

SPYFALL



Rulebook

„Loose lips sink ships“ is a saying that dates back to the days of WWII. It also represents a vital wartime principle. There were lots of things that could give spies away – rust-free staples in their documents, square-headed nails in the soles of their boots, and so on... This game offers everyone an opportunity to walk a mile in the shoes of both a spy who's close to having their cover blown and the special agent who's hot on the spy's heels.

Contents

- 208 cards (26 decks of 8 cards each)
- 26 ziplock bags
- Rulebook

You will also need to keep track of time during the game, so make sure you have a stopwatch handy. One of the players probably has one on their cell phone.

Overview

A game of Spyfall is made up of several short rounds. In each round the players find themselves in a certain location with a specific status assigned to each player. One player is always a spy who doesn't know where they are. The spy's mission is to make the other players talk, identify the location, and keep from blowing his cover. Each non-spy must give an oblique hint to the other non-spies suggesting that he knows the location's identity, thus proving he's not the spy. Observation, concentration, nonchalance, and cunning – you'll need all of them in this game. Stay on your toes!



Objective

The spy's objective is to avoid exposure until the end of a given round or identify the current location.

The non-spies' objective is to establish consensus on the identity of the spy and expose him or her.

Preparing for Round One

Before the first round begins, sort all the cards into location decks. Each deck should have seven cards with identical illustrations and one spy card. Each deck goes in a separate ziplock bag. All cards should be face down, **with the spy card on top**.

All the locations are shown in the middle spread of the rulebook. The players are advised to study it well before the first round begins. This should give the "potential spies" an idea of the kinds of locations they will have to choose from during the game. We strongly advise the spies not to study the middle spread during the game – that's a dead giveaway.



Beginning of the Round

Each game is a series of short rounds, the number of which is agreed upon by the the players before the beginning of the game. We recommend playing five rounds for your first session (this should take about an hour).

A new dealer is chosen for each round. The dealer participates in the game as a regular player. The most suspicious-looking player is the dealer in the first round. This player takes all the card ziplock bags out of the box, turns them face down, shuffles them, and chooses a random ziplock bag. The dealer then removes the cards from the selected ziplock bag very carefully to avoid turning them over.

Location Card

📍 Location

👤 Status



Spy Card



The dealer selects a number of cards that corresponds to the number of players from the top of the stack, shuffles them, and gives a card to each player. If there are five players, five cards are played. The remaining cards are not turned over. Put them aside carefully — you won't be needing them. Each player looks at their card without letting the others see it, then places it face down in front of them.

The dealer for the each successive round is the player who was the spy in the previous one. That player selects a new deck and deals the cards as described above.

Game Flow

The dealer starts the stopwatch, and the game begins. The dealer then asks one of the players a question, calling them by name: "Tell me, John..." The questions usually pertain to the deck's location. This is prudent, but not mandatory. Questions are asked once; no follow-up questions are allowed. Responses can take any form. The player who answers the question proceeds to ask any other player a question of their own, with the exception of the player who asked the last question (so you can't answer a question with another question). The order in which the questions are asked is established by the players themselves and based on the suspicions they have after hearing the questions and answers.

📍 Airplane



📍 Bank



📍 Beach



📍 Circus Tent



📍 Day Spa



📍 Embassy



📍 Hospital



📍 Hotel



📍 Passenger Train



📍 Pirate Ship



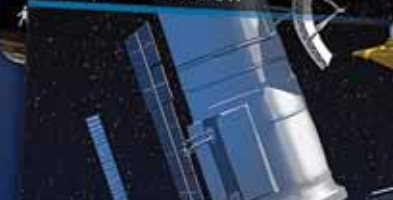
📍 Polar Station



📍 Police Station



📍 Space Station



📍 Submarine



📍 Supermarket



📍 Theater



Corporate Party



Crusader Army



Casino



Military Base



Movie Studio



Ocean Liner



Restaurant



School



Service Station



University



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Note: if you are not the spy, your card will also specify your status in the given location. Before the beginning of the game, the players should agree on whether they will adhere to the status on their card and play the corresponding role or not. We strongly recommend doing this in order to make the game more interesting. For example, if you're a college professor and somebody asks you why you missed the faculty party, you can complain about your age and arthritis; if you're a student, you might want to express your outrage at not having been invited by the senior faculty.

The name of the status might seem to suggest that you're playing a male character, but all characters can actually be either male or female. So the flight attendant on the airplane could also be a stewardess, or the actor could also be an actress.

Sample Round

Anne, Juan, Maria, and Isaac find themselves in the crusader army. However, Anne isn't aware of this because she got the spy card. Juan gets the Knight, Maria the Squire, and Isaac the Archer. They all play their parts and try to identify the spy. Anne's goal is to identify the location without blowing her cover.

Maria the Squire asks the first question: „Isaac, do you remember which sea we took a dip in yesterday?" Isaac the Archer naturally names the Mediterranean, and Anne the spy takes notice: the location could be the beach or the pirate ship. Isaac can't ask Maria, so he asks Juan, „Juan, when do we get paid — is it at the beginning of the month, or the end?" All the other players are on the alert, since the question might identify Isaac as the spy. However, Isaac is just sounding out his fellow players. Since Juan is a knight and not a spy, he answers the question easily: „Who knows? We'll get paid whenever the commander feels like paying us." Anna the spy is thoroughly confused — now she suspects the location might be the military base or the submarine. Juan asks her next question: „Hey Anne, what did they serve for dinner yesterday? I couldn't make it." Anne is evasive: „Oh, you know, the usual stuff — potatoes, nothing special." This is where other players start to suspect her of being the spy — as crusaders, they're well aware that Columbus won't be bringing that particular plant back from the New World for another three hundred years or so...

End of Round

A round ends when one of the following three things happen.

1. Eight minutes have passed;

When time runs out, the players must declare their suspicions as to the spy's identity. The dealer asks each player to vote, starting with themselves and proceeding clockwise. If need be, the players can discuss their suspicions and then vote. If everybody but the suspect votes for the suspect, the spy loses. In every other case the spy wins.



Note: The players can agree on a different round length. Make sure you decide how long you want rounds to be before you start the game. First-time players might want to play longer rounds — say, 12-15 minutes.

2. When a Player Gets Suspicious;

Any player can stop the game at any time (but only once per round) to declare one of the players a suspect and ask the others to vote. If all players vote for the same suspect, the round ends (even if it turns out that the suspect they've voted for isn't the actual spy). It's in the players' best interest to stop the game. If the spy is caught this way, the player who initiated the vote gets an extra point. However, it might also benefit the spy to accuse another player in order to divert suspicion from themselves.

If the initiator of the vote fails to receive the support of all the players, the round continues as usual from wherever the game was stopped.

Note: we recommend players abstain from discussing the spy's identity during voting (i.e. „I think this player is the spy because their pajamas are pink, but they should be green!“). The players' arguments „for“ and „against“ the spy's identity could inadvertently reveal the location's identity to the spy.

3. At the Spy's Request.

The spy can stop the game at any time by revealing their spy card to the other players. The spy is then allowed to consult the location list in the middle spread of the rulebook and identify the current location. The spy wins if they identify the location correctly. Otherwise the other players win.

Note: once the game is stopped by one of the other players in order to accuse the spy, the spy can no longer attempt to identify the location. The spy has missed their chance. If the other players vote against them, the spy loses the round.

Once the round is over, the cards are returned to the dealer and can no longer be played in the current game. The ziplock bag with this deck is returned to the box.

Objectives and Strategies

The objectives of the **non-spy players** are to identify the spy and avoid revealing their location. Therefore, the non-spies should refrain from being too explicit in their questions: (for example, a bank teller asks a security guard, „How much cash did the robbers steal yesterday?“ The spy will then instantly identify the location as the bank). However, when a player's questions and answers are too vague, other players might start suspecting them of being the spy, enabling the real spy to win.



The **spy's** objective is to listen as carefully as possible to what the other players say and do their best to avoid blowing their cover while also trying to identify the location before eight minutes have passed. A spy who waits until the end of the round is taking a risk — it is entirely possible that the other players will identify them after discussion and voting.

Scoring

Tally up the points earned by the players at the end of the round based on the results.

If the Spy Wins

- Victory: The spy earns two points.
- The spy stops the game and identifies the location correctly: the spy earns extra two points.
- All the players accuse an innocent player: the spy earns extra two points.

If the Non-Spies Win

- Victory: Each non-spy player earns one point.
- A successful vote (before the end of the round): the player who stops the game and names the suspect earns an extra point.

End of the Game

Whoever scores the most points after the agreed-upon number of rounds wins the game.



Credits

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