

SHISIMA

(Kenyan "Tic Tac Toe")

This game, similar to Tic-Tac-Toe, is played by the Tiriki people in Kenya. The name Shisima, which means "source of water," was inspired by watching imbalavali, the Tutriki word for "water insects," crawling toward the shisima (water source). When the Tiriki play it, they draw lines toward the shisima and use beans, stones, or other objects to represent the imbalavali.

Counters: Each of the two players has 3 pieces of different design to represent the crawling imbalavali.

Players: Two players or teams.

General Rules

1. Opening Position

The board is placed in such a position that each player faces a group of insects (imbalavali). The players lay down, on their respective sides, all their pieces on top of the three corners occupied by the insects.

2. Object of the Game

The object of the game is to get your 3 imbalavali in a straight line first.

3. Moves

The players take turns, moving one piece at a turn. Moves are made along any line (no jumping) to a vacant space. Obviously, whoever wins must have one counter in the center (in the shisima). However, moving there first does not necessarily guarantee winning. In spite of its seeming simplicity, this game requires some strategy.

