

ALPHAGEOMETRIC GAME

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Alphagon

THE GAME

From **2 up to 6** players. You construct a polygon by concatenating meaningful words in the squares of a table.

You earn points by closing words or by finding syllables or polygon shapes on your cards.

Winner:

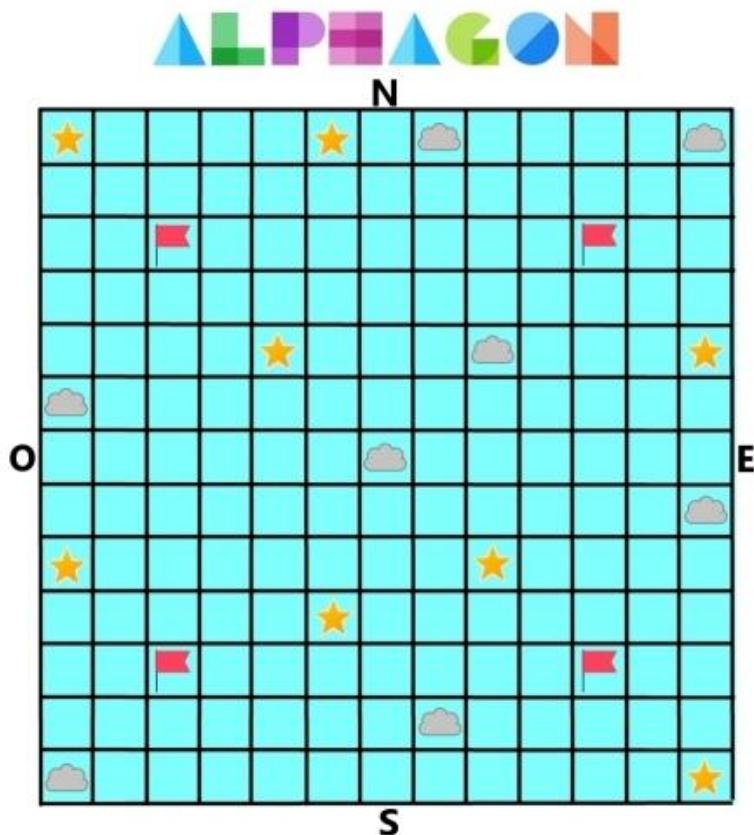
- Whoever has the most points when closing the polygon, OR.
- Whoever has the most points when a stalemate is reached, OR
- Whoever first reaches the **GOAL** score

The GOAL score is 40 for 2 players, 35 for 3 players, 30 for 4 players, 25 for 5 players, 20 for 6 players.

THE GAME BOARD

The game board is a table of 13x13 squares where the letters of the words under construction are concatenated. Some of the squares have the following symbols:

- **flags** are the possible starting points for building the polygon
- **stars** are the bonuses for the active player
- **clouds** are the penalties for the active player



THE ELEMENTS OF THE GAME

Each player is identified by one color among 6 (red, yellow, green, blue, black, white).

The elements of the game are:

- for each color one sack of vowels and one sack of consonants (*)
- a deck of polygon cards
- a group of bonus tokens
- a group of '+' symbols to connect the sides of the polygon
- a group of 3, 4, 5, 6 points tokens
- [optional] the web app at www.geromannella.com/alphagon

(*) the number of vowels and consonants is relative to the frequency of use in the language (i.e., there are more A's than U's, more C's than Z's). Numerical detail is in the appendix.

Polygon cards contain silhouettes consisting of 4/5 squares and 4 pairs of syllables, as in the example below.

	S	A	N	I	T	
	A	S		T	I	
O						E
	F	U		N	O	
	U	F	S	O	N	

START

A dice roll is made to choose the starting player and the direction of rotation.

With each player having chosen his or her color, his or her starting equipment consists of:

- 3 vowels and 4 consonants taken at random from the relevant sacks
- 3 random polygon cards
- 2 bonus tokens

The first player's **first play** consists of taking the symbol '+' from the relevant sack, placing it on a flag of his choice on the game board, and placing a letter next to it in the desired direction (North, East, South, West). After that, the game is played as indicated in **THE GENERIC PLAY**.

THE GENERIC PLAY

The generic play consists of one or more of these actions:

1. Place letter(s) on the game board
2. Change a letter
3. Find a syllable
4. Find a shape
5. Any bonuses/maluses on the game board

1. Place letter(s) on the game board

The player places a letter adjacent to the last one in the current direction (e.g., from West to East), to construct a **complete meaning word** (*).

By investing **1 bonus** the player can place **2 letters**.

The word under construction starts from the last '+' entered. After placing the vowels/consonants the player replaces them with others at random from the relevant sacks.



- 1) If the player completes or reveals a **complete meaning word**, he **CLOSES** the word.
- 2) If the player fails to continue the word under construction he may:
 - **pass the turn** to the next player, losing **1 bonus** (in case he does not have them, he loses a letter of his choice)

- **doubt** on the word in construction

If he doubts, the previous player must state the complete word. If it is admitted, the previous player **CLOSES** the partial word (because it has now been revealed) and the doubting player is **penalized**. On the other hand, if it is not admitted, the previous player is **penalized**, and the current player **SUSPENDS** the word.

- 3) If the word under construction has at least 3 letters already on the board and the player believes it is **UNIQUE in meaning** (even if it subtends multiple similar words) he/she may **declare it in advance**, without composing it until the end.

If it's confirmed to be unique, i.e., receives no denials from others, the player **CLOSES** the partial word.

If, on the other hand, he is contradicted, that is, another word with the same root but a different meaning is mentioned, the current player is **penalized** and **the first player** to contradict him **CLOSES** the word.

To avoid misunderstanding or overlap, it can be agreed to raise the hand to contradict, so establishing a sequence among the players.

For example, if the current word is CONCL, the current player might hypothesize that the only continuation is CONCLUDING/CONCLUSION, but another player might oppose him CONCLAVE, and win the dispute.

The complete word to **CLOSE** must have at least **4 letters**.

In **CLOSING** a word, the player:

- gets:
 - 4-point token for short words (4 to 5 letters)
 - 5-point token for medium words (up to 7 letters)
 - 6-point token for long words (over 7 letters)

In the case of early closing of **multiple but unique in meaning** words, the length of the shortest word is considered.

Obviously, even if the opponent does not find a word with the same root but different meaning, he can correct the turn player's unique meaning word, if he finds a shorter one, to reduce his score.

For example, in the case of root ASCE, if the player on turn declares only ASCETICAL, another player can correct it to ASCESIS (5 points instead of 6).

- - if the word exceeds 8 letters, the player is can get 1 bonus or 1 letter of his choice, **but only if he is under the initial allocation**
- - concatenates the '+' symbol at the end of the word

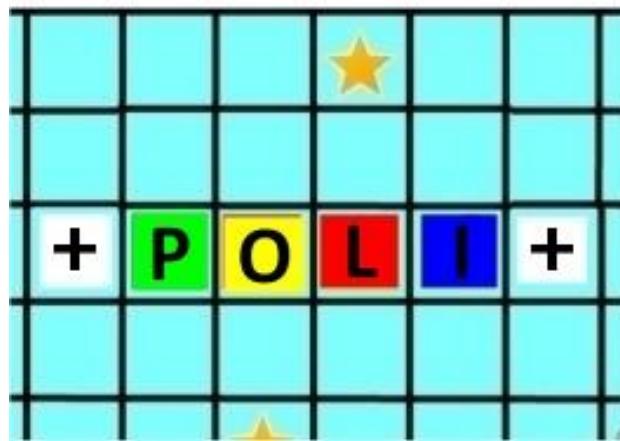
In **SUSPENDING** a word, the player:

- - concatenates the '+' symbol at the end of the word

PENALIZING means to **lose 1 letter** of his choice.

If a round of the table is completed in passing the turn, the last player may suspend the word in progress, to begin a new word.

The '**+**' symbol is a **discontinuity** in the construction of the polygon, that is, it closes one side and begins another perpendicular side, as described in **POLYGON CONSTRUCTION**.



In the above example, the BLUE player, arriving at the partial word POLI, declares POLICE, POLICEMAN the only possible continuation. He is not contradicted, CLOSES the word with 5 points and is lucky.

In fact, if another player had remembered POLICLINIC (same root, but different meaning), the BLUE player would have been penalized.

(*) **Complete meaning** is agreed upon among the players. For example, all dictionary terms, plus geographic nouns, can be admitted, without verb conjugations.

2. Change a letter

The player **MAY** change **only one letter** to one of his choice. If he wants to do this BEFORE placing the letter he must invest **1 bonus**. Otherwise, he can do it afterwards for free.

3. Find a syllable

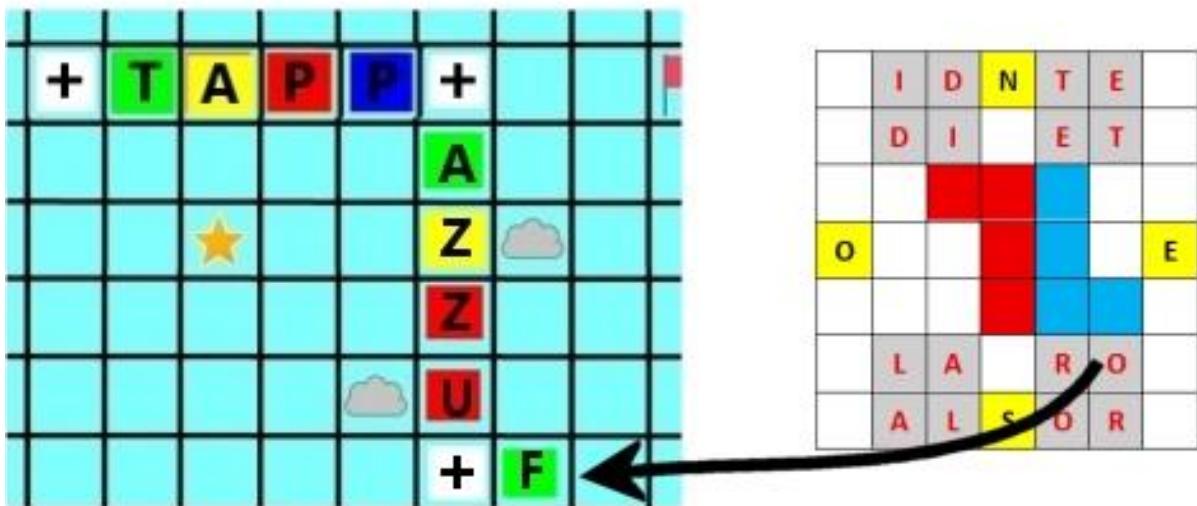
If the current player finds on one of his **polygon cards** a syllable present in the word under construction (e.g., the current word is CONGI, and on a polygon card there is 'CO' or 'GI'), he earns a 3-point token and must exchange the polygon card for another from the deck (he puts his card in the queue and takes the new card from the beginning).

The player can find only one syllable on his turn, but if the polygon card with the syllable also contains the polygon shape (see below) the player also enjoys the corresponding prize.

4. Find a shape

If the current player finds on one of his polygon cards a sequence of squares corresponding to the last section of the polygon (i.e., coincides with red or blue shapes), he earns a 3-point token and must exchange the polygon card for another from the deck.

The player can find only one shape on his turn, but if the polygon card containing the shape also contains a syllable of the word under construction (see above) the player also enjoys the corresponding prize.



For example, if the current player (GREEN, after arranging the letter, or the next YELLOW, before his move) has the polygon card indicated, the blue shape coincides with the end of the polygon. Thus the player earns 3 points and replaces his polygon card.

5. Bonus/Malus

If the player puts one of his own letters (or the final '+') on a square with **STAR**, he **gains 1 bonus token**.

If the player puts his own letter (or the final '+') on a square with **CLOUD**, he **loses 1 bonus token**. In case he has no bonus, the player loses a letter of his choice.

In addition to earning bonuses with the STAR or by closing a long word, a player can receive a **bonus if he gives up one of his own letters**.

POLYGON CONSTRUCTION

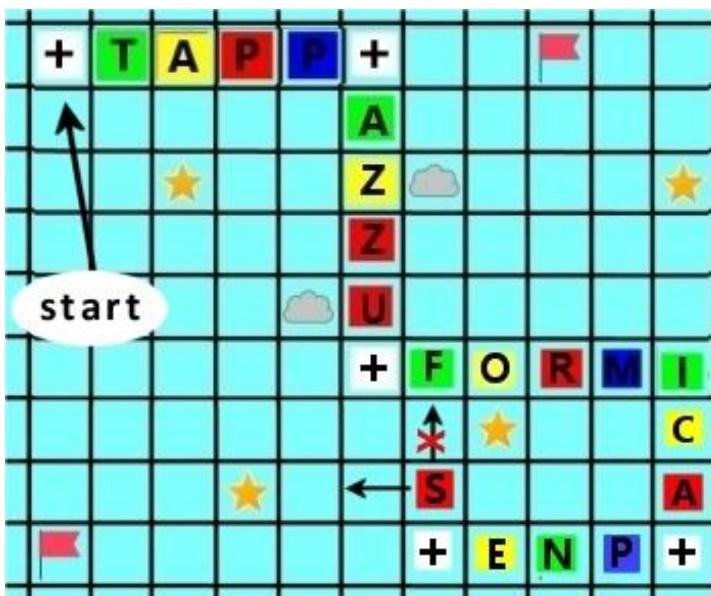
Starting with the first 2 squares, each player places his letter adjacent on the same direction, either horizontally (WEST to EAST, or vice versa) or vertically (NORTH to SOUTH, or vice versa). The ideal goal is to construct a polygon by closing it on the starting point.

One must **change direction**, that is, start a new **perpendicular** side, in one of the following cases:

- - After the placement of a ' +' (as already seen).
- - When the current square is on the **board edge**
- - When the current square is one step away from **early closure** of the polygon



*Example of current letter ('I') on the **game board edge**. To continue, NORTH or SOUTH is chosen depending on the constraints described below.*



*Example of **early closure** to be avoided. The mission of the game is to **approximate the START point**.*

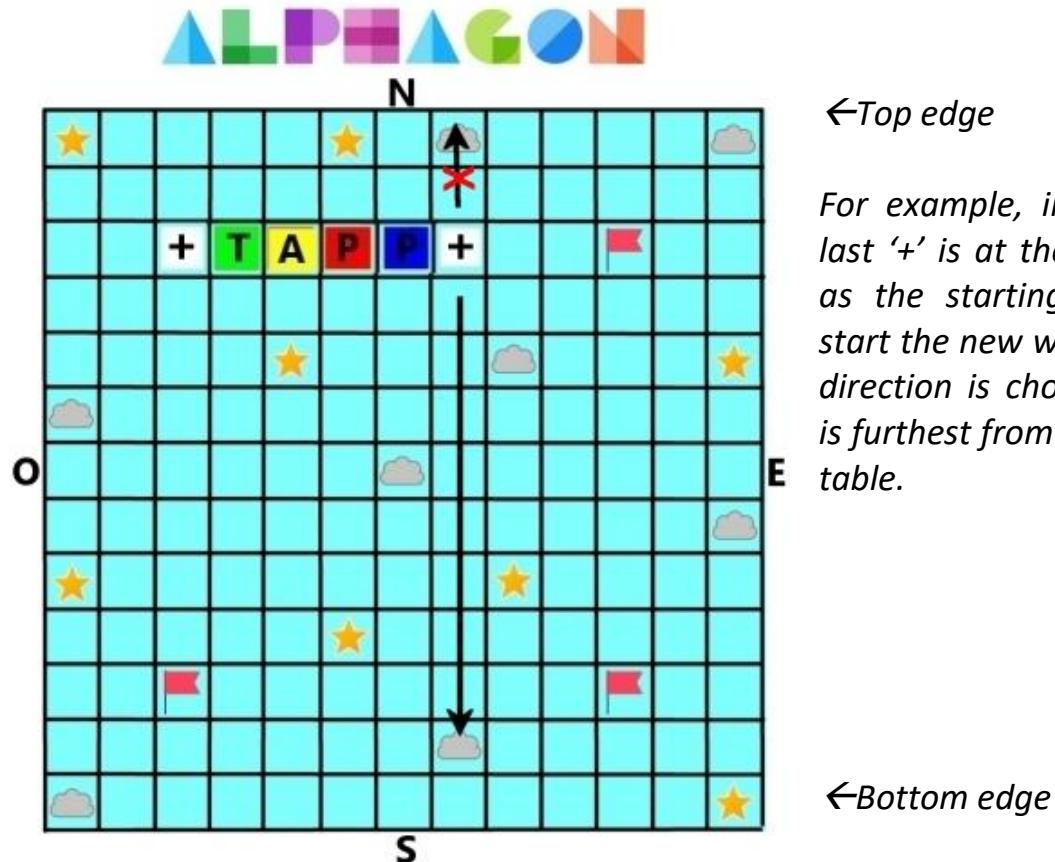
In this case, after the last '+' with direction change for the letter 'S', being one step away from early closure, there is a new direction change toward the START point, with the constraints described below

The choice of direction is **not arbitrary**, but depends on the position of the starting point of the polygon.

That is, **if the polygon under construction has at least 4 sides**, in changing the direction NORTH/SOUTH or EAST/WEST, I will choose the direction that approaches

the starting point. Conversely, if the number of sides constructed is less than 4, I will choose the direction that moves away from the starting point.

If the starting point is at the same latitude or longitude, the direction where the **opposite side of the board is furthest away** is chosen.

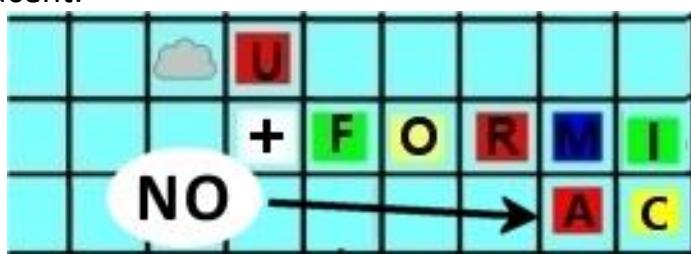


←Top edge

For example, in this case the last ' +' is at the same latitude as the starting point. So, to start the new word, the SOUTH direction is chosen, because it is furthest from the edge of the table.

←Bottom edge

Obviously, a polygon is such if its sides contain an area, so it is not permissible for the sides to be adjacent.



Apart from **totaling the GOAL score**, the game stops if:

- the distance between the starting point and the terminal point is **1 square** (polygon closure)
- the sides of the polygon are at **least 10**
- in the presence of the above constraints, **its construction cannot be continued**

In such cases the player with the highest score at that time wins.

THE USE OF THE WEB APP

On the use of a smartphone during a party game there are opposing views, some would like to forget its existence while playing (and I agree).

In any case, there is the optional web app at the link

www.geromannella.com/alphagon

It allows you to:

- choose the initial player without the dice roll (SETUP option)
- update the score to the players instead of using tokens (SCORE option)
- generate the **initial sequence** of consonants and vowels (SEQUENCE option)

In the latter case, the web app can have added value because, instead of randomly choosing from a sack, it allows an algorithm to be applied to balance the frequency of use of vowels and consonants, so that one player is not favored (with common letters such as C, A, S) and another player is disfavored (with rare letters such as Z, Q, U).

In any case, the web app is not invasive, it would have the sole function of random generation at the beginning and eventual accounting during the game.

APPENDIX

Number of letters and the symbol '+'

The number of letters for each player is related to the frequency of use in the language.

In each consonant sack there are:

4 **C, N, R, S, T**

3 **B, D, F, G, K, L, M, P, V, W, Y**

2 **H, J, Q, X, Z**

In each vowel sack there are:

6 **A, E, I**

5 **O**

3 **U**

Since 10 is the maximum number of sides of the polygon, it will be the minimum for '+' symbols.