

0.1 Ranged Weapons v1.2

It's a shame that in Pathfinder, bows seem to be almost the only viable ranged weapon. (Thrown javelins are also useful for some melee warriors. Guns require dedication to class.) This mod aims to make slings and crossbows more useful.

0.1.1 Slings: faster

If you have BAB +1, you may load a sling during movement using the same rules as drawing a weapon during movement (*by combining it with that Move action; see CRB 187*); this still provokes attacks of opportunity in all the squares you move from and to. This benefit also applies to other sling-like weapons that normally require a move action to load.

If you have Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Sling), the damage dice for slings increase by 1 step on the weapon size/damage dice scale (to 1d6 for medium, 1d4 for small) and its range increment becomes 80.

0.1.2 Crossbows: heavier models for strong users

Pathfinder features three main classes of crossbow, with different reloading mechanisms. The lightest (Hand Crossbow) is reloaded by pulling back the string by hand. The next one reloads by pulling a lever (Light Crossbow) as well as using stirrups, and the biggest one uses a wind-up mechanism (Heavy Crossbow). What changes in this Mod is that the Hand Crossbow and Light Crossbow gain a Strength rating required to reload them. If the crossbowman isn't strong enough to meet this rating, he can only load the crossbow by succeeding at a Strength check with a difficulty of 10 + the difference in Strength. Failure on this check means the crossbowman wastes his action. In addition, the Rapid Reload feat can't be used by a character with insufficient Strength.

Because the light crossbow uses stirrups, reloading it cannot be combined with a move action. Reloading a hand crossbow can be combined with a move action (although this provokes in all squares you move from and to). In addition, hand crossbows are now simple weapons.

Strength	Hand Crossbow Damage	Light Crossbow Damage	Weight
—	1d3	1d6	50%
7	1d4	1d8	normal
14	1d6	2d6	150%
20	1d8	3d6	200%
26	2d6	4d6	300%

(Even heavier crossbows appear at every +6 strength intervals. Weight doubles every two intervals. Use the progression for abnormally large weapons to determine damage. Note that these effects stack with oversized weapons; fear the giant with a crossbow!)

A hand or light crossbow can be enchanted with the Adaptive weapon property (Ultimate Equipment page 134) in which case it automatically adjusts to the maximum Strength at which the wielder can use it without trouble.

0.1.3 Explanation

Although slings are the racially preferred weapon of halflings, they get very little love in the rules. A halfling adventurer is better off using a bow. And so are others; loading a sling is just too slow, even if they offer the juicy option of adding Strength to damage.

The basic fix is simple. Allow reloading as part of a move. To load as a free action (allowing full attacks) takes a feat or a racial weapon. This is appropriate because adding Strength to ranged damage on is a powerful ability to get on a weapon that doesn't have to be Mighty/Adaptive, and that also has a decent range increment, so it shouldn't be entirely free.

Historically, slings were a dangerous weapon that worked well at long range, but also hard to master. Therefore as an Exotic Weapon its stats improve.

0.1.4 Version history and future

1.0 This is the first version. As it stands now, there doesn't seem to be an obvious need or niche to enhance any other ranged weapons.

1.1 Altered damage progression to match the standard progression for larger weapons.

1.2 Drastically rewrote the crossbow section to be much simpler.

Used information about the reloading mechanism of crossbows to inspire mechanics.

Can no longer combine move with reloading of light crossbow, but can use Rapid Reload again.

Can now use the Adaptive property on crossbows.

Set the minimum strength for normal reloading at 7 because that's as low as point buy without racial ability penalties will let you go.

With the first actual upgrade at Str 14, weaklings still need the heavy crossbow to reload during combat, although they could carry a preloaded light crossbow with high strength.

By making high-Strength crossbows heavier, we put a brake on wizards who carry around lots of super-powered crossbows.