

SpyParty

New! Updated! More densely packed with information!?

What?! I need to read a manual to play **SpyParty**?!?

Yes, it's true, you really need to read this before you can play **SpyParty** effectively. **SpyParty** is a very different kind of video game, and if you don't read this, you will have no idea what you're doing, and your opponent is going to utterly own you, since I'm sure he or she has read it. In fact, I saw him or her reading it just a minute ago... Plus, if you have a clue, you'll have a lot more fun!

I know the idea of RTFM is a bit dated in these days of "push the A Button to win the game", but I'm following the Blizzard-style "**Depth-first, Accessibility-later**" model, which means I'm 100% focused on making a deep and replayable skill-based experience, and I haven't spent any time on making it accessible to new players. Even an experience gap of a few games makes a huge difference in skill. So, read this and don't get shot!

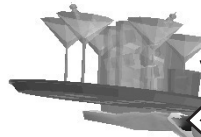
Overview

SpyParty is a game about subtle behavior, perception, performance, and deception. This early version is two-player, and highly asymmetric—each player is playing a very different game with completely different skills.

The Setting The game takes place at a high society cocktail party, with all the usual suspects from spy and mystery fiction in attendance. The partygoers do fairly normal party activities during a match, including engaging in conversations, having drinks, looking out the window, examining the art displayed in the room, or perusing a book from the library.

The Spy One player chooses to be the Spy. The Spy player takes control of a character at the party, and tries to blend in with the normal party social behaviors, while also trying to accomplish espionage missions. The Spy's game is one of performance and deception, and staying cool under pressure.

The Sniper The other player becomes the Sniper, observing the party, trying to figure out which character is the Spy by looking for various "tells" and suspicious behavior. The Sniper can then choose to shoot the suspected Spy, or simply let the timer run out if he or she is confident the Spy did not accomplish the missions. The Sniper's game is about perception, managing your attention as a resource, and making consequential decisions with incomplete information.



Sign Up for the Beta at spyparty.com!

New players should play a few games as each role, not only to get a feel for them, but also because playing the Spy helps you be a better Sniper, and vice versa. After alternating, sometimes different personalities are drawn to different roles.

It is very important for noobs to play other noobs! The game is tuned so that beginner Spies and beginner Snipers are evenly matched, and both improve at about the same rate. I cannot stress this point strongly enough: the game is intensely player-skill focused right now. If you play someone who has played even a few more games than you, you will die if you're the Spy, or not notice a thing if you're the Sniper. This will be frustrating, so until I implement handicapping and matchmaking and all that good stuff, please find people at your skill level to play with.

Please Remember! This is a very early version of a game in active development. There will be bugs, the content is all placeholder, and any new features will probably have balance issues.

The Good Old Missions These missions have been playtested a bunch!

Bug the Ambassador The Spy has to get near the Ambassador (magenta triangle) and plant a bug. The bug can be planted either while next to the Ambassador in conversation, or while walking by. **SpyTip:** The walking version is much harder to pull off, but is harder to notice. **SniperTip:** The animation tell for bugging the Ambassador looks like the Spy is grabbing the Ambassador's butt, to put it plainly.



Steal the Statue There are three statue types: the Maltese Falcon, the Venus of Willendorf, and the Idol from Raiders of the Lost Ark. One is randomly assigned to each pedestal at match start. To accomplish this mission, the Spy picks up a statue and randomly swaps it to another statue model. **SpyTip:** Before swapping, know where the Sniper's laser is, and swap when the statue is low. **SniperTip:** If you can, memorize the statues at the start, and Highlight as suspicious anybody who rushes the statues.



Contact the Double Agent The Double Agent (yellow triangle) is known to the Spy, but the Sniper only sees zero or more suspected DAs (one of which is the real DA, and the others are normal partygoers). To contact the DA, the Spy goes into a conversation circle with him or her, and then says the secret pass phrase, which is currently "Banana Bread". Both players will hear the phrase aloud. **SpyTip:** Wait until as many people are talking as possible before contacting the DA. **SniperTip:** You do not know which person said the phrase, but it must be someone in a conversation, so use the Highlight and Lowlight triggers to narrow your suspects.



Transfer the Microfilm The Spy needs to get an invisible piece of microfilm from a bookshelf of his or her choosing to any other bookshelf. There are two ways of accomplishing this. The Spy can get the film out of a book while reading it (either at the bookshelf or in the world), put the book away on its original shelf, hide the film in a book from another bookshelf, and then put that book away on its shelf. Or, the Spy can simply take a book from one bookshelf and put it away at a different bookshelf; books in hand are color coded in the Spy's view, but are gray in the Sniper's. The "get/hide" method has hard animation tells for the get and hide microfilm actions. The "different bookshelf" method has no animation tells, but has a behavioral tell: the normal partygoers will never put a book away at the wrong bookshelf. **SpyTip:** If you're going to do the "different bookshelf" method, don't beeline straight from one bookshelf to another, go into the party and act normal. **SniperTip:** You can use the triggers to cycle the book through the different bookshelf colors to keep track of it if you know which bookshelf it came from.



The Hot New Missions These are fresh from the oven, and may be (probably are) unbalanced and broken!

Seduce Target The Spy chooses a secret Seduction Target (red triangle, only visible to the Spy), and must flirt with the Target multiple times over the course of the party. The closer the Spy is when flirting, the more effective the flirtation. Flirting can happen in conversation, in which case it looks like normal talking, or at other areas in the world (currently there is no animation played while flirting outside conversations, but the characters must be close together). There are no hard tells for this mission, the Sniper must simply observe if two partygoers are spending a lot of time close together.

Inspect Statues This mission is the yin to Steal the Statue's yang. The Spy must simply pick up and hold a number (currently tuned to be three, but that may change) of different statues during the party. There is no hard tell, only the behavioral tell of a partygoer who seems overly interested in sculpture.

Steal the Plans from the Briefcase This mission is not actually working yet, sadly. The Ambassador has a briefcase filled with Secret Plans. The Ambassador, however, is a little absent-minded, and is constantly putting down his or her briefcase and then forgetting to pick it up. The partygoers find the briefcase around, and try to bring it back to the Ambassador. To do this, the Ambassador needs to not be holding another object in his or her right hand. Partygoers can get sick of trying to help after a few tries and just put the briefcase down if the Ambassador is not cooperating.



The Other Stuff

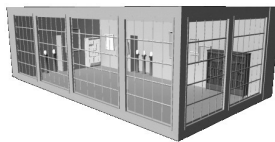
Time The round timer beeps every minute and then every second at 30 seconds remaining. The Spy can add time to the timer by **Checking His or Her Watch at the Window**. This looks just like a normal watch check, except the timer will increase, or slow down. **Drinks** If the Spy is holding a drink, he or she can't accomplish any tasks that require the left hand, including holding books, statues, or bugging the Ambassador on the left, so Spies don't want drinks, but it does provide cover since Spies don't want drinks! Drinks take 3 sips to finish, but drinks at the start of the match have only one sip left. **Laser Sight** The Spy can see the Sniper's laser sight in the room, indicating the center of the Sniper's view. The laser collides with objects in the room, including the window frames, and it can be aimed above and below the room. **Conversations** Conversations take place in various positions in the room. People talk, listen, and interrupt each other. **Books** Partygoers will occasionally take books and walk around with them.

Action Test Some Spy actions have a Gears of War Active Reload-esque challenge associated with them. This can and should be ignored by beginning players. Pressing the Spy Action button again during the test will determine the results. Hitting the red area is a bad result, the white area is a neutral result and is the same as ignoring it, and hitting the small green area is a good result. The good result gives a subtler execution of the given mission, the bad result usually results in a ham-handed execution (and sometimes your execution).

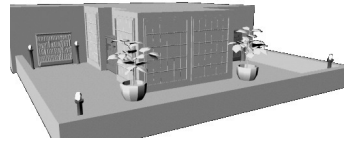
Maps There are multiple maps, each with strengths and weaknesses for Spies and Snipers. The Ballroom is the only map guaranteed to be balanced for all skill levels. The other maps have not been tested as well yet.



The Balcony



The Ballroom



The Veranda

Missions, Tells, & Characters Quick Reference

Bug Ambassador - Animation of bug plant, looks like an ass-grab

Contact Double Agent - "Banana Bread" sound from conversation talker, or text on screen in show mode

Swap Statue - Statue changes in hand, statue put back is different than when picked up

Transfer Microfilm - Animation of getting/hiding the microfilm, or book is put back at wrong bookcase

Inspect Statues - Spy must pick up and hold many statues over the course of the party, no hard tell

Seduce Target - Spy must get close to the same (unknown to the Sniper) person multiple times, no hard tell

Steal the Plans - Spy steals the plans while carrying the briefcase back to the Ambassador (not working)

Check Watch at Window - Timer increases momentarily, or time slows down

Cast Characters (Spy can not be these characters)

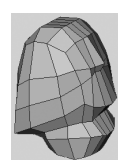
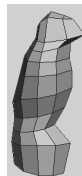
Ambassador - purple triangle

Double Agent (Suspected on Sniper's screen) - yellow triangle

Seduction Target - red triangle, unknown to Sniper

Security Guard

Waiter



TL;DR

Spy Controls



Note: If the Normal or Spy Actions have arrows and a number like (1/2) or (1/3) after the text, there are multiple Actions available. Use the Shoulder buttons to scroll through them.

Sniper Controls



Spy Tips

1. Good camera management is vital. Always be able to answer the question, "Where is the laser?" Always swing the camera around so you can see the room and the laser.
2. You may think you're being obvious, but the Sniper is overwhelmed with information, so try to relax.
3. Do not take control from the AI until you have your bearings. You can move the camera while in AI mode.
4. Moving with confidence is key! Don't fidget or adjust!
5. Once you have a destination in mind, do not stop in the middle of the room, or rotate the camera while you're moving. Walk until the outlined area highlights, then stop. There is no momentum on the movement.
6. Holding something (a drink, a book, etc.) restricts the actions you can do, and sometimes it's side-dependent, so e.g. if you're holding a drink on the left, you can't bug the Ambassador on that side.
6. Don't look too intentional. Don't make a beeline from the statues to the bookshelves to the Ambassador. Mingle at the party, have a drink, look like you're just hanging out.
7. If the laser sight is on your head, don't panic, play it cool.
8. Read the per-mission Spy Tips inside this manual.

Sniper Tips

1. Don't panic, it's overwhelming at first, but you have time to sort things out, and the Spy will make mistakes.
2. Ignore the cast characters who cannot be the Spy. Lowlight them with Left Trigger if you are a fast aimer.
3. Remember: you can move around corners and see the maps from various multiple sides.
4. You move slower when you're zoomed in.
5. Once you're comfortable, use the triggers to manage suspects by Highlighting and Lowlighting, but don't worry about this at the beginning, it's more important to observe.
6. Some Snipers find it easier to Lowlight everyone who is not a suspect, others find it easier to Highlight people who are suspects. E.g. when you hear "banana bread", you can Highlight people in conversations, or Lowlight people not in conversations. Both techniques work, use either one.
6. Keep your laser sight out of view of the Spy by aiming it at a window frame or above or below the windows.
7. Look for intentional behavior, not just hard tells. Who is acting like they have things to do? Who is not moving with confidence?
8. Read the per-mission Sniper Tips inside this manual.