



Puluc, also known as Bul, is a pre-Columbian board game originating from the Maya civilization in the region now encompassing parts of Guatemala, Belize, and southern Mexico.

More than just a game, Puluc reflected the Maya worldview, connecting war, spirituality, and the cyclical nature of life. Its war-like themes symbolized real-life battles and conquests, while its ritualistic ties underscored its deeper cultural significance.

When we play Puluc, we like to imagine two rival Mayan factions engaged in sacred ritual combat, where players strive to capture each other's warriors and offer them as tribute to the gods.

Puluc offers a deceptively simple gameplay experience that unfolds into rich strategic choices. We're captivated by how such straightforward rules can create such deep strategic possibilities.

Krisztina & Tamas, Lemery Games

Under the watchful gaze of ancient Mayan gods, two rival factions, one aligned with the radiant sun, the other with the serene moon, prepare for a sacred ritual combat. Each warrior steps onto the ceremonial field, eager to please the celestial bodies they represent. Victory is achieved by capturing enemy warriors and offering them as tributes to the gods.

Which faction will emerge victorious, their connection to the divine strengthened by their triumphs?

- Narrative based on the imagination of Lemery Games -

Puluc is a 2-player running-fight game from Guatemala.

Each player commands five Warriors.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

Capture all your opponent's Warriors and offer them as tribute to the gods to achieve victory.

GAME CONTENTS

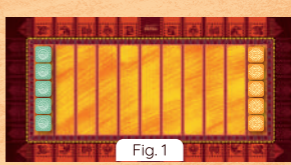
- 1 travel bag
- 1 game mat
- 7 yellow Warrior pieces*
- 7 blue Warrior pieces*
- 4 corn kernels
- 1 rulebook

*2 of each color are only used in the Rescue variant.



SETUP

1. Lay out the game mat as shown in Fig. 1.
2. Give each player 5 Warriors of the same color.
3. Each player places their Warriors onto the row closest to them, which is their City (Fig. 1).



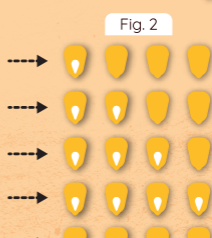
HOW TO PLAY

Players will take turns casting corn kernels and moving their Warriors from their city to their opponent's city across the field, taking enemy Warriors prisoner along the way by placing them under their own pieces. Players will continue alternating turns until one player wins.

Casting corn kernels

The game uses corn kernels to determine the number of spaces a player can move. Casting corn kernels is similar to throwing dice, with the result being determined by the number of marked () sides that face up (Fig. 2).

- 1 marked side up = 1 space
- 2 marked sides up = 2 spaces
- 3 marked sides up = 3 spaces
- 4 marked sides up = 4 spaces
- 0 marked sides up* = 5/6/0 spaces



*Players can adjust the game's difficulty by choosing how many spaces to move based on this roll result. We recommend trying 5 spaces first.

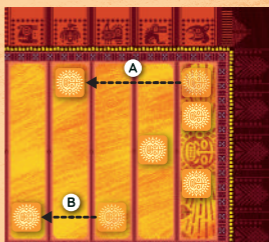
Determining the first player

At the start of the game, each player throws the kernels. The player with the higher result goes first (if tied, throw again). Players will then alternate turns.

Moving

Each turn, players will throw the corn kernels, and then move one of their pieces towards their opponent's city on the field (board) using the exact result of their throw (they may not move fewer spaces unless they reach the opposing city). Players may move EITHER:

- a Warrior from their city onto the field (Fig. 3A), OR
- a Warrior that's already on the field (Fig. 3B).



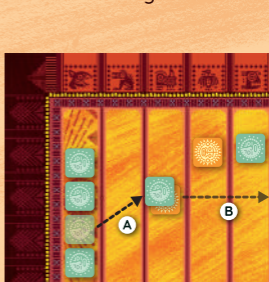
Players cannot end their movement on a space occupied by one of their own Warriors. This may force a player to skip their turn.

Once a piece reaches the opponent's city (an exact throw is not required), it is immediately placed back in the active player's own city, and may not continue moving onto the field again on the same turn.

Capturing Warriors

If a player's Warrior lands (finishes its turn) on a space occupied by a rival Warrior, the rival Warrior is 'captured.' The capturing player places their Warrior on top of the captured piece (Fig. 4A). The captured Warrior is then carried along by the captor towards the captured Warrior's city (Fig. 4B).

Players cannot capture enemy Warriors that are still in their own city.



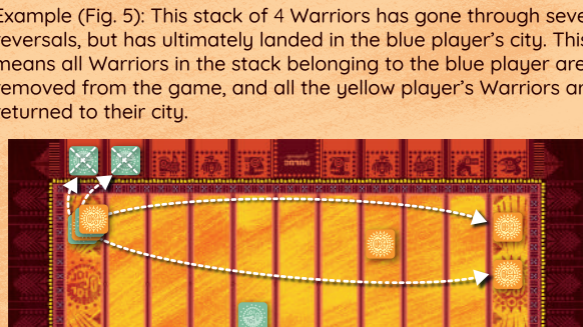
Rescuing Warriors

If your Warrior lands on a space with an enemy Warrior carrying captives, the entire stack is rescued (place your Warrior on top of it) and it once again changes direction, moving towards the captured Warrior's city. This can lead to dramatic turnarounds, with stacks changing direction multiple times before reaching a city. Even a whole stack of Warriors can rescue another stack of Warriors.

Eliminating Warriors

If a captured Warrior (or Warriors) gets taken back to its home city (the capturing player moves into or beyond the enemy city), the captured Warrior(s) is offered as a tribute to the gods, and is thus removed from the game. The capturing piece(s) start anew from their home city.

Example (Fig. 5): This stack of 4 Warriors has gone through several reversals, but has ultimately landed in the blue player's city. This means all Warriors in the stack belonging to the blue player are removed from the game, and all the yellow player's Warriors are returned to their city.



GAME END

The first player to eliminate or capture all of their opponent's Warriors wins the game.

TIPS AND TRICKS



Move pieces strategically based on the roll and board position. Keeping some pieces back as a reserve can be helpful, especially against aggressive opponents.



When there are only a few pieces left on both sides, careful calculation is key. Think several moves ahead, considering possible roll outcomes.

GAME VARIANTS

Like many ancient games, Puluc has regional variations with different board sizes and different numbers of game pieces. We're excited to share a particularly captivating version we discovered.

RESCUE VARIANT

This variation features a larger board, more pieces, and a unique mechanic for rescuing captured pieces, resulting in more complex gameplay.

Play as in the base game, with the following modifications.

SETUP

1. Lay out the game mat with the variant side up (Fig. 6).
2. Give each player 7 Warriors of the same color.
3. Each player places their Warriors onto the row closest to them, which is their City (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6

HOW TO PLAY

The game is played in the same way as the base game, but this variant introduces 2 new mechanics.

Stacking Warriors

Players can end their movement on a space occupied by one of their own Warriors, stacking on top of it, provided that the Warrior is alone on its space when moved to (Fig. 7A). Stacked pieces move together until captured or until they reach the enemy city, at which point they start anew from their own city (stacked pieces are unstacked and begin again as individual pieces).

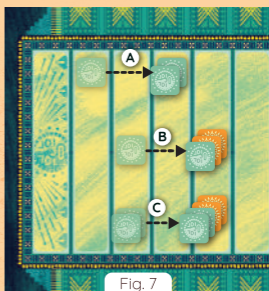


Fig. 7

A maximum of two Warriors of the same color can be stacked directly on top of one another, and a stack of two Warriors can still be captured by a single enemy Warrior (Fig. 7B) (it may also be captured by a stack of two enemy Warriors) (Fig. 7C).

Rescuing Warriors

While capturing one opposing Warrior is the same as in the base game, rescuing a captured Warrior (or Warriors) can only be done by a stack of two Warriors (Fig. 8).

GAME END

Game end conditions remain the same.

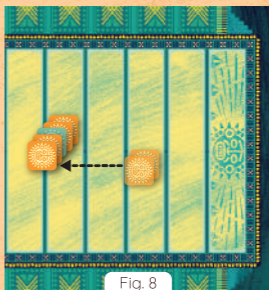


Fig. 8

These rules of Puluc were inspired by the 1969 book, Board and Table Games from Many Civilizations by R. C. Bell.

Publisher: Lemery Games
Illustration: Tímea Kőszegi
and Livia Varga

Rulebook editing and
proofreading: Jeremy
Rozenhart

THANK YOU

We would like to thank all XXX Kickstarter backers who helped LUDOS America come to life. Your contribution is key in preserving this game for future generations. Spread the word, and have fun!

To follow our journey and see all of our games, visit LemeryGames.com

