

Spy Rings, v2

A bare handful of criminals might operate as individuals, but any large criminal organization will naturally organize itself into **spy rings**. Each ring is led by a spy (4th level thief), with two robbers (3rd level thieves) as deputies, four senior hoods (2nd level thieves), eight veteran footpads (1st level thieves), and fifteen carousers (0th level thieves). (Some spy rings will instead consist of assassins, venturers, or bards, but operate along similar lines.) Together, they operate in a tight-knit group that can synthesize information from multiple sources and carry out hijinks more effectively on a larger scale.

A syndicate of less than 30 members will not generally feature more characters of any given level than noted above. Syndicates of 30 members or more will be organized into spy rings, which can be hired in the quantities shown in the Spy Ring Market Availability and Hideout Capacity table below. Large syndicates not organized into spy rings tend to be overly top heavy, and take a -1 penalty to Morale and Loyalty. They often end up fragmenting, or with new leadership.

Spy Ring Market Availability and Hideout Capacity				
Market Class	Spy Ring Market Availability	Max. Syndicate Membership	Max. Spy Rings	Minimum Hideout Value
Class VI	10%	30	1	5000 gp
Class V	25%	60	2	10,000 gp
Class IV	50%	120	4	20,000 gp
Class III	1d3	450	15	75,000 gp
Class II	1d6	750	25	150,000 gp
Class I	5d6	3000	100	600,000 gp

Any character can hire a spy ring to perform specific hijinks on their behalf. However, such rings are generally in the employ of local syndicates, and work on contract and not as employees. A character with Streetwise who wishes to establish their own syndicate treats the market class of the settlement as one smaller for purposes of hiring ruffians (Class VI markets have only a 5% chance per month of an unemployed spy ring being available), or must otherwise roll on the Change in Management table (in ACKS II). Additionally, establishing a syndicate requires a hideout of at least 5000 gp, and may provoke a response from other local syndicates (if any).

When a character attempts to hire a spy ring, roll 1d10 to determine their class: 1-5, thief; 6, venturer; 7, bard; 8-9, assassin; 10, elven nightblade, doppelganger, or other non-human. The spy ring will only attempt hijinks appropriate to their class. Additionally, roll once on the Spy Ring Specialties table to determine their specialty: 1d10 for thieves, 1d3+2 for venturers or bards, and 1d6+6 for assassins or nightblades. Last, roll 1d6 for alignment: 1-2, Chaotic; 3-5, Neutral; 6, Lawful.

Hiring a spy ring to perform hijinks on contract costs 2000 gp per month. A syndicate boss who commands a spy ring under him to perform hijinks must pay them 1000 gp that month. If the boss does not assign them specific hijinks that month, a spy ring will instead offer their boss a monthly tribute of 1000 gp. In addition to the above, a spy ring automatically yields five rumors each month (each as a successful Carousing hijink by a 1st level thief), regardless of whether it offers tribute or performs specific hijinks. If desired, they may spread false rumors instead of finding them. Spy rings are assumed to supply their own legal expenses and replace lost members.

Spy Ring Specialties	
Modified Roll	Hijink Specialty
1	Treasure Hunting
2	Stealing
3	Carousing
4	Slandering
5	Soliciting
6	Kidnapping
7	Sabotaging and Subverting
8	Smuggling
9	Infiltrating
10	Spying
11	Racketeering
12	Assassinating

As a dedicated activity a character can assign specific hijinks to four rings, or to one ring as two ancillary activities. Resolve the outcome of their month of activity by rolling 2d6 on the Spy Ring Hijink Resolution Table, adding a +1 bonus if the ring is attempting their specialty. A natural roll of 2 will always be the worst possible outcome on the table. Assassination or kidnapping hijinks take a penalty to the 2d6 roll equal to half the level of the victim (round up, maximum 6th level). The Judge may add a further modifier from -2 to +2 if the local authorities are particularly tolerant or specifically hunting the ring or syndicate in question.

Spy Ring Hijink Resolution Table							
Hijink Attempted	Hijink Level	Rumor Level	2-	3-5	6-8	9-11	12+
Carousing, Slandering, Soliciting	2	-	No Successes	1 Success	1d2+1 Successes	1d2+3 Successes	1d2+5 Successes
Racketeering	2	-	Botch	No Successes	1d2 Successes	1d2+2 Successes	1d2+4 Successes
Sabotaging, Smuggling, Stealing	2	-	Botch	1 Success	2 Successes	3 Successes	4 Successes
Escaping, Subverting, Treasure Hunting	3	2	Botch	No Successes, 1 Rumor	1 Success, 2 Rumors	2 Successes, 3 Rumors	3 Successes, 4 Rumors
Assassinating, Infiltrating, Kidnapping, Spying	4	2	Botch	No Successes, 1d2 Rumors	No Successes, 1d2+2 Rumors	1 Success, 1d2+2 Rumors	1 Success, 1d2+4 Rumors

If a Botch is indicated, the spy ring loses members to unavoidable legal consequences, gang warfare, or other hostile activity. It is reduced to half strength, takes -3 to all hijink throws until the lost members are replaced, and cannot attempt Assassinating, Infiltrating, Kidnapping, or Spying hijinks at all. Replacement members can be found in lieu of hiring a new spy ring, or are automatically replaced by emergent leadership when the ring rolls a natural 12 for hijink resolution.

Otherwise, the number of Successes listed is the number of successful hijinks of the selected type that are accomplished, with effects as if undertaken by a character of the noted Hijink Level. If a number of Rumors is mentioned, then many bonus Carousing hijinks were also accomplished at the noted Rumor Level. Hijinks that yield multiple successes may yield a single result of the combined value of all successes if desired.

Spy rings do not gain XP. Instead, the typical case is assumed, in which the natural advancement of some members coincides with the loss of others, and is roughly equivalent on net. However, as a dedicated activity a syndicate boss can attempt to recruit directly from a spy ring, and treat it as a Class VI market for purposes of hiring henchmen of the syndicate's class. Such hiring does not significantly impact the spy ring's functioning.