

SPYSCAPE (spyscape.com) is an interactive museum whose headquarters are located in New York City, and which focuses on creating the ultimate spy experience. We are seeking original, intelligent crosswords that tie in with our brand, as detailed below.

Specifications and details:

- Puzzles should be themed, American-style, and 15x15, though 14x15, 14x16, and 15x16 are also acceptable if this facilitates the length of some theme entries, or if this results in a stronger puzzle with better fill. Other sizes will be considered on a case by case basis, and only if the theme requires an unusual size; please query such puzzles in advance.
- Themes should relate in some way to our brand. This can take many forms: spies, intelligence, hacking, tech, movies, films, fashion, etc. We encourage constructors to be creative in their ideas.
- Standard rules for construction apply: puzzles should have some sort of symmetry, and should contain no unchecked letters or two-letter words. Puzzles should have at most 78 words in a 15x15 grid, with slight variances for differently sized puzzles, though this limit may be exceeded in certain cases. The black square count is more flexible, but one-sixth of the grid is a good rule of thumb.
- Good, clean fill should be prioritized. In particular, one should avoid unfamiliar answers, extreme crosswordese, variant spellings, uncommon prefixes / suffixes (and uncommon uses thereof, as with REDETECTERS and UNSPYLIKE), long multiword partials, etc. Excessive amounts of abbreviations, three-letter words, etc. are also discouraged. Of course, in some cases lesser entries such as these are required to facilitate fresh fill or good themes, but usually such answers can be avoided.
- Clues should be interesting and educational when possible, and should be at about medium difficulty. In addition, since the puzzle will be published primarily online, slightly longer clues than other outlets can be handled, especially if this results in fun facts, or if it helps the solver with an entry or crossing that may otherwise be difficult.
- Puzzles will include a title and author byline; a title is not necessary for submission, however.
- Puzzles should be sent to Will Nediger at spyscapecrosswords@gmail.com. Submissions are welcomed at any point in the construction process, as are theme queries. We also specifically encourage submissions and queries from newer and underrepresented constructors.
- Across Lite (puz) and Crossword Compiler (ccw) files are highly preferred, although submissions in other formats (e.g. pdf or plain text) can also be accommodated. In any case, please include a brief summary of your theme and / or a list of theme answers and clues in your email.
- Response time to submissions, queries, etc. should be under one week; feel free to follow up if you haven't heard back from us in that time.
- Payment will be \$100 per puzzle, and will be made upon publication. Constructors must sign and return a contract assigning all rights to SPYSCAPE.
- Puzzles will appear weekly on our website via an online solver, with links to puz and pdf files.