

HEIRLOOM ITEMS



Heirloom items are those that have a special meaning to a player in the context of their story, either from their background or something that evolves during play. These items "grow" or "level up" with the player.

ABILITIES AND UNLOCKING THEM

The format here is flexible, but what I have done is chosen three possible Ability options per Level Range of the PC (except for the first). From those, I will choose one to unlock during that PC's time within that Level Range.

For example: The detailed description of the item (hidden from the PC) could show 3 Abilities for me to choose from between levels 4-6. Once I unlock a Theme Ability for that range (typically at a meaningful moment in the game), the other two options disappear, though I may choose to move them to the next level ranges as potential future options.

Let's talk about the process of setting this up!

THEMES

To help brainstorm ability options and to better match them to the individual, I like to come up with 3 to 4 Themes.

In this example, for a Shortbow-wielding Ranger who has close ties to family and is at home in the wild, I may come up with the following:

THEME EXAMPLES (RANGER)

Theme	Possible Ability Types
Archer	<i>Offensive, Range</i>
Protector	<i>Defensive, Healing, Protection</i>
Nature	<i>Offensive, Crowd Control, The Wild</i>
Path	<i>Movement, Stealth, The Wild</i>

ABILITIES

Now that we have some Themes and Ability Types, it can be easier to decide on some possible Abilities.

In this example, an "Archer" themed Ability will be focused on Combat (Offensive). I'll call this "Initial" ability Nature's Cover:

Nature's Cover: *Gain Advantage on attacks from cover of any kind, while in the wild.*

This is essentially the Ability I have chosen for the (PC's) level 1-3 range to start it off. Let's look at some examples for the next few Level Ranges. Note that I have some "FREE" and "INITIAL" abilities that will be given regardless:



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EXAMPLE: SILVERLEAF (SHORTBOW)

Level Theme	Possible Abilities
1-3 (INITIAL)	Nature's Cover: Advantage on attacks from cover, while in the wild
(INITIAL)	Counts as a magical item, Attunement required
4-6 (FREE)	+1 Attacks
(Archer)	Poison Shot: [Bonus Action] Once per short rest, add 1d6 Poison damage to a successful attack
(Nature)	Entangle: [Action] Tap the ground with this bow. One enemy you can see within 30' is Restrained by roots
(Path)	Falling Leaf: [Bonus Action] Once per long rest you may fall safely from great heights, as per the Featherfall spell
7-10 (FREE)	Silverleaf Aura: Silver leaves can be seen falling gracefully from it, disappearing before touching the ground
(Nature)	Plant Growth: [Action] Once per long rest, as per the spell
(Protector)	Deflect: [Reaction] You can shoot and deflect one non-magical ranged attack (within range) as per Monk's "Deflect Missiles" (cannot "catch" them)
(Path)	Silver Steps: [Bonus Action] Once per long rest, "Pass Without a Trace" as per the spell

NOTES

- Flexibility** - Your number of level ranges, themes, abilities per theme, and the number unlocked per range can (and should) be determined by you!
- Ability Power** - Determining which abilities to use in order to keep them from being over/under powered can be hard. Look at spells and class abilities in those level ranges for some ideas.
- Balance Disclaimer** - Abilities here are not necessarily balanced and are used simply as examples.