

TINY SPIES

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Special Thanks and Dedication to Mark Parish, who was invaluable keeping me moving forward about this game.

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FOREWORD

I'm a big fan of espionage media. I grew up on old Bond movies, Get Smart and Mission Impossible reruns.

In my college years, I discovered John le Carré, and it only got worse from there. There isn't a piece of espionage media I haven't tried to consume. I remain an avid le Carré fan, and I excitedly consume every new Bond flick, as well as a wide swath of international espionage film and TV.

It is my second favorite gaming milieu (after superheroes) and I have to restrain myself from working spies into everything I do.

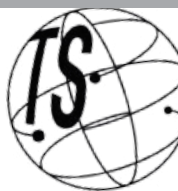
I always resisted Tiny Spies, as GKG had done *Cold Shadows* previously, but after seeing the latest Bond movie, I couldn't hold out any longer. This game tries to do something different. Where *Cold Shadows* was about paranoia, betrayal, trust and deadly violence, Tiny Spies is action-hero spies, heroes who can take a licking and keep going in pursuit of their mission. It's less le Carré and more Mission Impossible/James Bond.

Fast-paced, action-hero espionage was something I wanted to write, and so here we are. TINY SPIES, my minimalist love letter to team-based espionage stories. It's fast, simple but not stupid, and to the point. I've tried to pay homage all the great espionage RPGs I've played over the years as I wrote this.

Thank you all for supporting me and GKG over the years, and we'll see you in the shadows.

- Alan Bahr, December 2021





INTRODUCTION

Tiny Spies is a minimalistic table-top roleplaying game that delivers a satisfying gaming experience without books upon books of rules and options. You will not find classes, levels, or experience points in Tiny Spies —instead, you create organic superspies that grow through roleplaying. While Tiny Spies does assume its players are familiar with the table-top roleplaying, newcomers and veterans alike should be able to easily understand the basic mechanics of the game.

Getting Started

You will need at least two players: one to act as the Game Master (GM), and one to act as a Superspy. It is highly recommended to have at least three players acting as Superspy in a game. Each player will also need three six-sided dice, or d6, called a Dice Pool. You can make do with 1d6 by rolling it multiple times, but it's easier to have three to roll at once when needed. Besides, d6 dice are easy to come by.

You should also have some paper and a pencil to write down your Superspy's information and notes. A plain index card generally has enough space on it to be an adequate Superspy Sheet, which simply lists all of your Superspy's information, gear, and notes.

Game Masters will usually require more paper to keep their thoughts and plans in order, as well as information on Non-Player Superspies, or NPCs, the Superspies will encounter.

Finally, Tiny Spies is truly a pen and paper game in the classic sense; however, maps and miniatures do assist in visualizing where things are so that everyone is on the same page. While maps and miniatures aren't required, they do have their place at the table.

Tiny Spies posits that the group is playing a team of spies who work together in concert to handle and solve missions.





HOW TO PLAY

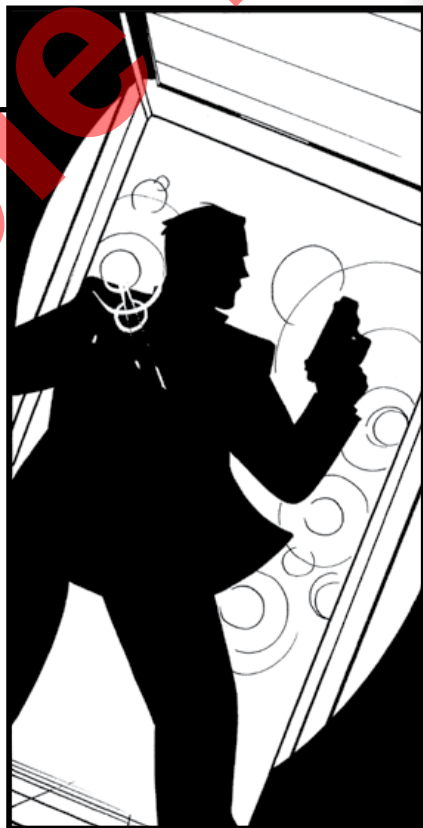
Before you create your Superspies, it's time to get down to the nitty-gritty of playing the game. Understanding the basics will help make the superspy creation process more enjoyable.

Roleplaying games are about story-telling, and Tiny Spies is no different. Most of the game is played simply by describing your Superspy's actions to the Game Master. When describing these actions, relay what you want to do or what you're attempting to try. It is the Game Master's job to react to these actions and describe the outcome. Simple actions are typically resolved with just the Game Master's consent.

TESTS

The core mechanic that runs Tiny Spies is called a Test, which is a roll of 2d6 from your Dice Pool. For complex actions, the Game Master will usually require you to make a Test to determine if you succeed at what you're doing. Tests are successful if you roll a 5 or a 6 on any of the dice rolled in your Dice Pool, unless otherwise noted by the Game Master.

The Game Master, and certain Traits selected at Superspy Creation, can grant you Advantage in situations. This will allow you to roll 3d6 from your Dice Pool instead of 2d6 for that particular Test, increasing the odds of success!



It might appear (especially when you get to the section with enemies) that Advantage can take you up to 4d6. That is not the case. All rolls in *Tiny Spies* are made with 1d6, 2d6, or 3d6. If you have 3d6 on a roll, it's likely Advantage is already calculated in for you, and you can't increase it.

Other situations, at the Game Master's discretion, may put you at a Disadvantage. When at a Disadvantage, you will only be able to roll 1d6 to resolve your Test. It is important to note that if the situation, Trait, or Game Master (or any

source) imposes Disadvantage in a situation, even if you would normally have Advantage due to a particular Trait, you still roll 1d6 for that Test. Gadgets that grant Advantage are the only things which supersede this—if a gadget grants you Advantage, you will always have Advantage for that situation. Why? Because science. That's why.

In the long and short of it: Disadvantage overrides Advantage (unless the Advantage is granted by a gadget item). That means if you have Disadvantage on a roll, and Advantage on the same roll, you only roll 1d6.

In summary, there are three types of tests:

- Test with Disadvantage: 1d6
- Standard Test: 2d6
- Test with Advantage: 3d6

OBSTACLES

Obstacles are challenges that usually require a Test to overcome. Obstacles may include attempting to barter with a shopkeeper, pick a lock, search a room for a hidden item, or resolve a conflict with words rather than gunfire. The Game Master may determine your roleplaying is sufficient in overcoming the Obstacle and grant you an immediate success without having to Test; however, in most situations, a Test will be necessary to determine the outcome.

