Inara

2025, James Kuang, https://inaragame.space/
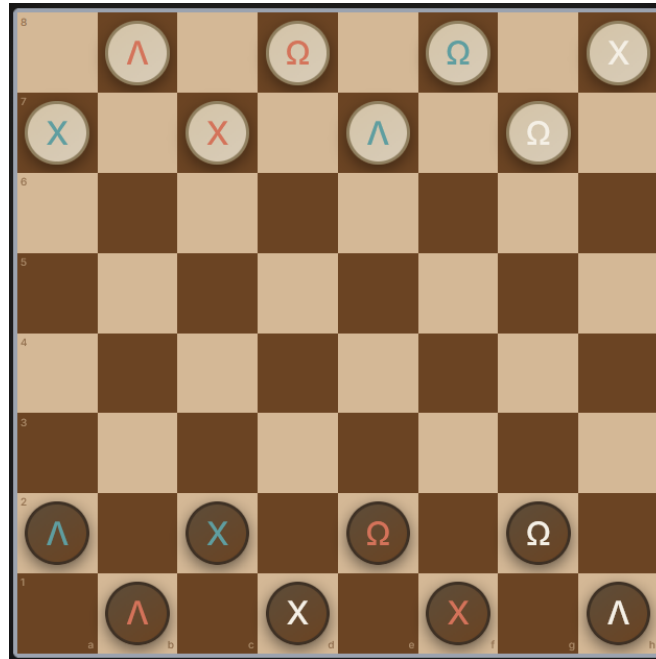
Inara is a contest of skillful positioning and adaptation to ever shifting resources. There is no random chance once the game has started and no hidden information.

Materials

- 7 Glyph tokens: 3 shapes (Moon, Sand, Peak), 3 colors (White, Orange, Blue), and 1 Mirror

- Two sets of 9 golems (Light and Dark), each with a shadow stone and marked mask showing one of nine unique shape/color combinations

Preparing the Game

1. Give each player a set of golems. The player with dark golems moves first.

2. Place 8 of your golems randomly on alternating squares in your first two rows. Light golems go on dark squares; dark golems go on light squares.

3. Leave your 9th golem aside—dismantle it and put the mask and shadow into your supply.

4. Randomly distribute glyphs: Dark receives 3, Light receives 3. The remaining glyph becomes Dark's resting glyph.

Goal

Race your golems across the board and be the first to move one into your opponent's back row. Victory is yours if you succeed before they do!

Turn Summary

Players alternate turns. At the start of your turn, you have 3 glyphs in hand and 1 resting. You must take an action—you may not pass.

1. **Play a glyph** from your hand as the active glyph, then either:

   o Move a golem matching the active glyph's shape or color (or if Mirror is active, match the resting glyph)

   o OR Reactivate a golem

2. **Resolve captures** resulting from movement or reactivation

3. **End your turn** by picking up the resting glyph

4. Your used glyph becomes the new resting glyph for your opponent

How to Move

Each square can hold at most one golem or shadow.

Stepping

- Move orthogonally 2 spaces (N/S/E/W). This can be blocked by opponent pieces in the intermediate square.

- OR move 1 space diagonally. This cannot be hindered by nearby pieces.

Jumping

- Jump diagonally over your own pieces (including shadows) to the next empty square

- You may jump over one piece or multiple pieces arranged in a row

- Chain several jumps together as a single move

- You cannot jump back to your starting square in the same turn

Capturing Pieces

- After moving or reactivating, your golem captures any opponent pieces surrounded on two opposite sides (horizontal or vertical) by the moving golem and another of your pieces

- The moving piece captures any opponent piece that does **not** match it in shape, color, or both. Pieces matching by shape or color are safe.

- The stationary piece's shape/color does not matter—only the moving piece's attributes count

- Captured pieces are dismantled and returned to their owner's supply

- Moving into a square between two opponent pieces does **not** result in your capture

Shadows

- When your golem moves, you may leave a shadow on the vacated square (if you have one in supply)

- **Dark may not place shadows until Light has placed one first**

- Shadows cannot move but can block opponent steps

- Your golems can jump over your own shadows

- Shadows can be stationary pieces for capturing

- Shadows can be captured by any opponent piece (no matching required)

- **Shadow Capture Rule:** If one of your shadows is captured, ALL your remaining shadows are immediately removed and returned to your supply

Reactivation

- Instead of moving, place a mask from your supply onto one of your shadows on the board

- The mask must match **both** the active glyph AND the resting glyph

- If Mirror is your active or resting glyph, you may reactivate any piece matching the other glyph

- After reactivating, resolve any captures

Ending the Game

Sudden Death: The game ends immediately when one player moves a golem into their opponent's first row. That player wins!

Extra Lives: Your opponent loses a life every time you complete a run to their back row. The golem that scores can still make captures and leave a shadow on that turn. Completing a run also returns that golem to your supply as a mask and a shadow. Bring their number of lives down to zero to win!

If neither player can make a valid move, the player with more lives wins. If tied, the game is a draw.