

TRADECRAFT: A SPY GAME

(Version 0.13)

Check out the website for the latest version of the game and a helpful overview video:

<http://www.escapevelocitygames.com/tradecraft-spy-game/>

Players are spies during the Cold War era. They are Soviet, American, or somewhere in between... Over several rounds, they will try to outwit their opponents and accomplish their mission. There's only one problem, players won't know which of the other spies are on their team.

Role Cards

Each player will receive a role card at the beginning of the round. A player may never show another player their role card unless instructed to do so by a card. However, they may say whatever they wish about their role, even telling the truth if necessary. Soviet cards are red, American cards are blue, and Neutral cards are grey.

Tradecraft Cards

Each round, players will receive a few tradecraft cards, numbered 1-12. Tradecraft cards have the following terminology associated:

- **Ready** – a tradecraft card is ready if it is in a player's hand and has not been played yet
- **In Play** – a tradecraft card is in play if it has been played on the table by a player, face up or face down
- **Face Up** – a tradecraft card that is face up will count towards nation scoring and mission scoring
- **Face Down** – a tradecraft card that is face down will not count towards nation scoring, but may still count towards mission scoring

Setup

Determine the number of players and then remove any cards not used. Cards marked 4+ are to be used in any game with 4 or more players, 5+ for 5 or more, etc... Cards that are not marked with a number of players should always be used. For the neutral roles, these cards are used when there are 3 or 5 players only.

Round Overview

Each round of Tradecraft consists of 4 phases:

1. **Deal Cards** – players are dealt role and tradecraft cards
2. **Choose Cards** – players will select tradecraft cards

3. **Play Cards (x3)** – players will play tradecraft cards from their hand and then cards are executed in descending order
4. **Scoring** – players will score points for their nation, their mission, and living to tell the tale

After 3 rounds have been played, the game is over and the player with the most points wins.

1. Deal Cards

Shuffle role cards and then deal 1 to each player (hidden). If playing with 3 or 5 players, randomly select the Double Agent or the Information Broker to be included each round (hidden) before shuffling and dealing role cards.

Next, shuffle the tradecraft cards and deal 4 to each player.

2. Choose Cards

Each player will look at the cards in their hand, choose 1 card to keep, and pass the rest to the player on their left. Each player will simultaneously choose a card, place it face down in front of them, and pass the remaining cards. They will then repeat the process by selecting 1 card from the cards received. After a player has 4 cards face down in front of them, they will pick them all up and choose 1 to discard. These discarded cards will be placed in the center of the play area face down to form the discard pile.

3. Play Cards

At the start of the Play Cards phase, each player will have 3 cards **ready** in their hands. The Play Cards phase will be repeated 3 times – until all cards have been played.

To begin, each player simultaneously takes the *highest* valued **ready** card from their hand and places it on the table face up in front of them. Any card on the table (face up or face down) is considered **in play**. After each player has put a card **in play**, resolve the actions on the cards in *descending* numerical order. To resolve an action, simply read the text on the card and do what it says. A player **may choose to pass instead of executing the action** on their card.

Example: Brian must first play the Launch Codes (24) card because it has a higher value than the Poison (3) card. So, he takes it and places it face up on the table in front of him. Since he has played the highest card of all the players, he executes the action and takes a look at Claire's tradecraft cards. Having played the lowest card this phase, Ethan executes the action for the Knife (4), choosing Adam as his target. Adam shows his Gun (1) to Ethan, preventing the knife attack against him, and then puts the gun back into his hand. Adam can still play the gun on his next turn.

The first card played during the Play Cards phase should be placed face up in front of the player so that all players can see it. Each additional card that is played can be placed next to the **in play** card or on top of it, but should not cover the number or name of any card that is in play.



Example: Brian thinks that Claire is an American and needs to be killed. During the second Play Cards phase, Brian plays the Poison (3) card chooses Claire as his target. However, Ethan comes to her rescue and chooses to use his Antidote (2) to save Claire. Finally, Adam uses his Gun (1) to target Brian, killing him. Brian says something with a poor Russian accent and then flips both the Launch Codes and the Poison cards over to show that he is dead.

If all cards have been played, the American Field Agent (even if dead) should reveal their role card and attempt to name the Soviet Field Agent (see card text). Next, proceed to scoring.

Termination (Death)

Death is a normal part of being a spy. When a player dies, they turn their **in play** cards **face down** and do not play any more cards for the round. Cards that were **ready**, but not yet **in play** are placed face down in play in front of the dead player and should not be revealed. The dead player may still complete their mission, try to influence the other spies' behavior, and score points, but **must not reveal their role** until it is time to score. A dead spy cannot be the target of any future actions.

Timing

When resolving cards in descending order, a card may switch players before it has a chance to be executed. If this occurs, the new owner of the card resolves the action when it is time.

4. Scoring

At the beginning of the scoring phase, players reveal their role cards by turning them face up. Next, players will score points. There are 4 ways to score points in Tradecraft:

1. Living – players can score 1 point if they live to tell about it
2. Nation – players can score 1 point if their nation wins the round
3. Mission – players can usually score 1 point for completing their mission
4. Cards – players can score some points from cards obtained during the round

If 3 rounds have been played, the game is over. Otherwise, record current point totals and play another round.

Living

Each spy still alive at the end of the round receives **1 point**.

Nation

To determine which nation won the round, count up the number of **face up** red (Soviet) tradecraft cards and compare it to the number of **face up** blue (American) tradecraft cards. (*Exception: Do not count the Launch Codes if they are in play by the Soviet Handler and do not count the Satellite Plans if they are in play by the American Handler.*) The nation (Soviet or American) with the most **face up** tradecraft cards in play wins the round and all players of that nation receive **1 point**.

Example: At the end of the round, there are 3 blue cards face up and in play, but there are 4 red cards face up and in play. The Soviets win the round and all players with a Soviet role receive 1 point each.

If tied, only neutral players score a point. Dead players may still receive points for their nation winning the round.

Mission

If a player has accomplished their mission, assign points as explained on the role card. Dead players may still receive points for completing their mission.

Example: Brian was the Soviet Handler and even though he was dead, he had the Launch Codes in play at the end of the round. Brian receives 1 point for completing his mission.

Game End

After 3 rounds, the player with the most points, and the best tradecraft, is declared Spymaster. In the case of a tie, players should declare an uneasy truce and begin making plans to put a man on the moon.

Credits

Game Design: Steven Cole

Art: Icons (mostly) made by Lorc

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