

Top Secret Spies

The dark turns all spies gray, so no one knows their true colors.

by Wolfgang Kramer
 players: 2-7
 age: 8 years and up
 length: 45 minutes

Contents

7 agent figures



1 safe



7 scoring markers



7 agent cards



1 die



1 game board



26 Top Secret cards



Overview

As in any spy story, the action in this game can be turbulent and confusing at times. The players search for top secret information on seven spies, hidden in a safe, which keeps being moved from place to place. Whenever an agent is able to crack the safe, more information becomes available.

Each player is the chief of secret service in his country and sends his best agent in this race for information. The players should be careful to keep the identity (color) of their agents secret. To better conceal his agent's cover, each player can move all agents in the game. The player who has managed to move his agent marker the farthest at the end of the game, has collected the most information and wins!

Preparation – the basic game

The 26 Top Secret cards are not used in the basic game.

The players choose which agents (colors), will be used in the game. The number of agents depends on the number of players:

- with two players, use five agents,
- with three players, use six agents, and
- with four or more players, use all seven agents.

Each agent has a scoring marker and an agent card matching his color.



red agent with scoring marker and card

Place the unused agents, agent cards, and scoring markers back in the box.

- Place the board in the middle of the table.
- Place all agents being used in the church.
- Place the scoring markers being used on the start/finish space on the scoring track on the board.
- Place the safe on building number 7.
- Place the die in the middle of the board.

Shuffle the agent cards being used and deal one to each player face-down. The players secretly look at their own agent cards and place them face-down in front of them on the table. The color of a player's agent card indicates which agent he has. For example, if a player has the red agent card, he has the red agent and the red scoring marker.

Note: the agent cards not dealt to the players represent free agents. Place them unseen face-down beneath the board. The players move these agents, but they do not belong to any player.

Note: with seven players, there are no free agents.

Each player knows his agent, but not the identity of his opponents' agents or the identity of the free agents. The identity of a player's agent is a state secret and must be kept secret from all other players until the end of the game. Players may not share this or other information.

beginning setup for five players

the seven agents start in the church

the agent cards for the five players lie face-down before the players

the cards for the free agents are face-down under the board

the die is in the middle of the board

the seven scoring markers are on the start/finish space



the safe is in building 7

Playing the game - the basic game

The oldest player begins and players take turns in clockwise order around the table. On a player's turn, he does the following in the order shown below:

1. The player rolls the die.
2. The player moves at least one agent.
3. When a player moves an agent to the building with the safe, he creates a scoring situation.
for scoring:
 - a. move the scoring markers.
 - b. the player whose turn it is moves the safe to a new building.
4. The player whose turn it is gives the die to his left neighbor.

Players continue to take turns until an agent reaches or passes the finish space (see also Game end).

1. The player rolls the die.

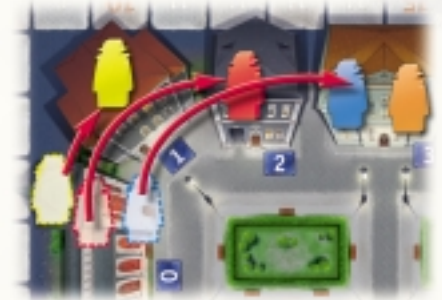
The die determines the number of movement points the player has. When a player rolls a "2", "3", "4", "5", or "6", he has 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 movement points, respectively; and with a "1-3", he may choose 1, 2, or 3 movement points.

2. The player moves at least one agent.

Note: a player may move any agent and may move several agents in his turn. He must always move agents in clockwise order from building to building. Moving one building clockwise costs one movement point. Several agents may be in a building.

The player can use all his movement points to move his agent, but he can also divide them among several agents. He can also choose to leave his agent standing and move only other agents. He must use all movement points he has on this turn and may not save them for later turns. After using all movement points, there may be a scoring situation.

Example: Anna rolls a **6**. She divides the six movement points among three agents. She moves the red agent from the church to building 2, the blue agent from the church to building 3, and the yellow agent from the church to building 1. She could have divided her six movement points: six agents each move one building, one agent moves six buildings, etc.



3. The player creates a scoring situation.

A scoring situation only occurs when a player moves one or more agents to the building with the safe.

Note: moving an agent through the building with the safe does not create a scoring situation.

3.a. moving scoring markers

Information learned by an agent is represented by the movement of his scoring marker on the scoring track.

The amount of information an agent gets is indicated by the number of the building he is in when there is a scoring situation.

- For example, an agent in building **4** during scoring gets **four** pieces of information and his scoring marker is moved **four** spaces on the scoring track.
- The old **Ruins** with the number **-3** is a dangerous place. Agents standing here during scoring **lose three** pieces of information and move **backwards three** spaces on the track, but not past the start/finish space.
- The church is number 0. It is a neutral building where players neither gain nor lose information.

The green agent is moved to the safe, creating a scoring situation.



The green agent is moved through the safe, creating no scoring situation.



Example: the blue agent is in building 7 with the safe. The player moves the blue scoring marker seven spaces forward on the scoring track. As the yellow agent is in building 2, the player moves the yellow marker two spaces forward. As the red agent is in building 10, the player moves the red marker ten spaces forward. As the violet agent is in the ruins, the player moves the violet marker three spaces backwards. As the green agent is in the church, the player does not move the green marker.

Tip: to avoid misunderstandings, the player, whose turn it is, moves the scoring markers.



3.b. move the safe

After he moves the scoring markers, the player, whose turn it is, moves the safe to a new building. **The safe can be moved to any building, even the ruins or the church.** If the safe is moved to a building that has one or more agents, a scoring situation is not created. A scoring situation occurs only when an agent moves to the building with the safe.

4. The player gives the die to his left neighbor.

No scoring situation: after the player moves the agents without creating a scoring situation, he gives his left neighbor the die. His turn is over and his left neighbor starts his turn.

Scoring situation: if the player creates a scoring situation by moving the agents, he moves the scoring markers, moves the safe, and then gives his left neighbor the die. His turn is over and his left neighbor starts his turn.

Game end - the basic game

The game ends after the turn in which one or more scoring markers reach or pass the finish space. To determine the winner, all players now reveal their secret agent cards. Also reveal the free agent cards at this time. The winner is the player whose agent's scoring marker reached or passed the finish space. If more than one scoring marker reaches or passes the finish space, the player whose agent's scoring marker moved the farthest is the winner (in the example above, red is the winner). It can occur that a free agent wins. In this case, the players may want to play again to find a winner.



Hot tips

The game is the most fun, when the players use comments and bluffs to fool their opponents as long as possible. The best players will offer their opponents advice and speculation that leads them to the wrong conclusions.

Moving an agent that is far behind is likely to generate speculation as to the player's motive.

Players should try to trick and mislead their opponents into moving their agents to valuable buildings. Such tactics will be employed to great success by the best secret keepers, but all will have fun playing the game.

Top Secret Variant

Use the same rules as in the basic game except for the changes noted below. New is the top secret part of the turn, during which the players may play Top Secret cards..

Note: When playing with **seven** players, remove the Top Secret card that shows two agent cards (see right) from the game and place it back in the box.



On his turn, a player does the following in the order shown:

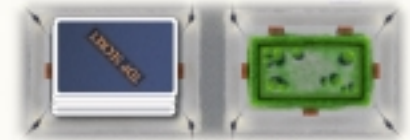
1. He rolls the die to determine his movement points.
2. He moves agents **or chooses not to move agents on a roll of "1-3"**.
3. **Players may play Top Secret cards.**
4. If the players create a scoring situation:
 - a. score the agents by moving the scoring markers and
 - b. the player, whose turn it is, moves the safe..
5. He gives his left neighbor the die, ending his turn.

New die rule

When a player rolls "1-3", he still has the choice of one, two, or three movement points, but may also choose to move no agents at all!

The top secret cards

Shuffle all 26 Top Secret cards and place them face-down in a stack on one of the two parks in the middle of the board. Used cards will be discarded face-up in a pile on the other park. A complete description of the cards is on **page 7**.



the Top Secret card supply on the left with the discard stack on the right

After each player has received his agent card, each player, in clockwise order, draws **two** Top Secret cards from the supply, which he holds secretly in his hand.

During the game, a player may draw another Top Secret card when, **on his turn** (when he has the die), either:

- he moves one or more agents to the ruins with his movement points or when he moves one or more agents to the ruins with a Top Secret card (the player draws the card immediately and may draw several cards on a turn, but he draws just one card for each occurrence, not each agent) **or**
- he rolls a "1-3" on the die and chooses not to move agents.

A player may have a **maximum of four** Top Secret cards in his hand. A player with four Top Secret cards, may not draw a fifth Top Secret card.

The player must always draw the top-most Top Secret card from the supply and place it in his hand. The player may play the card in the Top Secret part of this turn or in a later round. When the Top Secret card supply is exhausted, shuffle the Top Secret discards and place them face-down as the new supply.

Playing Top Secret cards

Top Secret cards may only be played in the Top Secret part of the turn. After the player, whose turn it is, moves agents or has chosen not to move agents to draw a Top Secret card, he asks if any player (including himself) wants to play a Top Secret card.

- **If no player wants to play Top Secret cards**, there is no Top Secret part of the turn. The turn continues as normal with scoring, if appropriate, and then the passing of the die.
- **If one player wants to play a Top Secret card**, there is a Top Secret part of the turn: this player plays a Top Secret card and takes the action on the card.
- **If more than one player wants to play a Top Secret card**, there is a Top Secret part of the turn beginning with the player whose turn it is (if he indicated he wanted to play a card) and moving clockwise around the table.

After the first player, who wanted to play card play has (and takes the action), each player, in clockwise order from this player, may either play a card or pass, regardless of whether they indicated they wanted to play a card or not. The opportunity to play cards continues clockwise around the table until all players, in order, pass. Then the Top Secret part of the turn ends and the turn continues as normal with scoring, if appropriate, and then the passing of the die.

Rules for playing Top Secret cards

- A player, who indicated he did not want to play a card, may choose to play one on his clockwise opportunity (after the first player who wanted to play a card has done so). In this way, **every player** may respond to the new situation.
- A player may play several cards at a time. If he does, he decides the order of the actions on the cards played.

- After playing a card and taking its action, the player discards it face-up on the **discard** stack.
- If a player uses a Top Secret card to move one or more agents into the building with the safe, he may create a scoring situation. **This scoring situation may be cancelled if a later Top Secret card moves the agent(s) from that building.**
- A scoring situation occurs during a turn if, after the Top Secret part of the turn is complete, one or more agents have been moved into the building with the safe **and** they are still there after the Top Secret part of the turn.

Example of the Top Secret part of a turn:

Anna is taking her turn. She rolls a "1-3", chooses 1 movement point, and moves the red agent one building forward because she wants to create a scoring situation. She asks (as she must) if anyone wants to play Top Secret cards.

David and Bob both indicate they do. Thus, begins the Top Secret part of the turn. As Bob is Anna's left neighbor, he begins the Top Secret part of her turn. Bob plays the Top Secret card "Move two agents each one building backwards".

He moves yellow to building 10 and green to the church.

Chris plays the Top Secret card "Move two agents each one building forward" and moves blue and yellow to the ruins. Neither Anna nor Chris draw a Top Secret card as it is not Chris' turn and Anna did not play the card.

David chooses not to play a card, as he is happy with the situation as it stands.

Anna plays the Top Secret card "Move the safe to the building of your choice" and moves the safe to building 4. She, thereby, cancels the scoring situation she created.

Bob chooses not to play a card.

Chris plays the Top Secret card "Move an agent to the safe" and moves red to the safe. This will create a scoring situation as an agent has moved to the building with the safe.

David and Anna choose not to play cards.

Bob plays the Top Secret card "Move an agent to the ruins" and moves red to the ruins, from the building with the safe, cancelling the scoring situation. Neither Anna nor Chris draw a Top Secret card as it is not Bob's turn and Anna did not play the card.

Chris, David and Anna choose not to play cards.

Bob plays the Top Secret card "Move one or two agents from the ruins to the church" and moves blue and yellow to the church.

All players now choose to pass in order. As there is no scoring situation, Anna gives the die to Bob, her left opponent. It is now Bob's turn.



before Anna's turn



after Anna's turn

Secret Dossier Variant

The Secret Dossier Variant can be played with the basic rules or with the Top Secret Variant. The rules are the same as in the basic rules or the Top Secret Variant with the following changes:

The winner is the player who got the most information on his opponents' agents and also **discovered their secret identities**. Therefore, each player keeps a secret dossier on the other players (see the sample dossier on the last page of these rules).

Example dossier:

Agent Bucci (orange) is played by: *Bob*

Note: scored no points in the second round. Used all his movement points in the third round to move the orange agent to building 10.

During the game, each player tries to determine the secret identity of his opponents and discover who the free agents are. To do this, each player makes notes in his secret dossier. In these dossiers, the players should note the following information:

- Who moved which agent from the ruins?
- Who moved which agent to the ruins?
- Who doesn't move an agent to the ruins when he could?
- Who supports which agent?
- Who created which scoring situation and which agents profited?
- Who could have created a scoring situation, but did not?

When the first scoring marker reaches or passes space 29 on the scoring track, all players must secretly note their speculations in their dossiers. For each agent they must place an opponent's name or a dash, indicating a free agent. At the end of the game, the players reveal their agent cards and the secret dossiers. For each correctly uncovered agent (opponent or free) a player earns five pieces of information and moves his agent's scoring marker five spaces forward.

The player, whose agent's scoring marker has moved the farthest, including points from his secret dossier, is the winner. He is the real top secret agent.

The Top Secret cards



Move one agent of your choice one or two buildings backwards.



Move the agent of your choice to the ruins. It is unimportant where he is before the move.



Move two scoring markers of your choice three spaces forward, but not past space 40. A scoring marker that has reached or passed space 40 may not be moved.



Move one agent of your choice one building forward or backwards.



Move all agents to the church.



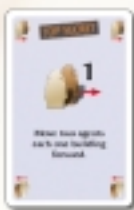
Move the agent of your choice agent to the safe regardless of where he is. This will create a scoring situation if the agent is still in the building with the safe at the end of the Top Secret part of the turn!



Move two agents of your choice one building backwards. They need not be in the same building.



Two agents of your choice trade places. This may create a scoring situation.



Move two agents of your choice one building forward. They need not be in the same building.



Move one agent of your choice to the location of another agent. This may create a scoring situation.



Take one of the face-down free agent cards from beneath the board and look at it. For the rest of the game you play with two secret agents. At the end of the game, return the card of the agent that is behind the other on the scoring track. If there are no more free agent cards under the board, discard this card from the game and draw a new Top Secret card.



Move one agent, who is in the building with the safe, one building forward or backwards.



Move one or two agents of your choice from the ruins to the church.



Place the safe in the building of your choice. This does not create a scoring situation. That occurs only when an agent moves to the building with the safe.



Move one agent of your choice one, two, or three buildings forward.

Note: This card is not used with seven players.

Agent Schulz (gray) is played by:

Notes:

Agent Perry (yellow) is played by:

Notes:

Agent Bucci (orange) is played by:

Notes:

Agent Jaques (red) is played by:

Notes:

Agent Mirkov (green) is played by:

Notes:

Agent Doyle (blue) is played by:

Notes:

Agent Larsson (violet) is played by:

Notes:

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions, please write:
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