

The Theft of Vader's Helmet

A Scenario for *Star Wars* Miniatures

Part of the fun with **Star Wars Miniatures** comes from recreating scenes from the original trilogy. Of course, there's also the potential to create new scenes, however improbable they may seem...

Admiral Piett found more than he bargained for in Episode V when making his report—namely, Darth Vader meditating in his chambers... without his helmet. Then only a glimpse, Vader's scarred visage would not be fully seen until the climax of *Return of the Jedi*. As Luke helped him unmask, he claimed Vader would die without his helmet.



True enough, but if it came down to it, how long could Vader have survived? If he had to continue without his helmet, how long would he have lasted?

The following scenario puts this question to the test, based on information on Darth Vader's armor from the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* (see sidebar below).

Darth Vader's Armor

Darth Vader wears a unique suit of dark armor. It is the equivalent of padded battle armor and imbued with dark side power through Sith construction techniques. The dark armor provides Vader with damage reduction 6, and it contains a life-support apparatus that maintains Vader's breathing and his shattered body.

In addition to these attributes, the life-support system enhances Vader's Strength and Constitution.

Without his helmet and visor, Vader's life-support begins to fail, and he loses 1 point of Constitution each round. Without his armor, his Strength and Constitution scores are immediately reduced by 4 points. Within his personal meditation chambers, however, Vader can remove his armor and find comfort within its pressurized, life-supporting shell as though he were still wearing his full suit of armor.

(From the Star Wars Roleplaying Game: Revised Core Rulebook pg. 301.)

Scenario Background

The unthinkable has happened. Darth Vader relaxes in the meditation chamber of his flagship, the Super Star Destroyer *Executor*, mulling over the next steps in galactic conquest, assorted family matters, and the like. Meanwhile, Rebel scoundrels have infiltrated his ship—and made off with his helmet.

Exactly how Han Solo, Chewbacca and their Fringe associates got onboard remains unknown. Were they given inside help? That's entirely possible, considering Vader's heavy-handed managerial style and the many nervous officers in his command. Nevertheless, the theft has not gone off without a hitch. The Rebels may have stolen his helmet, but doing so caused the blast doors in this section of the *Executor* to seal, effectively locking them in with a very upset Darth Vader.

Rebel Setup

The Rebel force consists of Han Solo, Chewbacca, and Fringe characters, totaling 100 points. If the Rebel player chooses not to use the suggested forces listed below, he can build a 100-point force of his own.

Use the *Death Star* map to represent this section of the *Executor*. The Rebel player can set up his characters in the Flight Control Center, Tractor Beam Reactor Coupling chamber, or Maintenance Station.

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|-----------------|-----|
| Han Solo | 28 |
| Chewbacca | 24 |
| Remaining squad | 48 |
| | 100 |



Rebel Victory Conditions

Eliminate the Imperials: The Rebel player wins by destroying the Imperial force.

Imperial Setup

The Imperial force consists of Darth Vader, an Imperial Officer, and Stormtroopers, totaling 100 points. If the Imperial player chooses not to use the suggested forces listed below, he can build a 100-point force of his own, but it must include one unique character to use in place of Darth Vader.

The Imperial player sets up Darth Vader inside either Turbolift (representing his meditation chamber), and the rest of the squad inside the closest room: either the Detention Block or Ion Cannon Battery Control.

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|---|-----|
| Darth Vader, Sith Lord | 60 |
| Imperial Officer (representing Admiral Piett) | 14 |
| Any Stormtroopers | 26 |
| | 100 |

Imperial Victory Conditions

Eliminate the Rebels: The Imperial player wins by destroying the Rebel force.

Special Scenario Rules

The Helmet: At the start of the game, the Rebel player assigns one of his characters possession of Darth Vader's helmet, secretly placing a spare damage counter under that character's stat card.

If Darth Vader defeats this character, he automatically regains possession of his helmet. If another Imperial defeats this character, the Imperial gains possession of the helmet, but must move adjacent to Vader in order to return it (and returning the helmet takes up one of that character's attacks). If a Rebel defeats this Imperial before he can return the helmet, that Rebel automatically wins it back (although Darth Vader will then know the location of his helmet).

Darth Vader:

Damage Reduction 10: Inside his armor, Darth Vader ignores the first 10 points of damage from every attack (subtract 10 from each source of damage; even if a character has Double Attack, subtract 10 from each of these attacks). Only characters that deal 20 points of damage or more have a chance of wounding Vader.

Meditation Chamber: Without his helmet, Vader can only fully function within his meditation chambers. In this scenario, consider each Turbolift a meditation chamber (he has a spare); inside either one, Vader fights without incurring a penalty.

However, Vader is handicapped without his helmet. Each time he activates outside a meditation chamber, he suffers a cumulative -1 penalty to his Defense and Attack. So after 3 rounds activating outside a meditation chamber, he would be at -3 Defense (20) and -3 Attack (+13).

This penalty cannot take Vader below 0 Defense or Attack. If Vader ever reaches 0, he is not defeated—he is simply very ineffective.

Vader can recover from this penalty only by winning back his helmet or returning to his meditation chamber (recovering $+1$ Defense/Attack each round he activates inside a chamber or with his helmet, up to his original stats).



Strategies

The Rebels: Against Vader's Damage Reduction, choose characters for your squad that deal at least 20 points of damage per attack. Several bounty hunters (Bossk, 4-LOM and Dengar) make excellent choices, as they deal at least 20 points of damage and have $+4$ Attack rolls against unique characters.

Vader eventually needs to move against your characters, since he fights with Melee Attack. Find cover and concentrate your fire as he comes at you. Then hit and move, trying to keep Vader out of his meditation chambers for as long as possible.

Only use Chewbacca's Momentum ability against an already wounded Vader. Although Momentum causes extra damage, it also brings Chewie into range of Vader's Melee Attack (and vicious Triple Attack).

The Imperials: Vader makes a mighty fighter even when slowly depleting. Still, try to stick close to his meditation chambers and let your minions go after any Rebels that cower in the back corners.

With a Rebel or two out of the game, fully commit with Vader. Even while depleting, his massive Hit Points and Triple Attack make him a dominant power; and with Melee Attack, he'll need to chase down and deal with those Rebel scoundrels... personally.