

Puluc

1. The game is played by two players on a board separated into eleven spaces as shown in the diagram. The playing space at each end of the board, red and green, serves as a home city for a player, the other nine spaces forming the track.
2. Each player starts the game with five pieces of his colour, all starting in his home city at his end of the track.
3. There are four casting sticks that control the movement of the players, the sticks each having one side marked. The value of a throw is the number of marked sides showing, or 5 if all sides are showing blank.
4. The players each throw the casting sticks, and whoever throws the highest takes the first turn.
5. A player's turn consists of throwing the casting sticks then moving one of his pieces.
6. If the player has pieces in his home city he may move one onto the track, by the number of spaces shown by the casting sticks.
7. Alternatively if the player has other non-captured pieces on the track, he may opt to move one of these by the appropriate number of spaces instead.
8. A player may not land one of his pieces on top of another, unless the latter is a captive of the enemy.
9. When a moving piece reaches or passes the enemy city, he and any freed compatriots with him are returned to his home city, and his enemy captives are killed removed from play.
10. If a piece lands on an enemy on the track, the enemy is captured.
11. Landing on enemy pieces in their city does not lead to their capture.
12. If the captured enemy himself had captives, those captives are freed and accompany their deliverer as described below.
13. If a moving piece is on top of a pile of enemy captives and freed compatriots, then those captives and compatriots move with him till he reaches the enemy city.
14. A player wins the game when all his opponents pieces have been either killed or captured.

The game at first appears to be one of luck, with a minor role for short-term tactics. This, if borne out by more experienced play, would make puluc a game of luck-management at best. However, there are some tactics and more advanced strategic decisions that can have more effect upon the game. The most elementary tactics are proper understanding of the probabilities of the various values given by the casting sticks. They are not all equal: two is the most common, appearing 40% of the time; one and three come next at 25% each, and four and five are the least common, each at approximately 6% or one in every sixteen throws.

This information can be used to position one's pieces, either for safety from capture or for attack. A piece two spaces away from an enemy is therefore in a good position to capture it, but is also in as much danger itself - more so if the piece has landed there voluntarily, as the opponent has the next turn. However, other considerations may come into play: if the piece's position is itself defended by an ally two spaces behind, then the position is somewhat safer to occupy.

A longer term strategic decision is between advancing a lone piece far down the track, or massing a larger force of pieces advancing more slowly. The former plan will present a smaller target for the enemy, but will reduce options, and thus opportunities for capture. The latter plan reverses both of these considerations, and also allows the pieces to defend each other more easily. The former plan still has the advantage, though, of keeping the majority of pieces safe in the city.

Page 3. Printable Puluc Board.

Page 4. Printable Puluc Board with more graphics.

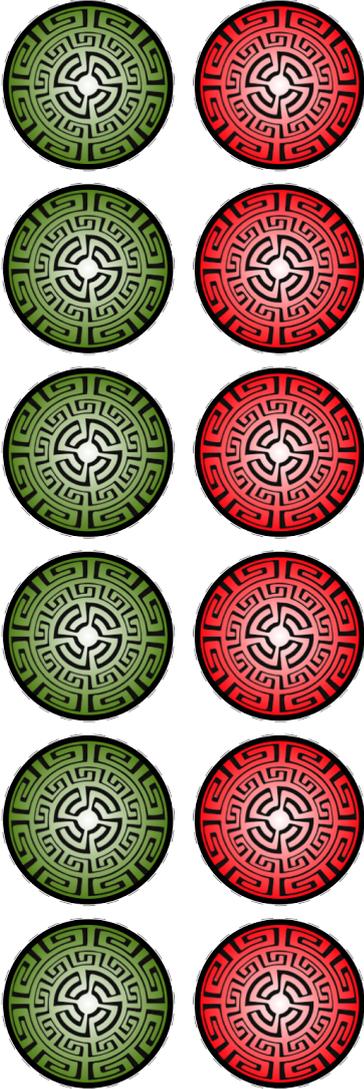
Page 5. Printable Counters, Casting Sticks and Spinner Dice. Stick to card and cut out. Insert a small pointed stick or small pencil through centre of Spinner Dice.



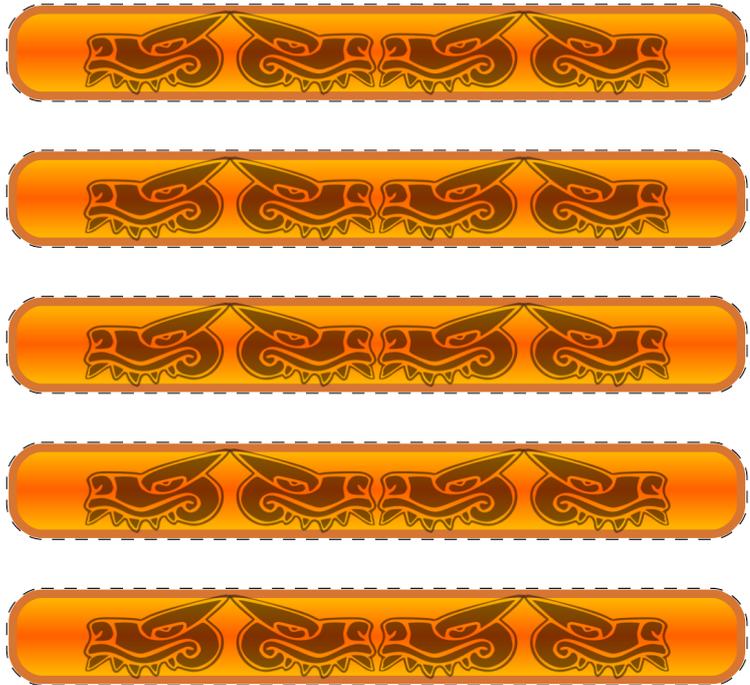




Printable Counters



Casting Sticks Back



Casting Sticks Front



Printable Spinner Dice

