

# The Force Unleashed Preview 1

## Emperor's Shadow Guard and Vader's Apprentice, Unleashed

Gary M. Sarli and Sterling Hershey

In November 2007, Wizards of the Coast will release [The Force Unleashed](#), the newest set for the **Star Wars Miniatures Game**. *The Force Unleashed* will feature 16 characters from the **Star Wars: The Force Unleashed** [video game](#) (LucasArts), along with other characters from throughout the *Star Wars* saga.

Today, we'll start taking a look at some previews of miniatures from the new set. First, Sterling Hershey tells us about the secretive Emperor's Shadow Guard, and then Gary M. Sarli shows us the power of Vader's Apprentice, Unleashed.



### Emperor's Shadow Guard

The Emperor's Shadow Guard is a new fighting force based on Emperor Palpatine's elite Royal Guard. Completely mute and rarely seen in public, they are dispatched on special missions as directed by the Emperor himself. It is rumored by some that the Shadow Guard are actually corrupted Jedi whose minds have been altered -- but as with all rumors, one must consider the source.

The Shadow Guard wears a black variation of the Royal Guard armor, the most apparent difference being the color scheme. The Shadow Guard's greatest secret is that they receive some basic Force training that enables them to use a unique weapon called a lightsaber pike, which has a lightsaber blade at one end. (The roleplaying game statistics below reflect those of a Shadow Guard Initiate who has just begun the secret training.)

In the **Star Wars Miniatures Game**, the Emperor's Shadow Guard is one of several new types of Imperial troops. On the surface, the Shadow Guard appears to be an improved version of the Royal Guard. However, there are several significant differences that will lead you to use this piece in a very different way.

To start off with, the cost of this unit is over twice that of the Royal Guard. Those are points well spent, as you get three times the number of hit points, better defense, more special abilities, and the addition of Force powers. The attack and damage values remain the same. The Bodyguard ability has been dropped, so you will have no extra incentive to keep the Shadow Guard close to the Emperor or other units you are defending.

The Shadow Guards can be much more aggressive, especially with their superior hit points and Stealth ability to survive a few hits while closing with their opponents. Their Lightsaber power is a nice addition to their defense, but it is limited to one use unless they are in a squad where they can occasionally use Force points from another character able to share them -- such as the Emperor, appropriately enough.



#### Star Wars Miniatures Stat Card Preview

**Faction:** Imperial

**Cost:** 23

**Hit Points:** 90

**Defense:** 19

**Attack:** + 8

**Damage:** 20

**Special Abilities:** Cunning Attack, Deadly Attack, Melee Attack, Stealth

**Force Powers:** Force 1, Lightsaber Block

## Star Wars Roleplaying Game: Saga Edition Statistics

### Imperial Shadow Guard Initiate      CL 10

Medium Human nonheroic 6/Soldier 6/Elite Trooper 1/Force Adept 1

**Force** 3; **Dark Side** 7

**Init** +17; **Senses** low-light vision, Perception +16

**Languages** Basic

**Defenses** Ref 21 (flat-footed 20), Fort 22, Will 24

**hp** 63; **Threshold** 22

**Speed** 4 squares

**Melee** lightsaber pike +12\* (3d8+7\*\*) or

**Melee** unarmed +13 (1d6+6) or

**Ranged** heavy blaster pistol +11 (3d8+4)

**Base Atk** +11; **Grp** +13

**Atk Options** Point Blank Shot, Power Attack

**Special Actions** Damage Reduction 10, Delay Damage

**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 9

**Talents** Armored Defense, Damage Reduction 10, Empower Weapon, Equilibrium, Power of the Dark Side

**Feats** Armor Proficiencies (light, medium), Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber pike), Force Sensitivity, Martial Arts I, Point Blank Shot [9th level], Power Attack, Skill Focus (Initiative), Skill Training (Use the Force), Weapon Proficiencies (pistols, rifles, simple weapons)

**Skills** Initiative +17, Perception +16, Use the Force +11

**Possessions** Shadow Guard armor (+7 armor; as ceremonial armor with helmet package), lightsaber pike, heavy blaster pistol, comlink (encrypted, long-range [miniaturized], holo capability), utility belt with medpac

\* Includes 1 point of Power Attack

\*\* Includes +1 damage die for Empower Weapon

## Vader's Apprentice, Unleashed

From an early age, the Apprentice was secretly raised by Darth Vader, who trained him in the power of the dark side of the Force. By the time the Secret Apprentice reached adulthood, Vader's training had made him one of the most powerful Force-wielders in the galaxy. After Order 66, Vader sent the Secret Apprentice on missions to destroy the last of the Jedi, and he became one of the most lethal weapons Vader had at his disposal. (The roleplaying game statistics below represent Vader's protégé fairly early in his apprenticeship, before he manifests his true potential by unleashing the Force.)

In the *Star Wars Miniatures Game*, Vader's Apprentice, Unleashed fills an interesting niche. While he can act as a low-cost "beat stick" -- he is not much behind the likes of Lord Vader or Darth Vader, Jedi Hunter, at least in terms of basic statistics -- he has only Double Attack to augment his actual attacks. Thus, he can't stand against top-tier melee uniques without substantial backup.

Instead, Vader's Apprentice, Unleashed has a value that builds during the game. His Force powers cost too much to activate early in the game, so normally he will have to let Force Renewal build up for at least a few rounds before he can use his best abilities. Given that Force Lightning 4 and 5 have the ability to deal damage comparable to an AT-AT *and* leave the targets activated (with the higher version affecting multiple targets), this can be a coup de grace that brings a skirmish to a quick end. Even better, if Vader's Apprentice, Unleashed can be given a source of extra Force Points (such as Emperor Palpatine from *Rebel Storm* or *Rebels and Imperials*), he can use this tactic much earlier in the game, crippling an opponent's central character and potentially changing the flow of the entire fight.



**Faction:** Imperial**Cost:** 48**Hit Points:** 130**Defense:** 20**Attack:** +13**Damage:** 20**Special Abilities:** Unique, Melee Attack, Double Attack**Force Powers:** Force 2, Force Renewal 1, Force Lightning 4 (Force 4, replaces attacks: range 6; 50 damage to target. Huge or smaller characters are considered activated this round; save 16), Force Lightning 5 (Force 5, replaces turn: range 6; 60 damage to target and 2 characters adjacent to that target. Huge or smaller characters are considered activated this round; save 16)

### Star Wars Roleplaying Game: Saga Edition Statistics

**Vader's Apprentice (early apprenticeship)****CL 10**

Medium Human Jedi 7/Jedi Knight 3

**Destiny 2; Force 5; Dark Side 15****Init +11; Senses Perception +7****Languages** Basic**Defenses** Ref 23 (flat-footed 21), Fort 23, Will 24**hp 93; Threshold 23****Speed** 6 squares**Melee** lightsaber +15 (2d8+10) or**Melee** lightsaber +13 (3d8+10) with Rapid Strike or**Melee** lightsaber +17 (3d8+15) with Rapid Strike and Powerful Charge**Base Atk +10; Grp +13****Atk Options** Powerful Charge, Rapid Strike**Special Actions** Block, Deflect, Redirect Shot**Force Powers Known** (Use the Force +17): *corruption, Force grip, Force lightning, Force slam, Force thrust, mind trick, move object, repulse, and surge***Abilities** Str 16, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 15**Special Qualities** Improved Force thrust**Talents** Block, Deflect, Juyo, Redirect Shot, Soresu, Telekinetic Savant, Weapon Specialization (lightsaber)**Feats** Force Sensitivity, Force Training (2), Powerful Charge, Rapid Strike, Skill Focus (Use the Force), Strong in the Force, Unleashed, Weapon Focus (lightsabers), Weapon Proficiency (lightsabers, simple weapons)**Skills** Acrobatics +11, Initiative +11, Perception +7, Use the Force +17**Possessions** lightsaber, dark clothing, comlink

## About the Authors

**Sterling Hershey** is an architect and freelance game designer. He regularly creates *Star Wars Miniatures* and *Starship Battles* scenarios and previews for the Wizards of the Coast web site. He also wrote the *Scenario Book* for the *Attack on Endor* Scenario Pack. He is one of the authors of the upcoming *Force Unleashed Campaign Guide* for the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* Saga Edition. Gaming in a galaxy far, far away is the focus of his starwars.com blog, [Delusions of Grandeur](#). Sterling lives in the Midwest with his wife, Mary.

**Gary M. Sarli** is a freelance designer, developer, and editor whose credits include the Saga Edition rulebook and *Ultimate Adversaries* (for the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*) and *Power of Faerûn* and *Fiendish Codex II: Tyrants of the Nine Hells* (for *Dungeons & Dragons*). He also moderates on the Wizards.COMmunity message boards as WizO the Hutt, cheerfully feeding Code of Conduct violators to the Sarlacc. Gary recently opened GMSarli Games, an online retailer specializing in making non-random miniatures packs designed for the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*.

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