

SHEPHERDS AND WARRIORS

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Change log

Date	Change
10/07/2025	Improvement in some styles and inclusion of examples.
06/07/2025	Improved some styles and included graphic description of the board. Added some links.
02/07/2025	Initial Version.

Links of Interest

https://caleb.smol.pub/pastores_y_guerreros	Main web page of the game.
https://caleb.smol.pub/instrucciones.pdf	This document in PDF format.
https://caleb.smol.pub/tablero.pdf	Board and stones, printable version.
https://codeberg.org/-Caleb-/pastoresyguerreros/	Codeberg repository.

About the game

Shepherds and Warriors was created during the week of St. John's Day by the author of this text, while playing Alquerque and seeing how they bathed the goats in Puerto de la Cruz (Tenerife) I wondered how would be the wars for the pastoral territory of the Guanches before the conquest and this gave rise to the creation of the game, after several versions and testing different assumptions this version is the most appropriate following the following principles:

- Easy to learn.
- Easy preparation.
- Easy execution.
- Encouraging complex strategies.
- Promotion of moral values.

Board.

Shepherds and Warriors is played on a standard 25-point (5x5) Alquerque board.

The Alquerque board can be represented in text form using:

1. A dash ('-') for horizontal lines along connected positions,
2. A vertical bar ('|') for vertical lines along connected positions,
3. A forward slash and a backslash ('/' and '\') for diagonal lines along connected positions,
4. A dot ('.') for blank spots.
5. The clear player is ('ñ') (Shepherds) and ('Ñ') (Warriors).
6. The dark player is ('ç') (Shepherds) and ('Ç') (Warriors).

This document has diagrams specified in ASCII with a monospaced font numbered A1 to E5 for the explanation of assumptions and cases as follows:

```

      1   2   3   4   5
A  . - - - - .
    | \ | / | \ | / |
B  . - - - - .
    | / | \ | / | \ |
C  . - - - - .
    | \ | / | \ | / |
D  . - - - - .
    | / | \ | / | \ |
E  . - - - - .
```

The green stones are the protagonists of the example and the red ones are the ones that can capture this one, in the explained sequence.

Rules of the game.

This section contains the rules and generalities of the game for a better understanding of the game, this is represented as (NOR.X for rules or GEN.X for generalities and/or statements). Within the Rules there are those of the Placement Phase (FC), those of the Movement Phase (FM) and the General Rules that apply in both Phases of the game (AM). In other words, the rules are described as follows
RULE.NUMBERRULE.PHASEOFTHEPLAYINGPHASE

GEN.01=Shepherds and Warriors is a board game for two players.

GEN.02=The game is classified as an Abstract Strategy Game.

GEN.03=The game is designed to be played on a 25-point (5x5) alquerque board.

GEN.04=The stone is assigned to the pieces and/or pawns in the game.

GEN.05=The game is played with 8 stones per player.

GEN.06=The stones are divided into two clearly differentiated types: Shepherds (5 stones) and Warriors (3 stones).

GEN.07=The objective of the game is to capture all the stones or prevent the opposing player from making any valid moves.

NOR.01.AM=The game will be determined by any method agreed upon by the players.

NOR.02.AM=The game consists of two phases: the Placement Phase (FC), when the stones are placed on the board to begin the game, and the Movement Phase (FM), where the rest of the game is determined by moves and captures.

NOR.03.FC=One stone is placed per player per turn, in no predefined order or pattern, on any empty spot in the two rows closest to the player (A-B or D-E) until all the stones have been placed.

NOR.04.FC=A Warrior may be placed on a spot in the initial rows that does not have diagonals to position it during the game. (See examples)

NOR.05.FM=Shepherds may move and capture in a cross formation to the next point immediately above.

NOR.06.FM=Warriors may move and capture diagonally to the next point immediately above. If movement is not possible, they may move horizontally (but only capture diagonally).

NOR.07.FM=Stones are moved along the lines of the board.

NOR.08.FM=Stones capture and replace the point of the captured stone (as in chess)

NOR.09.FM=Captured stones are removed from the board.

NOR.10.FM=Capturing enemy pieces that can be captured is not mandatory (as in checkers); here, piece sacrifice and good strategy prevail.

NOR.11.FM=If a stone reaches the other "end" of the board, nothing happens; it is not crowned or anything like that (as can happen in chess or checkers).

NOR.12.FM=If the outcome is 1 vs. 1, only 5 turns are available, or the game is declared a draw.

NOR.13.AM=When a player touches a stone, either to move or place it, they must play with that stone.

NOR.14.AM=The winner must always shake hands with the loser.

Educational benefits.

Shepherds and Warriors has didactic benefits and "lessons" for children and upwards due to its rules and regulations, apart from the logical and strategic thinking typical of this kind of games.

- The randomness of NOR.02.AM makes the starting strategies very varied (each game is different since each player has 2520 ways to position the stones at the start).
- The board has 25 points of which 16 are occupied in the first turn after the placement phase, this means that stones must be sacrificed before the third turn to open holes in the board, especially in the initial turns the sacrifice is almost mandatory, it is up to the player to decide which piece to sacrifice and how this will affect the rest of the turns. (You have to choose to sacrifice to advance).
- The stone that is touched is the one that is moved and placed according to NOR.13.AM. (It is necessary to assume the decisions that are made by mistake).
- Having no obligation to capture (NOR.10.FM) or possibility to crown (NOR.11.FM) the strategy, the medium term vision (1 or 2 turns ahead) and the sacrifice of pieces are key to victory. (You have to think about the consequences of the decisions you make).
- According to NOR.14.AM you must have respect for the opponent, this comes from the Canarian wrestling where the winner has to lift the defeated from the ground to give him the victory (You have to be polite with everyone).

In addition to these points, Shepherds and Warriors can be learned in minutes, both the board and the stones can be made in disposable and/or recycled materials, and it is easy to understand. All this makes it ideal for an approach to abstract strategy in schools. It is easier to learn than Chess and more complex than Checkers or Alquerque.

Examples

End of game

Cornered pieces

It is normal to corner or want to corner to end a game, whether it is in 1 VS 1 or if our opponent is playing defensively, a couple of examples.

Shepherd vs Shepherd

	1	2	3	4	5
A	•	•	•	•	ñ
	\	/	\	/	
B	•	•	•	ç	•
	/	\	/	\	
C	•	•	•	•	•
	\	/	\	/	
D	•	•	•	•	•
	/	\	/	\	
E	•	•	•	•	•

Move where you move A5 loses, this move is useful if we play 1 vs 1 and the opponent wants to play defensively and we manage to corner him in a corner.

Warrior vs Warrior

	1	2	3	4	5
A	·	·	·	·	·
	\	/	\	/	
B	·	·	·	·	·
	/	\	/	\	
C	·	·	·	·	·
	\	/	\	/	
D	·	·	·	·	·
	/	\	/	\	
E	·	·	·	·	·

Depending on whose turn it is:

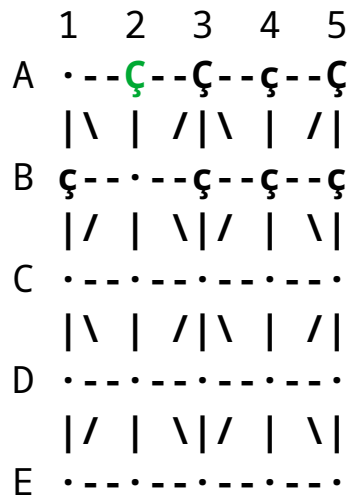
A5 → B4

or B4 → A5

	1	2	3	4	5
A	·	·	·	·	·
	\	/	\	/	
B	·	·	·	·	·
	/	\	/	\	
C	·	·	·	·	·
	\	/	\	/	
D	·	·	·	·	·
	/	\	/	\	
E	·	·	·	·	·

Something less obvious. If it is A5's turn the game is lost, if it is A3's turn he can still force a draw. The same would happen if instead of being in A3 he were in C3.

Placement of warriors at the start



In this example we see that in the placement phase (NOR.03.FC) there is a warrior in A2. When we want to move it, it can only move to the free horizontal point (A1 or A3) and from there always diagonally to B2 or B4.

Blocking Warriors

	1	2	3	4	5
A	·	·	·	·	·
	·	·	·	·	·
B	·	·	·	·	·
	·	·	·	·	·
C	·	·	·	·	·
	·	·	·	·	·
D	·	·	·	·	·
	·	·	·	·	·
E	·	·	·	·	·

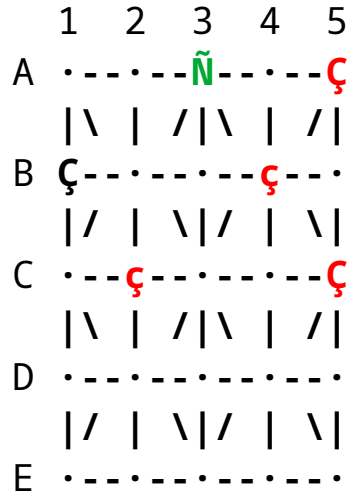
It is important to be able to block warriors that are placed in non-diagonal positions. In this example a shepherd has moved up from D2 to B2 and now B1 can neither position nor capture, besides there is a trap to capture A3:

If A3 → B2 = C2 → B2 → B2 → B1

If A3 → B2 = C1 → B2, B2 → A3 leaving the same B1 free but with its only available move guarded by C2 and A3.

	1	2	3	4	5
A	·	·	·	·	·
	·	·	·	·	·
B	·	·	·	·	·
	·	·	·	·	·
C	·	·	·	·	·
	·	·	·	·	·
D	·	·	·	·	·
	·	·	·	·	·
E	·	·	·	·	·

The danger of inactivity



If from the beginning of the game we have been blocked by A3 with B5 and C5, we must be aware of this type of moves and choose quickly what to sacrifice to get out of there because if we are inactive by the blockade can occur a situation like the one raised in which 4 of 5 opposing stones on the board can capture us in a maximum of 2 turns:

1 - That zone is blocked so that A3 does not advance with the threat of capture with C5.

2 - Move B4 → A4 to capture A3's stone, either by C2, A5 or C5.

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