

STAR WARS®

ROLEPLAYING GAME



ALTERNATIVE FORCE POINT SYSTEM

Alternative Force Point System

A Star Wars Roleplaying Game House Rule^{i,ii}

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Force Points

Force Points

Force Points benefit a character to call either consciously or unconsciously upon the Force to aid them in a difficult endeavor. Characters without the Force-sensitive feat start with one Force Point and can earn a maximum of five. Characters with the Force-sensitive feat start with two Force Points and can earn an infinite number.ⁱⁱⁱ

Gaining Force Points

Force Points are gained in two ways: each time a character gains a level, he gains one Force Point, and each time a character performs an act of dramatic heroism or evil, he gains one Force Point.ⁱⁱⁱ

Dramatic Heroism

Light or enlightened characters can gain Force Points by performing dramatic valor. To qualify as an act of dramatic heroism, an action must fulfill three criteria:

- It must accomplish a significant task in the defense of good or the defeat of evil.
- It must occur at a dramatically appropriate time (usually the climax of the adventure).
- It should require significant risk on the part of the hero.ⁱⁱⁱ

Dramatic Evil

Dark or tainted characters can gain Force Points by performing dramatic evil. To qualify as an act of dramatic evil, an action must fulfill three criteria:

- It must accomplish a significant task in the defense of evil or the defeat of good.
- It must occur at a dramatically appropriate time (usually the climax of the adventure).
- It should require significant risk on the part of the hero.

Calling upon the Force

When spending a Force Point, a Force Sensitive Character must declare if she is calling upon the Light Side of the Force, or the Dark Side of the Force. If the character is experiencing emotions conducive to the dark side, and she wants to call upon the light side, she must first make a Will saving throw (DC 10 + number of Dark Side Points possessed). If the character fails the Will save, she calls upon the dark side regardless of choice.

Only one Force Point may be spent during a round. A character may spend it at any point during the round.^{iv} It applies to all subsequent d20 rolls until that character's turn comes up the next round.

The number of bonus dice awarded by the Force Point depends on the character's level when the Force Point is spent (not earned) and whether or not she is calling on the Light or Dark Side, or is not Force-sensitive at all.^v

Character Level	Non-Force Sensitive	Bonus Dice Light Side	Bonus Dice Dark Side
1 st -3 rd	1d6	1d6	2d6
4 th -6 th	1d6	2d6	3d6
7 th -9 th	2d6	3d6	4d6
10 th -12 th	2d6	4d6	4d6
13 th -15 th	3d6	5d6	4d6
16 th -18 th	3d6	6d6	5d6
19 th -20 th	4d6	7d6	5d6

The Dark Side and the Light Side

Dark Side Points and Light Side Points merely measure a character's affiliation with either alignment of the Force. Due to the seductive nature of the dark side, it is far easier to gain Dark Side Points than Light Side Points. There are penalties and benefits for gaining either association as well.

Gaining Dark Side Points

Characters continue to gain Dark Side Points as written in the *Revised Core Rulebook* and expanded on through the *SWRPG FAQ*. There are five ways for a character not consumed by the dark side to gain a Dark Side Point; due to the greed of the dark side, dark characters only gain Dark Side Points for the first and last reasons listed below.^{vi}

- Using the Force while feeling fear, anger, hatred, pride, jealousy, greed, vengeance, etc.^{vii}
- Using a Force Point to call upon the dark side.
- Using a dark side Force-based skill.
- Using a dark side Force-based feat.
- Performing an evil act.^{viii}

Dark Side Characters

The dark side leeches on a character in stages. When a character's Dark Side Points equals one-half of his Wisdom score (rounded down), he is considered tainted. When a tainted character receives a Dark Side Point, he must make a Wisdom check (DC 10 + the number of Dark Side Points possessed). Failing this means the character is considered to be dark; possessing a number of Dark Side Points greater than or equal to his Wisdom score also means that he is considered dark.

Tainted: The character gains +2 bonus to dark-side skills, but a -4 penalty to light-side skills. When he levels, he must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 5 + the number of Dark Side Points possessed at the time of advancement) or suffer the permanent effect of the Dark Side (see below).

Dark: The character gains +4 bonus to dark-side skills, but a -8 penalty to light-side skills. When he levels, he must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10 + the number of Dark Side Points possessed at the time of advancement) or suffer the permanent effect of the Dark Side (see below).^{ix}

Permanent Effects of the Dark Side

If a character fails the Fortitude saving throw when leveling, he permanently loses 1 point of Strength, Dexterity or Constitution to demonstrate the physically corrupting effect of the dark side. The player chooses which ability to reduce, but no ability can be reduced twice in succession (at two different levels).

If a tainted or dark character is redeemed, the ability losses from the dark side remain. These penalties may only be regained in the process of leveling.^x

Atoning

A tainted character can atone to rid himself of the shackles of the dark side. The dark side does not allow this process to be easy or without sacrifice. For a character to atone, he must spend a Force Point at the beginning of a one-month period. Meditation and self-reflection must also be accomplished during this time. For that month, he must completely resist the temptation of the dark side. Giving in to the dark side during this month means that he loses the Force Point and has to begin anew in his atonement.^{xi}

Additionally, by earning Light Side Points (see below), a tainted character can reduce the number of Dark Side Points he has to one less than half of his Wisdom score (rounded down), and remove his taint. Naturally, the dark side does not reward the tainted character with a Force Point for performing such an act. A dark character cannot atone, although he can reduce his number of Dark Side Points by earning Light Side Points. Lastly, the effects of the skill Force Light may reduce Dark Side Points.

Redeeming Dark Side Characters

By performing an extreme act of dramatic heroism without calling on the Force – using a Force Point, Force skill or Force feat – can potentially redeem a dark character. This act requires extreme personal cost, selflessness and serves to benefit the galactic balance. If successful, the character gains no Force Points and the character's Dark Side Points are reduced to one less than one-half of the character's Wisdom score, rounded down. Additionally, as a final toll on the character, the dark side strips away all Force Points for the character, leaving them dangerously teetering on the edge of becoming tainted again, assuming they live at all.^{xii}

Gaining Light Side Points

The light side is not as seductive as its counterpart. Evil begets evil and twists to quickly consume. Light Side Points act in opposition to Dark Side Points. In other words, if a character already has a Dark Side Point and she gains a Light Side Point, the two cancel each other out. The converse is also true, so that a character with one Light Side Point who uses a dark side Force-based skill earns a Dark Side Point and it cancels the Light Side Point. The only way to gain a Light Side Point is to perform an act of dramatic heroism, as listed above.^{xiii}

Light Side Characters

More elusive to master than the dark side, the light side provides better long-term benefits. When a character's number of Light Side Points plus her Wisdom modifier is greater than or equal to eight, she is considered enlightened; when the number of Light Side Points plus

her Wisdom modifier is greater than or equal to sixteen, she is considered light.^{xiv}

Enlightened: The character gains +2 bonus to light-side skills.

Light: The character gains +4 bonus to light-side skills. When she levels, she gets to make a Fortitude check (DC 30 minus the number of Light Side Points possessed at the time of advancement); success means that she gains the long-term effects of the light side (see below).

Long-Term Light Side Effects

As the dark side withers the body away, the light side rejuvenates it and allows the body greater longevity. While this impact does not allow for immortality, the greater life span comes as a definite benefit to the taxing requirements that a light side Force-user must maintain throughout her life. Typically, a light character lives two to three times the average age of her species. All age ranges adult and above receive the multiplying factor, based on the age chart found in Table 6-2 of the *Revised Core Rules*.^{xv}

Falling Towards the Dark Side

The path of the light side is difficult and laboring. The lure of the dark side remains ever powerful. If a character walking the path of the light side earns a Dark Side Point, he grows closer to the dark side. Additionally, performing an act of dramatic evil completely thrusts a character from the light and immediately taints the character; she loses all Light Side Points and gains a number of Dark Side Points equal to one-half of her Wisdom (rounded up) plus one. The dark side rewards this act with a Dark Side Point, just as it would reward a dark or tainted character. The only way to return towards the light side is to atone, as mentioned above.

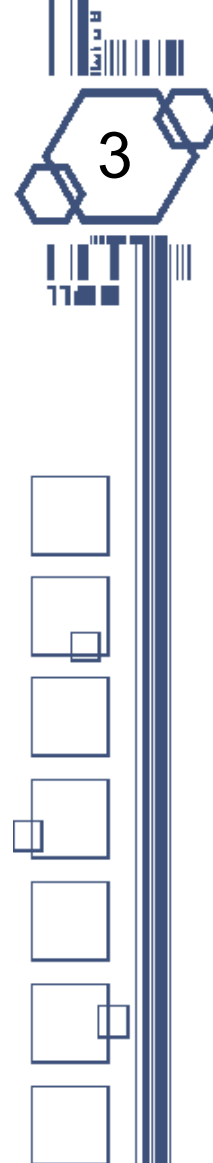
ⁱ I've often disliked the difficulties in using Dark Side Points for bookkeeping and Force Points for game mechanics. Something didn't seem balanced. Therefore, I want to try to sort that out. I will note that I typically dislike house rules. The rules in general are good enough for me, but occasionally I find something I need to amend.

ⁱⁱ D6 House Rule: The D6 system actually already seems to take most of this into effect. The only difference is a lack of Light Side Points. For gamers using D6 rules, simply count Light Side Points – earned at the same time a bonus Force Point is earned while "Being Heroic at the Dramatically Appropriate Moment" – as negative Dark Side Points. In this manner, a character can actually have a negative number of Dark Side Points. A character with a negative number of Dark Side Points gains the benefit of longevity from the light side. Gamemasters may also grant a bonus to all Force checks if they see fit.

ⁱⁱⁱ Bill Slavicsek, Andy Collins and JD Wiker, *Star Wars Roleplaying Game: Revised Core Rulebook* (Renton, Wash.: Wizards of the Coast, 2002), 179.

^{iv} Gary M. Salari, ed., *SWRPG FAQ* [FAQ on-line] (<http://www.swrpgnetwork.com/files/faq/SWRPGFAQ20040110.pdf>, 10 January 2004, accessed 23 February 2004), 28.

^v Slavicsek, Collins and Wiker, 180. While I'm making it possible to have a neutrally-aligned character, there is no



neutral Force to call upon. A character calls on either the Light Side or the Dark Side of the Force.

^{vi} I added this change to help explain why stats for dark side characters lack an insane number of Dark Side Points. Additionally, this helps for campaigns that run with dark side characters.

^{vii} This requires a great deal of roleplaying on the player's part. Those strictly concerned with mechanics (often termed Rules Lawyers) will likely say that his character never experiences negative emotions. However, the movies make it quite clear that use of the Force under these circumstances leads a character down the path to the dark side. This point continues to remain one that I wish the rules would better emphasize.

^{viii} Slavicsek, Collins and Wiker, 181. The above four were compiled as three on page 181; however, since the Dark Side Points stack in this situation, I felt it better to list them separately.

^{ix} Slavicsek, Collins and Wiker, 182.

^x Slavicsek, Collins and Wiker, 183.

^{xi} A valid point came up in the designing of these rules; a character who goes about doing dramatically evil acts, and earning Force Points could conceivably atone faster and easier than a character who earns Dark Side Points for acts that are not considered dramatically evil, since the former character has a greater number of Force Points (conceivably). Additionally, this could allow a player to commit dramatically evil acts solely for the purpose of earning Force Points so that he can atone. Naturally, by committing a dramatically evil act, the character again earns a Dark Side Point in addition to the Force Point, taking his character further down the path to the dark side. Additionally, only tainted characters can benefit from this loop hole, and therefore are less likely to have committed dramatically evil acts, as those tend to rack up Dark Side Points and speed up the journey to the dark side. The *SWRPG FAQ* addresses a similar question on page 68, brought up in *Jedi Counseling 4*, in regards to the use of the Force Light skill.

^{xii} Adapted from Slavicsek, Collins and Wiker, 182-183. The main change is that page 182 says that a dark character cannot call on the dark side of the Force; I feel that not allowing the character to use the Force at all better fits with the movies and further emphasizes the sacrifice required.

^{xiii} One could argue that characters who live their whole lives in service to the light side, such as an Ithorian nature priest, should be able to earn Light Side Points without having to perform acts dramatic heroism. This valid point makes perfect sense; however, most Gamemasters design their games around dramatic storylines, and not mundane service to the Force. Player Characters should be able to get them through dramatic situations, while Gamemaster Characters can have any number that the Gamemaster decides.

^{xiv} Naturally, the difficulty numbers are prone to arguments. Based on the campaign and Gamemaster, characters can earn Light Side Points at vastly different rates. The values used (8 and 16) appear to the author to be on par with, if not slightly harder to achieve, than a similar number of Dark Side Points needed to become tainted and dark.

^{xv} See Slavicsek, Collins and Wiker, 120.