommon for Archer-Rangers to have a double title, like Fletcher-Scout or Ranger-Archer. Note that the Ranger-class title is given first. Any individual might only state part of his/her title. Note that the experience points necessary for each level are the **different** for the Archer and for the Archer-Ranger. (They used to be the same.)

Archer Rangers must be trained for their archery skills by a higher ranking Archer and/or Archer Ranger. Ranger skills can be taught by another ranger. Weapon proficiencies can be taught by any fighter class. If a new bonus to hit or damage is due after a promotion but the teacher is not another Archer than that bonus is not gained until an appropriate level Archer does the instruction.

Addendum:

**# Rolling a character’s First Hit Die**

I like the rule that first die cast for hit points be guaranteed ½ of the die size rounded up. In this case 1+8 = 9 / 2 = 4.5 rounded up to 5 as the lowest number of hit points for that die. Otherwise you could roll two ones and have only two hit points [assuming that there is no constitution bonus]. A two hit point fighter would be rather discouraging to play. IF YOU PLAY THAT rule it should, in theory, apply to CLASSED individuals of all types, henchmen, shop owners, the blacksmith etc. assuming that he or she is a class or a subclass.

**Strength and hurled missiles**

A bonus to hit and/or to damage due to a character’s Strength can be taken into account when that character or creature hurls a missile. Such missiles are throwing daggers, throwing axes, spears, hammers, and javelins (not darts). To gain a Strength bonus the figure must be proficient with the weapon.

However, Magic,-Users never gain a Strength bonus to hit or to damage from a thrown dagger (aside: Magic-Users must *learn* to throw a dagger. First- to fifth-level M-Us are -5 to hit with a dagger, whether they like it or not, whenever they try to throw it.).

A Thief can gain a Strength bonus with a thrown dagger but *never* if he/she is trying for a “back stab” bonus.

The full bonus to hit and to damage is awarded for targets within15 feet of the thrower. For the balance of the short-range distance, 16 to 30 feet (16 to 60 feet for a javelin) half the bonus is awarded. Halved bonuses are rounded down.

Giants gain their full strength bonus to damage whenever the target is within 20 feet (See other notes on Strength In Leomund’s Tiny Hut, *Dragon* #43.)

\***Bull’s Eye Accuracy table** used in common competition throughout the Flanness. Note: the DM can change the size of the target and the distance to it. Be sure to adjust the table below for those innovations.

18 arrows fired at 40 feet

The Target is 6 feet in diameter and is composed of 3 three concentric rings and a 3 inch black central ring

The numbers below reflect ANY ordinary proficient archer using a bow. Archer and Archer Rangers add their bonuses to these rolls

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level of archer | Miss target | Outer ring | Middle ring | Center Ring | Central Ring |
| 1 or 2 | 1 | 2 to 5 | 6 to 8 | 9 to 19 | 20 |
| 3 or 4 | 1 | 2 to 4 | 5 to 7 | 8 to 19 | 20 |
| 5 or 6 | 1 | 2 or 3 | 4 to 7 | 8 to 19 | 20 |
| 7 |  | 1 or 2 | 3 to 7 | 8 to 18 | 19 or 20 |
| 8 |  | 1 or 2 | 3 to 6 | 7 to 18 | 19 or 20 |
| 9 |  | 1 | 2 to 6 | 7 to 18 | 19 or 20 |
| 10 |  |  | 1 to 5 | 6 to 18 | 19 or 20 |
| 11 |  |  | 1 to 4 | 5 to 18 | 19 or 20 |
| 12 |  |  | 1 to 3 | 4 to 17 | 18 to 20 |
| 13 |  |  | 1 or 2 | 3 to 17 | 18 to 20 |
| 14 |  |  | 1 | 2 to 16 | 17 to 20 |

**New Cleric Spell**

**AIM**

Level: 2

Component(s): V, S, M

Casting time: 2 segments

Range: self or one willing figure

Duration: one round per level of the Cleric

 Archer Ranger: 11th level 2 rounds, 12th 3 round, 13th 4 rounds and 14th 5 rounds)

Area of Effect: one target per throw or per shot

An AIM spell allows the cleric (or Archer) using a weapon that he/she is proficient at throwing (firing) to gain an extra 30 feet to the weapon’s range and a +1 to the accuracy of the throw/shot. Clerics can throw hammers for example. Archers could apply this spell to their bow or a number of throwable weapons like a hand ax, dagger, spear etc.

The material component is the weapon. The somatic component is the firing of the bow or throwing of the weapon. The verbal component is a single word stated aloud by the cleric/archer. (“hit”, “fly” etc. are common words used to evoke the magic of the memorized spell.

A number of arrows or thrown weapons can be fired/thrown during the spell’s duration.

The cleric or Archer can bestow this spell on a willing companion or ally who is proficient with a fired or thrown weapon. Thus Crossbows and slings could be added to the list of weapons. The class and alignment of the person on whom the spell is bestowed is immaterial.