

# Custom Species Creation

*A Guide for Creating a Custom Species*

Serve the Brotherhood —

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**SL / ED / RS / AK / SB / GC-PoDP / SC-CoI / AC-RoT / DC-PP / GN-BL / SN-AuL / BN-BL / Cr-9D-25R-25A-17S-9E-3T / CF-GF / DSS-AuL / SI-BL / SoL-BE / S:-17M-8R-8Al-1C-4D-1Dk**

## Introduction

In an effort to establish a procedure for the creation of custom species in the Dark Brotherhood, we have drawn up a process and set of guidelines that must be met for approval of such creations to be considered.

Our problems initially stem from members who wish to infuse the SW universe with characters who are clearly not of the realm, often from other fantasy existences which taint the general design of Star Wars. Some of these include, but are not limited to; Vampires, Elves, Ogres, Elementals and the like. We don't discriminate against those characters, but they don't have a place in the Dark Jedi Brotherhood, or the SW universe for that matter.

The attempt of this guidance is to be the 'standard'; the measuring stick by which all custom species should conform (save those who have previous approval as they are hereby 'grandfathered'; Karanan [Vessicant], Ralconian [Arania], Heragan [Timeros] and Spectran [Strategos]). In addition, it will cover those issues that must be addressed, in one form or another, for approval to even be considered. That is; if a sufficient attempt is not made to address a particular issue, the species request will be denied.

As of now, we will not establish an amount of attempts that can be made before requests become invalid. Instead, the Combat Master, Deputy Grand Master and appointed individuals will work with requestors to align their requests to meet the requirements. This includes, but is not limited to; re-witing sections for the requestor, addressing issues and having them make corrections, disallowing specific texts that will never meet the standard, etc.

## ***Never Acceptable***

Before one can reasonably begin the process of getting their custom species approved, there are a bevy of restrictions that must be adhered to for the continuity of the DJB as a Star Wars club; the following items will never be allowed:

1. Species from any other (i.e. non-SW) fictional existence, save that they're used as a "template" for creation; with clear non-SW indicators of the species removed.
2. Re-writes of species already addressed in SW canon.
3. Species submissions where the requestor is the "last" of the kind.
4. Species whose origin (i.e. planet, system, place in the timeline) is "unknown".
5. Species whose traits, skills and/or abilities are unrealistic, even for Star Wars.
6. Strengths of a species which have no reasonable, counter-weakness (i.e. deified characters).
7. Shape-shifting species which have no "common" form.
8. Species that claim involvement in major canon events which cannot be justified.

## ***Getting Started***

Even before one begins their creation process, they need to be aware that the creation of a species is not an easy task. There is far more to creating a 'believable' species than jotting down a few lines of vague and ineffective text. A custom species must address specific areas of information for it to be believable and, for that matter, approved. It is not necessary to address most points in grand fashion, but they do need to be noted in one form or another. Specifics that are not met will most likely see the request denied and it is with that that every request must answer the following questions before the first bit of text is laid out;

- What is the SW timeline origin of the species?
- What planet did the species evolve from?
- What caused the species to escape SW canon recognition?

## **Tips & The Can of Worms**

The biggest problem with creating a custom species, once a person gets to the point of actually attempting it, is the desire to create a species with some importance or existence of grandeur. Be realistic! If the species is of such great stature, one will never be able to believably justify why it missed canon recognition. Stay away from “this species was pivotal in the Jedi purge...” or some other such nonsense as it can never be realistically finagled to merge with canon information. Instead, skirt major events to simply “place” the species in a timeline.

Another key point that many fail to equate to being important is origin. Logically, a species cannot be created whose origin is “unknown”. As the species’ creator, a placement in the Star Wars universe is a must – but it needn’t be overly detailed. For instance, when addressing the origin/evolution of the species in the SW timeline, something as simple as 5000 years before the battle of Yavin is absolutely sufficient. Go ahead and pick an existing planet also – but be careful. This takes only a bit of research, but a “real” SW planet will help your believability, but don’t pick one that was destroyed...for obvious reasons...unless it suits the species history and/or relocation/migration. Planets are another thing – if a species creator “makes up” a planet; then they need to be prepared to treat the planet with the same scrutiny as the species; that is – when did the planet evolve; where was it born; why has it escaped SW canon recognition? All of those things are just a huge, compounding can of worms that a creator really shouldn’t get into. You can justify the evolution of a species on a “known” planet or in a “known” system – it just takes a bit of imagination.

Finally, the importance of why the species escaped SW canon recognition is crucial. This bit of information will/can make or break a request based on the amount of effort a creator chooses to put into the work. What often seems to escape most creators is their own species appearance. Humanoids, for instance, if possessing the same basic appearance as Humans could have easily escaped ‘specific’ canon recognition simply because of how they look. This goes for many custom creations depending on where you place them in the guise of the SW universe.

## ***Beginning Your Species***

When one looks at the multitude of species in SW canon, they are often faced with slight blurbs of information. This lies in direct contrast to what you, as a species creator, will be asked to do. This is solely based on one primary fact; Lucas (and the writers approved under his labels and enterprises) isn’t required to justify his own creations. The Dark Jedi Brotherhood is far from “Lucas canon”; but we do our best to maintain a majority of the themes. It is in that fight to remain true that we don’t take the creation of species lightly; in fact when all things are equal, we’d rather members stick with canon (which is actually easier in the long run) instead of new creations. However, as we always need to evolve and adapt to the needs of the membership, the inevitable creation of species is something that we must accept now and again. With that, there are a couple of ways to begin the actual creation process;

## **Non-SW Templates**

Be it non-SW movies, comic books, other forms of fiction and fantasy or whatever else triggers the thought – every species probably begins from a non-SW template. This is very common, otherwise the SW canon species would be used, right? You saw a character in a movie and thought, “that would be cool” and got your mind into gear to create it for your online entertainment. While we can appreciate the thought, and applaud the imagination, there are pitfalls you need to avoid;

- Remove any and all references to this non-SW species in the text of your request. Do not include lines or verbiage that reference your ‘template species’ in any respect (even if to simply paint an example).
- For all intents and purposes you are ‘recreating’ this species to fit into the SW realm, and need to completely “wash” all non-SW pertinent information from the text.
- Change the name. This is a “custom” species, you need to rename it.
- Within the text of your request, remove any and all references to non-SW locations, planets, historical events etc.
- Perhaps the toughest; remove any and all references to non-SW technology even if it plays a role in your new character’s existence. This will become an issue if your species relies on such things like, cybernetic implants or something as you must re-address those things with SW themes.

## Creation from Nothing

If you are more adventurous and choose to try and create a new species, the likes of which have no equal in Star Wars or any other realm– then you need to be sure that it actually has no SW equal. Similarities to existing species are fine, in fact, they make it easy to create a species if you run parallel to something that already exists as it’s easier to justify. However, if you are basically attempting to re-create or re-write an already canon species, that is not acceptable – ever. Starting from nothing can be difficult and takes a modicum of research to prevent theft of present ideas, but it’s not impossible. The easiest place to start is with the character themselves; what do they look like? How do they act? What was their life like? All of those things can point, in retrospect, to historical information about the species; did where they came from help to spurn the evolution of their appearance? Did society of their time help to create their demeanor? Make no mistake – you are playing “god” at this point when choosing to create a species from nothing; so it is imperative that you try and see it from all angles.

## Species vs. Characters

It must be said, at this point, that you are not creating a character – you are creating a species, a grander scope than one mere individual. Therefore, the traits you apply in both template creation and ‘zero creation’ must be global in nature, that is, they must effect the whole of the species. Individual traits and ideals are things that need to be addressed of the particular character. For example, many choose to have their characters as the cliché ‘regal’ type; possessing governing power in their former lives and all of that. What they fail to realize is, that is not a species trait – it is a character specific, history-related item.

The point to the above is that you need to create your species apart from your specific character. It is much safer to not even have your personal character in the thought process at all, but that’s not easy to do because it’s the reason why you’re trying to create a species in the first place. Therefore, whatever you can muster to separate the two will be wholly to your advantage and the successful creation of a new species. As a final note on that – remember; species created for the Dark Jedi Brotherhood should be force sensitive at the very least.

## Avoid Clichés and Deities

There are many species clichés, especially where the character is concerned, and all attempts should be made to avoid them. The biggest annoyance is the young looking, old species; that’s a theme that is actually a contradiction to the canon effects of the Dark Side. However, since we’re talking species and not character, and the dark side doesn’t necessarily play a role, it’s still just an overplayed theme.

It seems that every character creator wants to edify their character unrealistically, forgetting the bounds of realism that must exist. Save a few utterly rare cases, all species have weaknesses to contrast their strength. If you draw up a species with every ability or train from infrared vision to unsurpassed strength, but fail to address any weaknesses of the species, you will most likely see your request denied. Remember, you are creating a

species, not a character. Your “character” may be able to negate a weakness of the species, but that’s for your character’s history, not the databank information of the species.

## **Submission Format**

To make things easier for formatting and adding to the databanks, when/if approved, please submit requests for new species in the following format while addressing each item;

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### **Basic Information**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Species Name:</b>                     | <i>Species Name</i>   |
| <b>Species Sub-Set:</b>                  | <i>Choose; Human, Near Human or Alien<br/>Human: Closely Resembling Humans<br/>Near-Human: Maybe bipeds, with arms – basically “almost” resembling humans<br/>Alien: No resemblance to humans</i> |
| <b>Planet/System of Origin:</b>          | <i>Where they came from (remember: if you ‘make up’ the planet, you will have to supply its info as well). Also, if they’ve migrated and are no longer there; address that too.</i>               |
| <b>Current Residence of the Species:</b> | <i>Where, in the universe, can the species still be found? The species cannot be extinct; they can be low in numbers, but you must place them somewhere.</i>                                      |
| <b>Detailed Physical Appearance:</b>     | <i>Detailed means, describe them from head to toe – not “clothing”; Eyes; Hair; Body Types; musculature etc – include <u>all</u> species variations as well</i>                                   |
| <b>Species Traits/Attributes:</b>        | <i>Any special traits that are standard for the species as a whole; not personal abilities a character has learned</i>  |
| <b>Strengths:</b>                        | <i>Strengths, or what can be perceived as strengths</i>   |
| <b>Weaknesses:</b>                       | <i>“None” will not be accepted; Weaknesses or what can be perceived as weaknesses</i>   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Differences in Males and Females of the Species:</b> | <i>Differences in the species where males and females are concerned. "None" will probably not be logical</i>                        |
| <b>Average Life-span:</b>                               | <i>The average age to which members of the species live to</i>  |
| <b>Society Structure:</b>                               | <i>Closely knit families? Clans? Hierarchy? Loners? Classes? Castes?</i>  |
| <b>Alignment:</b>                                       | <i>Loyal to the Empire? Rebel sympathizers? Indifferent? This is for the species "in general"; your character may be different.</i> |

## Justification Information

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>When did the species evolve?</b>  | <i>A specific date (or date-range) in the Star Wars timeline when the species came into existence. Note: You should consider where the DJB is in the timeline and <u>not</u> create your species as "extinct" – it should go without saying that the request will be declined automatically if that becomes the case.</i> |
| <b>What event(s) or facts caused the species to escape canon recognition; i.e. why hasn't anyone <u>ever</u> heard of the species?</b> | <i>There is no straight forward guidance for this point. Justify it as believably and realistically as you can. "Mentioning" major events is a good idea, but stay away from too much information as that will cause more trouble than good.</i>  |
| <b>If the species evolved on a 'custom' planet; when did the planet evolve?</b>  | <i>N/A is acceptable if you are using a canon planet. If not, then you need to provide a specific date (date-range) in the SW timeline for when the planet came into existence.</i>   |
| <b>What event(s) or facts caused the planet to escape canon recognition; i.e. why hasn't anyone <u>ever</u> heard of the planet?</b>   | <i>If you choose something like the planet or system was destroyed, then you need to justify the migration of the species. Also, the planet being "undiscovered" is not acceptable and will see the request declined.</i>   |

## Final Review

Creating a custom species is not hard, but it is something that needs to have some thought put into it. Remember the points throughout this document as you work to create your species, and take note of;

## Justification

You are creating something into an already existing, widely popular, genre – there is no way you will be able to "fake" your species into it if you don't justify points that collide with canon material. We will not take any of your work at face value – a bit of information that doesn't mesh with canon information (where applicable) will be called out and you will have to re-accomplish the section or the entirety of the request.

## **Originality**

You're going through all of the trouble to create a custom species, you might as well go all out and stay clear of regurgitating something someone else has already thought of.

## **Detail**

No submission or request will be accepted with sections in the above format filled in as if it was a questioner. Use the sections that are there, but write your information as detailed as possible. If you don't possess that ability, get someone to do it for you.

## **Sharing**

Once approved, your species will not be restricted to your use alone. Anyone will have the right to select that species without your approval or say-so. That shouldn't sway the way you develop your species, but know there is a possibility that people will develop characters of that species which go away from your original intent. You will have no rights to cite them or prevent them from personalizing anything – so long as it doesn't contradict the species information.