POCKET OPS

By Brandon Beran



In Pocket Ops, you and your opponent are spymasters sending competing teams of agents to steal a doomsday device and its power crystal from the villain's facility where it is being built!

Pocket Ops is quick to learn, because you already know how to play; If you've played Tic-Tac-Toe before, you have the basics: place markers in a grid, trying to get three in a row. But wait! The simple game-changing twist with Pocket Ops is that before you make a move, the other player gets to secretly **predict** where you are going to go. After your move, if they were right, your move is **canceled**. In addition, a variety of Specialist tokens (*like the Grappler or Sniper*) introduce all sorts of sneaky abilities that will change the way you place and predict. Win two rounds first to win the game!

COMPONENTS

1 Facility Board



1 Doomsday Device



2 Power Crystals



18 Blueprint Cards (9 red, 9 blue)



14 Spy Tokens (7 red, 7 blue)



16 Specialists (8 red, 8 blue)



1 Keycard



GENERAL SETUP



1. Place the Facility centrally, with the Power Crystals and Doomsday Device nearby.



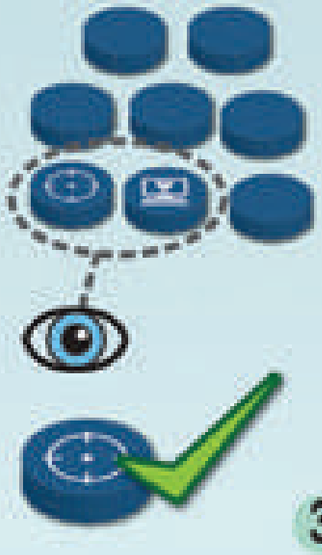
2. Players pick their color. Each player takes all 7 Spies, all 9 Blueprint cards, and all Specialists of their color.



3. Randomly give one player the Keycard. (*The player with the Keycard will be the **Placer** in the first turn of the round; the other player will be the* **Predictor.**)

SPECIALIST SETUP

At the start of every round, both players shuffle **all** their own Specialists face down, then peek at **two** of their own; each player picks **one** of those two Specialists to be *active* this round. Once both players have chosen, they reveal their choice to each other and add it to their stockpile of Spy tokens for this round. (*See **Specialists** to learn how they work.*)



GAMEPLAY

Each *round* is made up of a number of *turns*. Each turn, the *Predictor* will predict which room the *Placer* will place a unit (*Spy or Specialist*) into, by choosing the corresponding *Blueprint card* from their hand and placing it face down on the table. (*Your Blueprint cards should be kept secret in your hand in random order, to avoid giving your opponent any clues about your predictions.*) Then the Placer (*the player with the Keycard if this is the first turn of the round*) will either:

- **Place a Spy in the facility in an empty room OR**
- **Play their active Specialist into the facility according to its own rules (usually an empty room).**





Example: You are the (Blue) Predictor, and you suspect the (Red) Placer is going to play into room H; the Hangar. You find your Hangar card and play it face down, making sure your opponent doesn't see which card it is.

When the Placer has made their move, the Predictor reveals their played Blueprint card.

If the prediction was **correct**, the move was *blocked*. A blocked Spy is returned to the owning player's supply. A blocked Specialist is **removed from the game**.

If the prediction was **incorrect**, the placed unit *holds its position*; it gets to stay in the room where it was placed. (*Specialist abilities often activate now.*)

The Predictor retrieves their Blueprint card and becomes the new Placer, and the Placer becomes the new Predictor. Then the next turn begins. Turns continue in this fashion with players alternating placing and predicting until one player wins the round by getting **3 units in a row horizontally, vertically, or diagonally**, or if there is a **draw.**



*Example: Your opponent has indeed played into room H! You reveal your **correct prediction**... and the placed Spy is removed back to its owner's supply. Nice work!*

*Example: Your opponent has played into room A. You reveal your **incorrect prediction**... and the placed Spy stays where it is. Drat!*



DRAWS

A **draw** occurs when it becomes clear that neither player can win, or if both players win at once due to a Specialist's ability, or if both players have only one room in which to place a unit (*meaning the Predictor would be able to endlessly predict correctly*). Some Specialists can foil these draw conditions; don't call a draw unless you are certain! In the event of a draw, the player with the Keycard **loses** the round (*making the other player the **winner** of the round*).

ROUND END

The **first** time you win a round, take a *Power Crystal* from the supply. Both players **discard** their active Specialists from the game (*whether they entered play or not*), and retrieve all of their Spy tokens. Pass the Keycard from one player to the other, and begin a new round. (*Remember to select new Specialists from your now-smaller pool.*)

1st win



If a you **already have** a Power Crystal and win a round, take the Doomsday Device from the supply and plug your Power Crystal into it; you have **won the game**, and saved the world from villainy!

2nd win



SPECIALISTS

Each Specialist has a different ability, described below. Specialists may not affect (*push, remove, displace, etc.*) other Specialists with their abilities. Any Spy removed from the board for any reason is returned to its owner. The action of a Specialist **may** cause a round to end if it creates a win or draw condition.



SNIPER

Play the Sniper into an empty room. If it holds position, you may remove 1 enemy Spy from any room along an orthogonal path from the Sniper. This attack **may** travel through an occupied or empty room to reach its target.



COURIER

Play the Courier into the **same room** as a **friendly Spy** with an empty orthogonally adjacent room. If it holds position, move that Spy into that room.



MOLE

Play the Mole into an empty room. If it holds position, swap positions of one **enemy** and one **friendly** Spy that are **both** orthogonally or diagonally adjacent to the Mole.



HACKER

Play the Hacker into an empty room. If it holds position, on your later turns as the Predictor, play **2 Blueprint cards** instead of 1 as normal. This ability **stays active** until you successfuly block a placement.



GRAPPLER

Play the Grappler into an empty room. If it holds position, you may swap the Grappler with an enemy Spy in an orthogonally adjacent room.



NINJA

Play the Ninja into an empty room. If it holds position, you may remove 1 enemy Spy from an orthogonally **or** diagonally adjacent room.



PUSHER

Play the Pusher into an empty room. If it holds position, you may move the Pusher into an orthogonally adjacent room containing any Spy, pushing that Spy one room in that direction (*or off the board*). If the Spy is pushed into a room containing a Spy, it pushes that Spy in the same way. Any Spy pushed off the board is removed.



ASSASSIN

Play the Assassin into the **same room** as an **enemy Spy**. If it holds position, remove that Spy from the board.

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