

Behind the Threat: The Sith, Part 3

Design

Matthew Grau

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The last two installments of "Behind the Threat: The Sith" talked mostly about the fact and flavor of the Sith. This article digs into the game mechanics of designing appropriately savage dark side characters.

Not all Sith are fallen Jedi. There are as many paths to darkness as there are paths in life. One of the most infamous and powerful Sith was Darth Sidious, a man named Palpatine who was a noble and a politician (growing out of the Noble heroic class). Some were warriors or survivors of one sort or another, whose prowess and/or Force-sensitivity drew the attention of a Sith lord (growing out of the Soldier or Scout heroic classes). Those who live in the shadows of society may already be inclined to the obsessions of the Sith simply due to the nature of their lifestyle, especially if they are Force-sensitive (growing out of the Scoundrel heroic class).



Others are Jedi who fell or those whose control of the Force was developed outside the Jedi tradition. Darth Vader, the scourge of the Jedi, was in fact a powerful and respected one himself until the lure of the dark side claimed him. Perhaps the easiest explanation for a Force-using character to have strayed down the path of the Sith is that he lived in a world where falling to the dark side was a regular concern.

Meeting the Requirements

The first threshold on the path of the Sith is to gain access to the Sith apprentice prestige class. To do so, your character must be at least 7th level, have Use the Force as a trained skill, and have the Force Sensitivity and Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber) feats. He must also have acquired a Dark Side Score equal to his Wisdom and be a member of the Sith tradition, but these are both accomplished through roleplaying. The Force Sensitivity feat (which provides access to the Use the Force skill) and the Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber) feat are available only as starting feats to the Jedi heroic class.

An easy way to speed you along your path is to have your character acquire at least one level in the Jedi class. Remember that this Jedi training does not have to be as a part of the Order; it can be from a variety of traditions similar to the Jedi Order or simply be the first step of training by a Sith master.

Don't want your character to have been a Jedi or to have had Jedi-like training? You can meet the requirements using your non-class dependent feats,



which are gained at 1st level, 3rd level, 6th level, and every three levels thereafter. At 1st level, by purchasing the Force Sensitivity feat, you are allowed to treat Use the Force as a class skill, which you can then choose as one of your starting trained skills. Later, choose Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber), and you now have a character eligible for the Sith apprentice prestige class, regardless of his background.



If your character is Human, it's even easier because he receives one bonus feat and one bonus trained skill at creation. For example, you can choose Force Sensitivity and Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber) as your character's starting feats and make Use the Force your bonus trained skill (which he has access to through the former feat).

The simplest option is to simply declare your character's first class to be Jedi, in which case you gain everything you need to eventually become Sith.



To develop Force powers during this time, your character needs to meet two of the same requirements -- having the Force Sensitivity feat and being trained in Use the Force. Once you meet those requirements, you can select the Force Training feat. This feat is not offered as a bonus feat in any heroic class, so the only way to get it is through the feats your character acquires as a result of character level, not class level.

Choosing a Class

Once you figure out how to meet the requirements for the Sith apprentice prestige class, you have room to play. You have at least six, if not seven, levels.

- If you wish your Sith to be manipulative and deceitful, the Noble class is the way to go. Starting in the Noble heroic class nets you more trained skills than any other heroic class, among which are Deception, Gather Information, and Persuasion.
- Starting in the Scout heroic class nets you the second largest number of trained skills, among which are those that make a fiercely independent Sith, such as Climb, Endurance, Jump, Survival, and Swim, as well as the Shake It Off feat.
- The Scoundrel heroic class, as a starting class, nets you the manipulative ways of the Noble (though with fewer trained skills), adding the benefits of Acrobatics and Stealth for those Sith wishing to be shadow warriors.
- For those on the path of a deadly predator, starting in the Soldier heroic class is the way to go. Though your character won't have many trained skills, he will be geared toward aspects of combat, and the sheer number of starting weapon proficiencies makes up for it.

These guidelines are appropriate for choosing the heroic class in which to begin your character's path towards the Sith. Once you begin to multiclass, it becomes more about the feats and talents. We'll discuss those more in the next section.

Choosing a Species

Some species are predisposed to the Sith or have natural advantages that lend themselves well to the darker path.

- Bothans can make dangerous Sith, but only when the Rule of Two is in place. Their manipulative and

crafty natures make them vicious in a world of stealth and guile. If they have Gather Information as a trained skill, they gain Skill Focus (Gather Information) as a bonus feat, and they have access to the Bothan SpyNet.

- Some Quarren who endured the devastation of their homeworld during the Galactic Civil War live with so much pain and hate that they might be drawn naturally to the ways of the dark side.
- Natural hunters, Force-sensitive Rodians can find their aggression and tenacity bringing them toward the world of a Sith warrior. Their Heightened Awareness and low-light vision can be of great benefit to the Rodian Sith warrior, giving them the ability to notice danger before many others and to strike more effectively under cover of darkness. However, they are poor deceivers (thanks to their -2 Charisma) and are better suited for more violent pursuits.
- Sullustans are a race whose curiosity can easily lead to recklessness, and it is those same traits that can bring about the downfall of the Sullustan Jedi who finds himself fascinated by the ways of the dark side. Like Rodians, their darkvision and Heightened Awareness can be an advantage for the Sith warrior, giving them the ability to notice danger in advance and even more utility for striking from the shadows.
- The violent and driven nature of the Trandoshans lends itself well to the path of the Sith, as do their natural combative abilities. They make deadly Sith warriors, with their darkvision, Limb Regeneration, and Natural Armor abilities, plus the bonus Toughness feat. They can take more punishment than most.
- Though Twi'leks often try to avoid open conflict, their tendency to live in the shadows can bring those who master the Force to the stealth and guile of the Sith who live in the ages of the Rule of Two. Their +2 Charisma and Deceptive ability make them masters of manipulation.
- The adventurous nature of the Zabrak likewise can be drawn to explore the mysteries of the dark side, and their adaptation to living in a tough environment serves them well as Sith warriors (as evidenced by Darth Maul). Their Heightened Awareness and Superior Defenses abilities are of particular use.
- Still, Humans make up the bulk of the Sith. The natural chaos of their emotions is capable of producing the warping passion necessary to create a Sith Lord. Many of the most powerful, terrifying, and notorious Sith Lords through history have been Human or near-Human, including Exar Kun, Darth Malak, Darth Bane, Darth Sidious, Darth Vader, and Darth Krayt. Furthermore, their bonus feat and bonus trained skill give them more room to play when developing on their way to the dark side.

Possible Paths

Although there are many ways to craft a Sith, this section covers three main paths: the Sith Manipulator, the Sith Warrior, and the Fallen Jedi. Let's walk through the start of each kind of character through the final step of becoming a Sith apprentice at 7th level in terms of skills, feats, talents, and powers.

The Sith Manipulator

At 1st level, this character begins in the Noble heroic class. He begins with Linguist, Weapon Proficiency (pistols), and Weapon Proficiency (simple weapons) as starting feats, plus the Force Sensitivity feat. For talents, he begins with Wealth from the Lineage tree. He also begins with Deception, Gather Information, Knowledge (Bureaucracy), Perception, Persuasion, and Use the Force as trained skills (plus any additional based on his Intelligence bonus). The corruption destiny is his path.

By the time he reaches 3rd level, he has added the Strong in the Force and Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber) feats, as well as the Presence talent from the Influence tree.

By 5th level, he has increased both his Wisdom and Charisma attributes by one point each. He also adds the



Force Training feat and the Weaken Resolve talent from the Influence tree. The Force Training feat confers one Force power, *mind trick* (plus, most likely, a few extra based on the character's Wisdom bonus).

At 7th level, he completes the Noble heroic class and enters the Sith apprentice prestige class, finally reaching his goal. He either has behaved in such a way to garner the appropriate number of Dark Side Points or will automatically get them by falling to the corruption of the Sith and completing his destiny. He has added the Force Deception talent from the Sith tree and the Force Training feat twice more, giving him *Force lightning* and *rebuke* (plus possible others based on his Wisdom bonus). He also chooses a new destiny, either destruction or discovery.

The Sith Warrior

At 1st level, this character begins in the Soldier heroic class. He begins with Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (medium), Weapon Proficiency (pistols), Weapon Proficiency (rifles), and Weapon Proficiency (simple weapons) as starting feats, plus the Force Sensitivity feat. For talents, he begins with the Armored Defense from the Armor Specialist tree. He also begins with the Initiative, Perception, and Use the Force as trained skills (plus any additional skills based on his Intelligence bonus). The corruption destiny is his path.

By the time he reaches 3rd level, he has added the Weapon Focus (lightsaber) and Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber) feats, as well as the Penetrating Attack talent from the Weapon Specialist tree.

By 5th level, he has increased both his Strength and Dexterity attributes by one point each. He also adds the Force Training feat and the Power of the Dark Side talent from the Dark Side force talent tree. The Force Training feat confers one Force power, *dark rage* (plus possible others based on the character's Wisdom bonus).



At 7th level, he completes the Soldier heroic class and enters the Sith apprentice prestige class, finally reaching his goal. Like the Manipulator, he either has behaved in such a way to garner the appropriate number of Dark Side Points or will automatically get them by falling to the corruption of the Sith and completing his destiny. He also adds the Deflect talent from the Lightsaber Combat tree, either the Dual Weapon Mastery I or Power Attack feat (depending on whether his Dexterity or Strength qualifies), and the Force Training feat, which gives him the *Force slam* power. He also chooses a new corruption or destruction destiny.

The Fallen Jedi

At 1st level, this character begins in the Jedi heroic class. He begins with Force Sensitivity, Weapon Proficiency (lightsabers), and Weapon Proficiency (simple weapons) as starting feats, plus the Force Training feat, which yields him the Force power *surge* (plus possible others based on his Wisdom bonus). For talents, he begins with the Deflect talent from the Lightsaber Combat tree. He also begins with Acrobatics and Use the Force as trained skills (plus any additional skills based on his Intelligence bonus). The corruption destiny is his path.

By the time he reaches 3rd level, he has added the Force Training feat twice, which gives him the Force powers *mind trick* and *move object* (plus possible others based on his Wisdom modifier) and the Force Perception talent from the Sense talent tree.

By 5th level, he has increased both his Strength and his Wisdom attributes by one point each. He has also added the Force Training feat, giving him the Force power *farseeing*, as well as the Visions talent from the



Sense talent tree.

At 7th level, he completes the Jedi heroic class and enters the Sith apprentice prestige class, finally reaching his goal. Like the Sith Manipulator, he either has behaved in such a way to garner the appropriate number of Dark Side Points or will automatically get them by falling to the corruption of the Sith and completing his destiny. He has also added the Dark Scourge talent from the Sith talent tree as well as the Force Training feat twice, which gives him the Force powers *Force grip* and *negate energy* (plus any additional powers based on his Wisdom bonus). He also chooses a new corruption or destruction destiny.



Next Time

In the next installment of "Behind the Threat: The Sith," we'll explore the tools of the Sith as well as advancement paths for Sith characters.

Feel free to post your thoughts or questions about this article in [this message board thread](#).

About the Author

Matthew Grau has been a professional writer and intellectual property developer since the age of 17. He began his career in the adventure games industry, writing books and designing game rules for such popular titles and licenses as **Dungeons & Dragons**, *Marvel Super Heroes*, *Frank Herbert's Dune*, and *Star Trek*. In the late 90s, Matthew moved into the film and television arena. He has written scripts and directed productions for clients such as Microsoft and Nintendo, and he created and wrote the Curiosity Cafe television show and kick-off feature film on a first-look agreement with the Jim Henson Company. He is an award-winning screenwriter with projects currently in the Hollywood studio system.

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