

= Star Wars Jedi Knight : Dark Forces II =

Star Wars Jedi Knight : Dark Forces II is a 1997 first @-@ person shooter video game developed and published by LucasArts for Microsoft Windows . It was made available on Steam on September 16 , 2009 . The game is set in the Star Wars fictional universe and is a sequel to the 1995 game Star Wars : Dark Forces . Jedi Knight was very well received by critics , and holds aggregate scores of 88 @.@ 69 % on GameRankings and 91 out of 100 on Metacritic .

The storyline in Jedi Knight follows Kyle Katarn , who first appeared in Dark Forces . Katarn 's father had been murdered by a Dark Jedi over the location of " The Valley of the Jedi " and the game follows Katarn 's attempts to find the Valley and confront his father 's killers .

Jedi Knight adds some technical and gameplay improvements over its predecessor . It uses a more powerful game engine that supports 3D acceleration using Direct3D 5 @.@ 0 . Jedi Knight also includes a multiplayer mode that allows players to compete over the internet or a local area network . On January 31 , 1998 , Star Wars Jedi Knight : Mysteries of the Sith was released as an expansion to Jedi Knight . The game was a large success and as a result , the next game in the series followed in 2002 , Star Wars Jedi Knight II : Jedi Outcast .

= = Gameplay = =

= = = Single @-@ player = = =

Jedi Knight is primarily a first @-@ person shooter , although it does offer the choice of a third @-@ person view . The game consists of twenty @-@ one levels with objectives which the player must complete before being able to continue to the next level . There are weapons available in each level and after level three , the player has the use of a lightsaber , along with the Force . In addition to being an effective weapon , the lightsaber is also a useful tool for the player , providing light in dark areas , deflecting incoming blaster fire and cutting through some obstacles .

There are three types of Force powers ; light , dark and neutral . Light Force powers provide nonviolent advantages such as being able to restore health or persuade enemies to ignore the player . Dark Force powers are violent and give the ability to throw objects or choke enemies . Neutral powers enhance athletic abilities such as being able to jump higher or run faster . There are fourteen powers in total , four of each type and a bonus power in each light and dark if the Jedi stays true to that path . Players earn stars to allocate toward Force powers by completing specific levels . By finding all the secrets in a level , players can also gain one bonus star to use . Between levels , the player can choose which Force powers to enhance by allocating stars to that power . Stars cannot be reclaimed from powers later on .

Some levels contain puzzles that may require use of the Force to overcome , or by locating certain objects in the level . There are a variety of hostile and non @-@ hostile non @-@ player characters (NPCs) within each level with whom the player can interact . Other enemies include monsters and vehicles . There are two endings to Jedi Knight , depending on how the player plays the game . If the player does not harm non @-@ hostile NPCs and focuses on collecting light Force powers , the player will get the light side ending . Conversely if the player harms non @-@ hostile NPCs and collects dark Force powers , the game will end with the dark side ending .

= = = Multiplayer = = =

Jedi Knight includes a multiplayer mode that allows up to eight people to compete with one another on a local area network and up to thirty two people online . Online gaming was hosted by the MSN Gaming Zone . The player creates an avatar within Jedi Knight and selects a ranking , with higher rankings having access to more Force powers . The player can also edit their avatar 's " skin " and lightsaber color . There are two types of game in Jedi Knight 's multiplayer mode , " Capture the flag " and " Jedi Training " , similar to deathmatch . The players can customize the settings to play a

deathmatch the way they desire ; for example , by limiting the use of Force powers or playing on teams .

= = Plot = =

The game is set one year after the events of Return of the Jedi . The player controls Kyle Katarn (voiced by Jason Court) , who made his first appearance as a mercenary in Dark Forces . On Nar Shaddaa , Katarn meets with an information broker droid named 8t88 (Denny Delk) who tells Katarn that his father , Morgan Katarn (Jacob Witkin) , was killed by a Dark Jedi named Jerec (Christopher Neame) , who also intends to rebuild the Empire under his rule . After a lengthy firefight , Kyle retrieves a disk from 8t88 that can only be read by WeeGee , the Katarn 's family droid . The disk 's message , coupled with WeeGee giving Kyle a lightsaber , compel Kyle to undertake a journey to confront his father 's murderers and discover his own latent Force abilities . While on this journey , Kyle learns that seven Dark Jedi are intent on finding the " Valley of the Jedi " , a focal point for the Force and sacred ground for the Jedi .

Katarn retrieves the Valley 's location and travels with Rebel Alliance agent and close friend Jan Ors (Angela Harry) to Ruusan , the planet on which the Valley is located . Jerec captures Ors and offers Katarn the choice to execute her or die . The decision Katarn makes here depends on the player 's actions within the game up to this point . If Katarn has fallen to the dark side he kills Ors , but if he has remained true to the light path he spares her . With both paths , Katarn has a final confrontation with Jerec in the Valley of the Jedi 's core . If the player chose the dark path , the game ends with Katarn becoming the new Emperor ; if the player chose the light side , the game concludes with Katarn being reunited with Ors and carving a monument to Rahn and his dead father .

= = Development = =

Development of Jedi Knight was led by Justin Chin , who had also worked on the previous game . The most significant developments for Jedi Knight are the use of The Force and the lightsaber . The Force plays an integral role in how the player plays the game and shapes the way the game is played . The method of allocating credits to Force powers was designed with a role @-@ playing video game style in mind , allowing the player the choice of which powers to improve . Chin said in an early interview that progress in the game is based upon the abilities the player develops .

Jedi Knight uses both 3D graphics and surround sound . It is one of the early games to adopt the use of 3D graphics hardware acceleration using Microsoft Direct3D . The 3D sound technology was tweaked extensively to give an immersive feel to the game . This was achieved by experimentation using many different sound effects and playback styles . Between levels Jedi Knight features full motion video cutscenes . The characters are represented by live actors while the backgrounds are pre @-@ rendered graphics . The cutscenes included the first lightsaber footage filmed since Return of the Jedi in 1983 .

= = = Mysteries of the Sith = = =

After the release of Jedi Knight , LucasArts developed Star Wars Jedi Knight : Mysteries of the Sith as an expansion pack . It was released on January 31 , 1998 and received positive reviews from critics . The expansion includes a single @-@ player mode and fifteen multiplayer maps . There are also technical improvements over Jedi Knight , including colored lighting , new textures and models , and developments to the artificial intelligence .

The single @-@ player story in Mysteries of the Sith is set five years after the events of Jedi Knight . The player once more takes control of Kyle Katarn , but later in the game is given control of Mara Jade , one of the most popular Star Wars expanded universe characters .

= = Reception = =

Star Wars Jedi Knight : Dark Forces II was well received . The game holds an aggregate score of 91 out of 100 on Metacritic , based on ten reviews , and 88 @.@ 69 % on GameRankings , based on thirteen reviews . The combination of puzzles and gameplay drew praise from critics , who indicated that the game builds upon the qualities found in Dark Forces . The user control of the game was praised , especially the control of the lightsaber . The game was compared positively with Doom , a significant game in the first @-@ person shooter genre .

The gameplay did not escape criticism , however , with Tom Chick of IGN criticising the layout of the levels : " The levels can be awfully linear , throwing you up against some frustrating brick walls where you don 't know where to go or what you 're supposed to do next . There are some bald key hunts . " The artificial intelligence of hostile NPCs received mixed reactions . GameSpot 's Ron Dulin praised the AI , saying that they help the suspension of disbelief . Chi Kong Lui of Gamecritics.com , however , gave the opposite view : " Enemy artificial intelligence is still pretty mindless and blasting them doesn 't require much skill . "

Jedi Knight 's graphics received mixed reviews . Critics stated the non @-@ 3D accelerated version of the game looks poor . Game Revolution 's Calvin Hubble argued that the game only really looks good if played on a system with a powerful 3D card . Other graphical aspects received praise . The character animations were considered more detailed than similar games . The graphical presentation of the levels received specific praise from IGN : " No other first person shooter has come close to Jedi Knight 's dizzying sense of scale and its vast levels . " The full @-@ motion video sequences between levels received both praise and criticism .

The use of John Williams ' soundtrack from the Star Wars films was met with praise , though one reviewer believed that the music is overused in Star Wars video games . The sound effects were also lauded , and seen as providing a good atmosphere for the game , in particular the lightsaber sound and its implementation .

The addition of a multiplayer mode to Jedi Knight was met positively , but questions arose to why there are so few multiplayer maps and why single @-@ player maps cannot be used in the multiplayer mode . Tom Chick of IGN believes this was corrected with the release of Mysteries of the Sith .