

TOP SECRET

NEW WORLD ORDER™

Initial Briefing

Full game by Merle M. Rasmussen

Initial Briefing rules by James Carpio & Jayson Elliot

These introductory rules are a simplified version of the complete ruleset for Top Secret: New World Order. The concepts and mechanics are the same as in the full game, but abridged to help you start playing right away.

If you enjoy this Initial Briefing, we hope you'll try the full box set for Top Secret: New World Order, available from TSRgames.com.



HOW TO PLAY

One player is the guide and referee for the game, and is known as the Administrator. All other players assume the characters of covert agents working for ICON, the International Covert Operations Network.

At least two players are needed, one Administrator and one Agent. Any number can play, but six or fewer is recommended.

To play the Initial Briefing rules, each player chooses one Agent as their character, and the Administrator chooses a Scene Card or Mission Card (see below) and its corresponding Map Card to begin.

SCENE OR MISSION?

If you've just got a few minutes to play, on your lunch break, as a short break on game night, during some down time at a convention, or whatever, the Scene cards are a quick way to jump right into the action for 10–20 minutes of play.

For a longer session, the Mission cards allow experienced Administrators to run the players through a complete one to two hour game. The Administrator may also choose to write their own mission if they like. Be creative, it's your world!

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Player mats are included for each Agent. Attributes and Tradecraft are the main stats for your Agent, and are represented by a die type ranging from d4 to d10. The number refers to the number of sides per die. Players will roll these dice to attempt Tradecraft tasks, or during combat.

ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are the Agent's natural abilities.

Nerve

A measure of overall emotional well-being. Nerve refers to how well an agent performs under pressure, the stability of their mental state, and ability to withstand stress, temptation, fear, and in extreme cases, even torture or brainwashing.

Suave

This quantifies the agent's personal skills, charm, and ability to fit in to any social

situation. It covers skills such as intimidation, seduction, persuasion, ability to read other people's emotions, and talent for lying.

Pulse

Represents an agent's stamina, health, and vitality. Paramilitary operations, wet work, and other physically demanding activities rely on pulse.

Intellect

This attribute measures an agent's capacity for logic, reason, and learning. It also quantifies their level of perception, and ability to solve problems. An agent with a high intellect score may or may not be well-educated, but they possess the natural talent to use the knowledge they obtain.

Reflex

Assessing an agent's reflex measures their reaction time, agility, and speed. While it is often associated with overall physical fitness, an agent who loses speed or agility to injury or disability still can maintain a high reflex score, as their reaction time may be unaffected.

TRADECRAFT

Tradecraft skills are learned during training.

SIGINT (Signals Intelligence)

The art of intelligence gathering by intercepting communication between people, whether electronic or conventional, and analyzing communications for meaning.

HUMINT (Human Intelligence)

The skills related to personal interactions and human observation combine to make up HUMINT. This includes everything from surveillance to interrogation to the art of conversation.

TECH (Technical Operations)

The ability to use machinery, computers, and other technology.

COMBAT (Combat Operations)

Skills include those related to fighting, as well as all other physical talents, including piloting of vehicles, athletic feats, and situational awareness.

ROLLING THE DICE

LUCKY 13

You must meet or beat a difficulty of 13 to succeed at a tradecraft task.

The formula to this is Attribute + Tradecraft + Asset = success or failure. If no asset is necessary, the Administrator may use a Decision Die in place of the asset:

1d4 if the task is difficult

1d6 if the task is easy

OPPOSED TASKS

An opposed roll is used when two characters are pitted against one another, such as trying to open a door another character is holding shut.

Players roll Attribute + Tradecraft + Asset dice and compare totals. Highest total wins. A tie indicates no change in the situation.

BURST AND BLOWBACK

Burst: when you roll the highest number on the Attribute die, you roll the die again and add the result.

Blowback: when you roll a one on an Attribute die your character is given an impairment on their next roll.

Impairment: Your character rolls the attribute die twice and takes the lower of the two rolls. Impairment usually takes place on the following roll after a blowback or at the administrator's discretion.

FORTUNE POINTS

Each character has one Fortune point to spend per scene or mission. Fortune allows you to roll the attribute die twice and take the highest value. Alternatively, your fortune

point can be used as a lucky escape, ignoring damage from one attack.

TENSION TRACK (OPTIONAL)

The tension track, printed at the bottom of this sheet, provides an extra dimension of difficulty as the tension rises.

Each time a player rolls a Blowback, the tension track goes up one step. Each Burst reduces the track by one step.

When the tension track reaches 14, players must roll a 14 instead of a 13 for success, and so on, all the way up to 18. The tension track may never go above 18 or below 13.

The Administrator's rolls are not affected by the tension track.

ASSETS

There are 18 asset cards included in the *Initial Briefing* box. Each player chooses three asset cards and places them on their player mat. If two players would like the same asset, or a player wants to describe an asset not included on a card, the Administrator may write the relevant details on an index card for them.

COMBAT

INITIATIVE

Agents take actions in the order of their Reflex attribute, fastest to slowest. In a tie, the actions are considered to happen simultaneously.

ACTION POINTS:

Action points (AP) are equal to the agents Reflex die type, i.e. a d6 equals 6 AP. Simple actions not listed below require 2 AP.

The action point slider on the player mat allows players to track AP spent each round. Action points reset every round.

Fire a gun: 3 points

Aim gun: 1 point (required or lose 1 die type)

Hand to hand combat move: 3 points

Normal movement: 1 point

Running: 2 points

Tradecraft task: 2 points

HAND TO HAND COMBAT

Players make opposed rolls, Combat + Pulse. Highest total wins. A tie indicates no damage. Damage is equal to the winner's Pulse die roll. If a melee weapon is used an asset die is added to the tradecraft roll and damage is based on the weapon die.

RANGED COMBAT

Players make opposed rolls. The attacker rolls Combat + Reflex + Asset (weapon). The defender rolls Combat + Reflex + defense (if applicable, below).

Defense die is d6 for evading or cover. Light cover or a steady run grants a d4.

RANGES

Top Secret Lite only has two ranges

Close - All actions are made normally

Far - All actions are made with impairment

HIT POINTS

Hit points are equal to the agent's Pulse attribute. As damage is taken, move the slider on the player mat down to the new hit point total. If a character's hit points reach zero, they are dead.