

Cityscape, Part 1

Urban Class Features

By Ari Marmell



Even as a city can present different adventuring challenges than other environments, so do heroes with unusual abilities rise to meet those challenges. In a campaign that covers multiple settings, it hardly matters if some characters are more effective in one, and others in another; in fact, such myriad skills are all but essential. In a city-focused campaign, however, a traditional druid or ranger might find her abilities less useful than those of classes such as the **rogue** or the **bard**.



Of course, you can gear these classes toward adventuring in the city from the start. The urban **barbarian** is no wild warrior from a distant land, but a rage-driven streetfighter from the worst neighborhoods. The urban **druid** still seeks to manipulate the natural world while revering its powers, but she may be more interested in the ebb and flow of the city -- and the living things within -- than in the surrounding woods or distant fields.

Presented here are urban-oriented alternate class features for the barbarian, druid, **ranger**, scout (*Complete Adventurer*), and spirit shaman (*Complete Divine*) classes. Not all city-dwelling members of these classes possess these features, but the options exist for those who want them. In addition, while the **paladin** is hardly a wilderness-oriented class, her summoned mount is not appropriate for all city-focused campaigns, so she gains a few alternate class features as well.

Several class features presented here reference feats and mechanics found in *Cityscape*.

City-Shape

The ability to transform into an **animal** is the hallmark of the druid, so much so that even many urban druids choose to retain it. Some, however, prefer the ability to blend and maneuver within the streets of the city, sacrificing size for a wider range of forms.

Class: Druid.

Level: 5th.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain all the aspects of standard wild shape (except for the ability to wild shape into an elemental at high levels, which remains unchanged).

Benefit: At 5th level, the druid gains the ability to transform into an animal, as per the standard wild shape ability. She can do this once a day to start with, but the frequency of her wild shapes increases as per the standard druid advancement chart.

At 8th level, the druid does not gain the ability to transform into **Large** animals. Instead, she may transform into **Small** and **Medium vermin**, as well as animals.

At 11th level, the druid gains the ability to transform into **Tiny** animals and vermin.

At 12th level, the druid does not gain the ability to transform into **plant** creatures. Instead, she may transform into an animal- or vermin-based swarm, so long as it fits within her standard wild shaping **Hit Die** limits.

At 15th level, the druid does not gain the ability to transform into Huge animals. Instead, she gains the ability to transform into Large animals and vermin.

Special: The Natural Spell feat functions with city-shape just as it does standard wild shape.

City Soul

The most powerful druids can transform themselves into **elementals**, representatives of the building blocks of reality itself. A few urban druids, truly taken with the nature and order of the city, prefer more mundane forms.

Class: Druid.

Level: 16th.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain the wild shape (elemental) ability, or later improvements to that class feature.

Benefit: At 16th level, the druid can use her wild shape (or city-shape) ability to become a Small, Medium, or Large animated object (*MM* 13) once per day. These forms are in addition to her normal wild shape uses. In addition to the normal effects of wild shape, she gains all the animated object's extraordinary abilities, as well as many traits of the construct type (low-light vision, darkvision to 60 feet, and immunity to critical hits, poison, disease, paralysis, and stunning).

The precise form must be an object common to the city environment, such as a wagon, a statue, or the like. (Talk to your DM in advance to determine what sorts of forms are available and what are off-limits.)

The druid can assume the form of an animated object twice per day at 18th level, and three times per day at 20th level. At 20th level, she can use this ability to turn into a **Huge** animated object.

Special: The Natural Spell feat functions with city soul just as it does standard wild shape.

Crowd-Walker

Certain individuals are comfortable among the throngs of citizens in even the most densely packed city. They know how to maneuver deftly through such environs without impediment.

Class: Druid or ranger.

Level: 2nd (druid) or 7th (ranger).

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain woodland stride.

Benefit: When moving through a crowd, the crowd-walker moves at her normal rate, rather than requiring two squares of movement for every square as is normal. In addition, light debris does not impede her movement, and she treats heavy debris as light debris. Any other sort of rough terrain impedes her normally, however.

Ferocity

Where most barbarians define themselves by nigh-unstoppable rage, a few streetfighters and urban warriors have mastered different techniques. By working up a surge of adrenaline, they hit just as hard, and substantially faster, than their counterparts, while dodging the inevitable counterattack.

Class: Barbarian.

Level: 1st.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain rage, or any later improvements to that class feature, nor do you gain indomitable will.

Benefit: Once per day, the barbarian can enter a state of adrenaline-fueled fury, increasing both his physical might and his reaction time. He temporarily gains a +4 bonus to Strength and a +4 bonus to Dexterity, but he takes a -2 penalty on ranged attack rolls beyond short range (30 feet).

He can enter this state as an *immediate* action, even when flat-footed at the start of combat, so he may apply the enhanced Dexterity modifier to his initiative check.

While in a state of ferocity, the barbarian cannot use any Charisma- or Intelligence-based skills (except for Intimidate), the Concentration skill, or any abilities that require patience or concentration, nor can he cast spells or activate magic items that require a command word, a spell trigger (such as a wand), or spell completion (such as a scroll) to function. He can use any feat he has except item creation feats and metamagic feats. Ferocity lasts for a number of rounds equal to 4 + his Constitution modifier (if positive). The barbarian may prematurely end his state of ferocity. At the end of ferocity, he loses the ferocity modifiers and restrictions and become sickened (-2 on all attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks) for the duration of the current encounter (unless he is a 17th-level barbarian, at which point this limitation no longer applies). Abilities that normally render him immune to being sickened (such as the Strong Stomach feat, *Cityscape* 64) reduce the penalties to -1, but do not remove them entirely.

The barbarian can invoke ferocity only once per encounter. At 1st level he can use this ability once per day. At 4th level and every four levels thereafter, he can use it one additional time per day (to a maximum of six times per day at 20th level).

Greater Ferocity: At 11th level, his bonuses to Strength and Dexterity during ferocity each increase to +6. In addition, the duration of his ferocity increases to 5 + your Constitution modifier (if positive).

Shifting Stance: At 14th level, while in a state of ferocity, he gains a +1 dodge bonus to Armor Class and Reflex saves.

In addition, while in a state of ferocity, the barbarian can stand from prone as a *swift action* that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. If a foe that threatens him has a base attack bonus that is 4 points or more

higher than his barbarian level, however, she gains an attack of opportunity as normal. (These abilities replace indomitable will.)

Relentless Ferocity: At 17th level, the duration of his ferocity increases to 6 + his Constitution modifier (if positive), and he no longer become sickened at the end of his ferocity. In addition, the dodge bonus granted by his shifting stance ability becomes +2.

Unstoppable Ferocity: At 20th level, the barbarian's bonuses to Strength and Dexterity during ferocity each increase to +8.

Go to Ground

Just as most druids and scouts have an almost supernatural ability to avoid being tracked in the wild, so too have others learned to blend in so fully with the urban throng that nobody remembers their passage.

Class: Druid or scout.

Level: 3rd.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain trackless step.

Benefit: When you choose to "lay low," you become all but impossible to find without magical means. All attempts to find you with Urban Tracking (*Cityscape* 64) simply fail outright.

Hidden Stalker

For those who know how to use them, the ever-shifting concealment of the throng and the back alleys of the city provide just as much opportunity for stealth as the shadows of the trees or the early morning fog.



Class: Ranger or scout.

Level: 13th (ranger) or 8th (scout).

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain the camouflage ability, and your hide in plain sight ability (gained at higher levels) is modified.

Benefit: Upon first gaining this ability, the hidden stalker no longer takes a -5 penalty on Hide checks when moving faster than half **speed**, nor does she take the standard -10 penalty when attempting to hide during a brief distraction. In addition, the presence of other people within 5 feet is considered sufficient cover for her to hide, making it easy for her to vanish into a crowd.

At the second level of this ability, the hidden stalker gains hide in plain sight, but this ability functions in any urban environment, rather than only in natural environments as written.

Iron Constitution

Natives to the worst and filthiest areas of the city have to contend with stench and illnesses of a sort rarely found in the wild, yet some have become so inured that they are all but immune.

Class: Druid.

Level: 4th.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain resist nature's lure.

Benefit: The druid gains Strong Stomach (*Cityscape* 64) as a bonus feat, even if she does not meet the prerequisites. If she already has this feat, she may instead choose any feat for which she does meet the prerequisites.

In addition, the druid gains a +2 bonus on saves against disease.

Riposte

While most scouts rely on mobility to overcome their opponents, some focus instead on taking advantage of the openings their foes provide in combat when making their own attacks.

Class: Scout.

Level: 1st.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain skirmish or any later improvements to that class feature.

Ability: Any time the scout attacks a foe that has made a **melee** or ranged weapon attack against her within the past round (whether or not the attack hit you), her attack deals an extra 1d6 points of damage. This extra damage increases by 1d6 for every four levels gained above 1st (2d6 at 5th, 3d6 at 9th, 4d6 at 13th, and 5d6 at 17th).

This extra damage applies only against living creatures that have a discernable anatomy. **Undead**, **constructs**, **oozes**, plants, **incorporeal** creatures, and creatures immune to extra damage from critical hits are not vulnerable

to this additional damage. The scout must be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach such a spot. She can apply this extra damage to ranged attacks, but only if the target is within 30 feet.

At 3rd level, the scout gains a +1 competence bonus to Armor Class against any creature to which she has dealt riposte damage, as described above. This bonus lasts until the start of her next turn. If she deals riposte damage to more than one creature in a round, she gains this bonus against all of them; it is not limited to a single foe. This bonus improves by 1 for every four levels gained above 3rd (+2 at 7th, +3 at 11th, +4 at 15th, and +5 at 19th level).

The scout loses this ability when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Rival Organization

A few urban rangers, devoted to a particular organization, guild, or church, prefer to focus their studies and their efforts against a rival group, instead of a specific race.

Class: Ranger.

Level: 1st.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain favored enemy or any later improvements to that class feature.

Benefit: At 1st level, the ranger chooses one particular organization that he has studied in depth. This could be a guild, a noble house, a church, or any similar specifically defined entity. (See Chapter 3: Politics and Power in *Cityscape* for definitions and samples of these groups.) Due to his knowledge of how the organization operates, he gains a +2 bonus on Bluff, Intimidate, Gather Information, Knowledge (local), and Sense Motive checks made against, or pertaining to, members of that organization. Likewise, due to his heightened awareness around these individuals, he gains a +2 bonus to Armor Class against members of this group.

At 5th level and every five levels thereafter (10th, 15th, and 20th level), the ranger may select an additional rival organization. In addition, at each such interval, the bonus against any one rival organization (including the one just selected, if so desired) increases by 2.

Roof-Dweller

Those who grow up on the streets of the city are often equally at home *above* the streets, where the rooftops provide an unseen highway.

Class: Barbarian.

Level: 1st.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain fast movement.

Benefit: The barbarian gains Roofwalker (*Cityscape* 63) as a bonus feat, even if he does not meet the prerequisites.

Additionally, as of 6th level, he need not meet the prerequisites for the Roof-Jumper feat (*Cityscape* 62) if he

chooses to take it, though it is not a bonus feat; the barbarian must still spend a feat slot to acquire it.

Skilled City-Dweller

The various wilderness-oriented skills are valuable indeed, but make less sense -- and may prove less useful -- for an urban character.

Class: Any class that has one or more of the "skills replaced," as listed below, on its list of class skills.

Level: 1st.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain the "skills replaced" as listed below.

Benefit: The skilled city-dweller gains one or more skills as class skills, at the expense of other skills. If she does not have the proper skill to lose, she cannot gain the skill it grants as an urban benefit.

Note that she need not swap out all these skills. A skilled city-dweller may pick and choose, but she cannot later change her mind.

Skilled City-Dweller

SkillGained	SkillReplaced
Gather Information	Handle Animal
Knowledge (local)	Knowledge (nature)
Sense Motive	Survival
Tumble	Ride

Stand Fast

While most paladins enjoy the companionship of a summoned mount, those who live amidst large populations often prefer to devote their energies toward protecting those around them and defending the city from outside threats.

Class: Paladin.

Level: 5th.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain a special mount.

Benefit: Starting at 5th level, a paladin may use the following two abilities, once per day each, as an immediate action. At 11th level, she may use each ability twice per day, and at 18th level she may use each ability three times per day.

- Add the paladin's divine grace (Charisma modifier) on the saving throw of all allies within 20 feet. She must add this bonus on the same save for each of them; thus, she could add to everyone's Reflex save, or everyone's **Will save**, but she could not grant some a bonus on Reflex and others a bonus on Will. She does not gain any bonus for using this ability, but neither does she lose her own divine grace bonus.

This bonus lasts for 1 round.

- Add the paladin's divine grace (Charisma modifier) on any roll she makes to resist a bull rush, disarm, grapple, sunder, or trip attack. She cannot use this ability when she is making such an attack; it is defensive only.

Streetfighter

The ability to take a blow is valuable, but on the violent and crowded streets of the city, the winner of a brawl or a duel is often the one who can hit hardest and fastest.

Class: Barbarian.

Level: 7th.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain **damage reduction** at 7th level, or any of the improvements to damage reduction at higher levels.

Benefit: The barbarian gains the ability to swiftly bring the fight to his foe and to hit him hard.

- At 7th level, the critical threat range of any charge attack he makes, or any attack he makes against a **flat-footed** foe, increases by 1. (Thus, a greataxe would threaten a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.) This ability stacks with the Improved Critical feat or the *keen* weapon enhancement.
- At 10th level, the barbarian can make a single turn, up to 90 degrees, during a charge.
- At 13th level, the barbarian can charge through squares occupied by his allies or by noncombatants.
- At 16th level, the barbarian can move up to four times his speed when making a charge attack, rather than double.
- At 19th level, the barbarian acquires a "cleaving charge." If he drops an opponent on a charge attack, and he has at least 10 feet of movement remaining, he can immediately make a new charge attack against a second foe. If he drops that foe and still has movement remaining, he can charge a third, and so on until he either fails to drop a foe, or runs out of movement. All the other standard rules for a charge attack still apply, including the fact that he must have at least 10 feet of distance to make the charge.
- Even if he somehow gains the ability to make multiple attacks on a charge (such as with the *lion's charge* spell from the *Spell Compendium*), he must drop the foe on the *first* attack to use this ability. Similarly, he cannot use this ability and Cleave or Great Cleave in the same round.

Urban Companion

The fearsome animal companions who accompany some casters in the wild are indeed a boon in combat, but a hulking wolf or creeping tiger is out of place in an urban environment. Some characters believe that small and subtle is of greater value than massive and mighty.

Class: Druid or ranger.

Level: 1st (druid) or 4th (ranger).

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain an animal companion.

Benefit: The character gains the companionship of a smaller but far more intelligent creature than she otherwise would have. This is identical to the sorcerer's ability to summon a familiar (*PH 52*), including all benefits granted and gained by the familiar, except as noted below. Her functional level for determining the abilities of the companion is equal to her druid level or one-half her ranger level.

- She does not lose **experience points** if her urban companion is slain, and she requires only 24 hours to replace one who is lost.
- Her urban companion has total hit points equal to 3/4 her own **hit points**, rather than half as per a familiar.
- The urban companion gains the ability to speak with other animals of its kind when she has an effective master level of 1st, rather than 7th.
- When she reaches an effective master level of 7th, she can speak with animals of her companion's kind, as per *speak with animals*. This is a **supernatural ability** that functions constantly, and it requires only a **free action** to reactivate if somehow dispelled.

Urban Sense

Druids native to the sprawling city master a widely differing range of skills than their wilderness-based counterparts.

Class: Druid.

Level: 1st.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain nature sense.

Benefit: She gains a +2 bonus on Knowledge (local) checks and Sense Motive checks.

Urban Tracker

Many rangers of the city learn to hunt people down through interrogation and questioning, since following tracks is often all but impossible on the busy streets.

Class: Ranger.

Level: 1st.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain Track as a bonus feat.

Benefit: He gains Urban Tracking (*Cityscape 64*) as a bonus feat.

Voice of the City

For some, the ability to make oneself understood in the midst of any culture is of far greater value than the ability to influence the beasts of the wild.

Class: Druid, ranger, or spirit shaman.

Level: 1st.

Replaces: If you select this class feature, you do not gain wild empathy.

Benefit: Through a combination of body language, tone, and expression, the voice of the city can make herself understood by those who do not speak her language, and she can interpret their meaning the same way. Simple concepts that can be conveyed in a few words (such as "Help!" or "Drop your weapon!") can be conveyed automatically. More complex concepts require her to make a roll: d20 + her class level + either her Wisdom modifier (if trying to understand someone else) or Charisma modifier (if trying to make someone else understand her). Roll each only once per conversation. If she fails, she cannot try to communicate with that specific individual via this ability until she has gained a level. (Thus, it is possible, if she succeeds in one roll but fails in the other, to hold a conversation where she can understand the other speaker but he cannot understand you, or vice-versa.)

The **DC** of the roll depends on creature type and how closely the individual's language is related to any of her own. The ability works most effectively with other humanoids. In this case, if the individual's language uses the same alphabet as any language she knows, the DC is 20. If it does not, the DC is 30. (See *Speak Language*, *PH* 82, for this information.)

The above DCs increase by 5 if the speaker is a **fey**, **giant**, or **monstrous humanoid**; they increase by 10 if the speaker is an elemental. If the other individual is of any other creature type, she cannot communicate via this ability.

If the speaker is deliberately trying to make himself understood, the voice of the city gains a +2 **circumstance bonus** on this roll. If she is attempting to interpret his speech from outside normal conversational distance (such as eavesdropping), she takes a -4 penalty on this roll.

In addition, she gains *Speak Language* as a class skill.

About the Author

Ari Marmell has spent time on several creative endeavors, not the least of which is [Cityscape](#), a supplement that helps DMs bring campaign cities to life.

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