



**Australian Government**  
**Australian Sports Commission**



# Yulunga

**Traditional Indigenous Games**

**Suitable for school years 4–6**

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# Yulunga

## Traditional Indigenous Games

### Traditional Indigenous Games

The games outlined in this resource are considered primarily as a contribution towards the implementation of Indigenous Australian perspectives across the education curriculum, from Kindergarten to Year 12 (K–12). It is recommended that local elders are consulted and invited to be involved in some way prior to undertaking any unit of work or special event using the *Traditional Indigenous Games*.

Examples of statements that might be acceptable to local elders and that can be made in association with the use of the games in this resource are:

*'We pay our respect to the traditional custodians of this land.'*

*'We acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands of the ... peoples and pay our respects to the traditional custodians.'*

In the language of the Kamilaroi (Gamori) people of north-western New South Wales, *Yulunga* means 'playing'.

## **Acknowledgments**

The Australian Sport Commission acknowledges Ken Edwards for the extensive and thorough research undertaken to collate the Yulunga: Traditional Indigenous Games.

To create this resource, Ken Edwards with the assistance of Troy Meston reviewed almost every available account of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander games from all parts of Australia.

The Australian Sports Commission recognises the traditional owners of the games and activities that formed the basis of this resource. This resource is dedicated to all Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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## **Disclaimer**

The Traditional Indigenous Games resource has been designed for people of all ages. The resource assumes that each person participating in the activities is healthy and has no medical condition that would preclude him or her from participating in the activities. People should not be allowed to participate in an activity if any medical, physical or other factor indicates that he or she is not suited to that activity. Where there are any queries or concerns about such matters, the consent of the participant, or if under 18, the participant's parent/legal guardian, should be obtained before allowing participation. Adult supervision must be provided for all activities where participants are under 18 years of age. While care has been taken in the preparation of the resource, the publisher and authors do not accept any liability arising from the use of the resource, including without limitation, from any activities described in the resource.

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ISBN 978 1 74013 102 5

Content by Ken Edwards, with assistance by Troy Meston

Illustrations by Glenn Robey

Produced by Australian Sports Commission Publishing staff

# Foreword



The *Yulunga: Traditional Indigenous Games* resource was developed to provide all Australians with a greater understanding and appreciation of Indigenous culture — the way it was many thousands of years ago and still is today. Over the years sport has played a major role in developing a socially cohesive environment within Indigenous communities. Many of the games you see today have evolved from traditional games of the past.

Through this unique sporting resource, traditional Indigenous culture can be experienced and enjoyed by all Australians. It combines curriculum principles and cultural traditions in sport-related activities for people of all ages, while ensuring the integrity of traditional games. It can be used in schools around Australia as an educational resource and as a guide to inclusive, structured sport within communities.

**Adam Goodes**

*Sydney Swans AFL player*

*Ambassador, Indigenous Sport Program, Australian Sports Commission*



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**Wener ganbony tillutkerrin?**  
*What shall we play first?*  
(Language of the Western people of Victoria)



# Introduction


*Yulunga: Traditional Indigenous Games* presents a selection of games and activities played in Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies. Traditional pastimes have been included along with some more ‘modern’ activities. This book is based on extensive research, including several hundred accounts collected over many years from all parts of Australia and the Torres Strait Islands. Many of the original accounts of games were recorded during the nineteenth century by explorers, government officials, settlers, scientists and missionaries. There are comparatively few descriptions of games and sports by Indigenous people, but efforts have been made to include a significant level of Indigenous input.

Some points about how the games are presented:

- Some of the games can be played in their traditional form or close to it — sometimes by using modern equipment.
- Some games have been modified from their traditional form so that there is an understanding of the basic skills and game play while considering other factors such as safety and ease of play. In some cases modifications of a game or activity have been outlined to provide opportunities for people of different ages and abilities to be able to participate in an enjoyable and relevant way.
- Some games have been reconstructed from vague or incomplete accounts into what is believed to be an accurate representation.
- Many of the games presented can be successfully played as skill games or lead-up games in physical education lessons, or in specific sports practice sessions, rather than as major games in themselves. A large number of the games can be played as outlined in this book.
- Some types of games outlined (such as wrestling and ball games) provide an opportunity to play different versions of the game or activity.
- The games vary in the type and level of competition.

As part of the process in preparing this book, an Australia-wide consultation was conducted in conjunction with the Indigenous Sport Program at the Australian Sports Commission. Where possible, approval was sought from the traditional owners of the games or from representative Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. The sole motivation in researching and developing the games presented has been to provide an outline of the types of activities that were, and in some cases still are, part of Australian Indigenous play culture.





Individuals and groups contributed information in the course of the consultation process. The enthusiasm and positive feedback received reinforces the important role that these games and activities can serve.

The games outlined cover most regions of Australia. Care has been taken to avoid games used in initiation ceremonies and religious events, or which could give a false impression of the cultural identity of Indigenous people.

It is recommended that when the games are used as part of a school or sporting program, local elders and Indigenous groups are informed of the plans and invited to participate in some way, including commenting on suitable activities.

# bunbuja

'bun-bu-ja'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

Spin-tops were made from the gourds of the *Benincasa vacua*, in an area of north Queensland. The people in the Cape Grafton area called them *bunbuja*. A spin-top was made by passing a stick through the gourd and then fixing the stick into position with twine and beeswax.

Spin-tops were used only by the men, and spun by twirling with the flats of the open hands or a flick of the thumb and first finger. A hole was made in the side, to make it hum.

## Game play and basic rules

- Make or use small tops that can be spun with the hands or with the thumb and finger.
- Some types of spin-tops can be purchased in toy shops.

## Teaching points

- Hold the ends of the top.
- Be ready to spin it.
- Pull and push your palms together. (Flick the thumb and first finger).
- Release the top.
- Look at it go.

# jillora

'jil-lor-a'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

Spinning balls or tops of various kinds were used as an amusement by Aboriginal people in most parts of Australia and by Torres Strait Islanders.

The spin-ball used in the northwest central districts of Queensland was a round ball of about 2 to 3 centimetres in diameter. It was made of lime, ashes, sand, clay and sometimes hair, rolled into shape, either between the hands or the folds of a blanket, and subsequently baked, thus making it smooth and hard. The spin-ball was often painted with red or yellow ochre.

## Language

The spin-ball was called *jillora* at Boulia, *popojo* at Glenormiston and Roxburgh, *pucho-pucho* in the Kalkadoon country, and *anai-dappi-dappa* at Headingly and Lake Nash. The game was apparently introduced from the lower Diamantina River area.

## Short description

A ball-spinning activity.

## Players

- One to ten players

## Playing area

- A suitable indoor or outdoor area

## Equipment

- Large balls such as basketballs

## Game play and basic rules

- Players attempt to make the ball spin for as long as possible.
- Players use one or both hands to spin the large balls on a smooth surface. Younger players may need help from other players in spinning the balls.

### Variations

- The game can be played by several players at once. On the signal to start, all players start their balls spinning.
- In a competition the last ball left spinning is the winner.
- Timed-team *jillora*: Players are organised into groups of three to five. Players add their times together and attempt to set a 'record'. Have three attempts to set a record. At the end add the times for all the groups to set a class record.

### Comment

This version is designed for use as a warm-up activity and is particularly suitable for younger children.

### Teaching points

- Balls ready. Hands each side on top.
- Push with one hand pull with the other. Hold in the fingers. Make it spin.
- Step back. Keep it going.
- Try again. A little harder. That's the idea.

# pirrha

'pir-rha'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

The Lake Eyre women made small gypsum balls to spin. The game was played by several players at once. The player whose ball spun the longest was the winner.

Sometimes two women competed against each other. In another form of the game two balls were spun in a large bowl (*pirrha*) and there was excitement when the balls collided.

## Language

The name for the game is taken from the large bowl (*pirrha*) used for spinning balls.

## Short description

The game is one of ball spinning. The object is to try to make the ball spin for as long as possible.

## Players

- One to ten players

## Playing area

- A suitable indoor or outdoor area

## Equipment

- Use a number of discs (frisbees) — the discs should all be the same. The underside of the disc can be smoothed and the surface waxed.
- Use balls such as wooden balls, billiard balls or large marbles.

## Game play and basic rules

- The ball is spun on the surface of an upturned disc (frisbee) or similar object.
- The player prepares by holding the disc in one hand — or placing it on a flat surface — with the other hand ready to spin the ball. The spin is

usually made by flicking the thumb and first and second fingers.

- The signal to start is given and the ball is spun.
- The ball can be moved around the surface of the disc by changing the angle of the disc. For best results the ball should be kept in the middle of the disc.
- A stop-watch is used to time how long the ball spins. When the spin is timed, the stop-watch is started as the hand is lifted away from the ball and the time is recorded until it stops turning.
- Players aim to achieve their best time or beat a set time (such as 45 seconds).

### Scoring

The player whose ball spins for the longest time wins the game. Players have three attempts and the best time counts.

### Variations

- The game can be played by several players at once. On the signal to start, all players start the ball spinning. The longest-spinning ball is the winner.
- Players in groups of three at a time compete in an elimination contest to determine a winner.
- For a team competition the ball must be spun and hands lifted away quickly on the signal to start. If there is any delay the turn does not count.
- Players attempt to guess which ball will spin the longest before the turn has started.
- Have two balls spinning in the same *pirrha* and attempt to have them collide with each other. This is not a competition.
- The game can be played by the players in teams of three or five and with each player competing against a member of the other team at the same time.
- Spin a basketball on a smooth wooden floor. Use two hands to start the ball spinning.

### Top-spinning technique

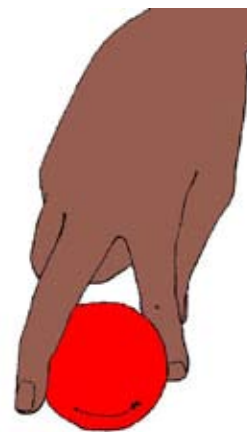
- The spin-ball is spun by being pressed between the first and middle fingers, on either a patch of smooth, hard ground, or more usually on a flat board.
- Another method is to spin the ball by holding it between the thumb and first two fingers and giving it a quick twist.

### Suggestion

This activity could be ideally used as a classroom activity or as a night-time activity as part of an outdoor education unit.

### Teaching points

- Spin balls ready. Thumb and one or two fingers on the ball.
- Grip and flick hard to spin.
- Hands each side of the disc. Try to keep it still or move it around.
- Count the time.
- Keep going.
- Try again. A little faster. That's the idea.



Spinning technique

# boogalah

'boo-ga-la'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

This was a ball game played by both genders of the Juwalarai people in New South Wales. A ball (*boogalah*) was made of sewn-up kangaroo skin. In playing the game all of one *Dhé*, or totem, were team-mates.

## Short description

This is a team throwing and catching game.

## Players

- Two teams of six to ten players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A soccer ball (size 2 or 3) or a gator skin ball as the *boogalah*

## Game play and basic rules

- All the players start in the middle of the playing area. To decide who will start the game a player (or referee) throws the *boogalah* into the air and the player who catches it moves with their totem (team) to stand in a group in the middle of the playing area. The other team is in a circle around them.
- The *boogalah* is thrown high into the air and the players attempt to catch it for their team.
- The players in the circle cannot move to catch the *boogalah* until it is thrown in the air. If a player from the outside circle catches it, his or her side goes into the middle to swap places with the other team. Teams change places quickly. Physical contact should be avoided as much as possible.

### Scoring

The team keeping the *boogalah* in play the longest or the highest number of times during the game is the winner.

### Safety

For younger players, mixed-age and/or gender teams there is to be no pushing while attempting to gain the *boogalah*. When the *boogalah* touches the ground, play stops and the turn is taken again.

### Variations

- Small group *boogalah*: One ball for each group of five or six. One player throws up the ball and they all attempt to catch it. The successful player scores one point.
- Play the first team to five points or the highest score after a set time. (Suitable for physical education lessons.)
- Ten-catch *boogalah*: To start players from both teams, players stand in two lines, 10 metres apart and face each other. The referee throws the *boogalah* into the air and players attempt to catch it for their team. When a player catches the *boogalah*, his or her team moves to stand outside the playing circle (radius of 8–10 metres) and the catching team moves to stand inside the circle. The player catching the *boogalah* is in the centre of the circle and throws it into the air. After throwing the *boogalah* the thrower leaves the circle. Players from the catching team attempt to catch it to throw up again. The first team to make ten catches in a row wins (or count the total catches of both teams without dropping the *boogalah*).

### Suggestion

To add more action and as a possible warm-up activity, it is possible to use two to three balls thrown up in different directions. Players retrieve the balls and move to the middle of the circle and throw them up as part of a continuous whole-group activity.

Note: The game may also be played as a cooperative game for the enjoyment of playing.

### Teaching points

- All in the middle. Form two circles.
- Throw it high. Go and get it.
- Watch the contact. Be careful.
- Swap teams. Let's go.
- Make the game quick.
- Good. High throws.
- Call for the ball.



# buroinjin

'bur-oin-jin'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

This was a ball game played by the Kabi Kabi people of south Queensland. The game was played with a ball made of kangaroo skin, which was called a *buroinjin*.

The ball, which was smaller than a soccer ball, was sewn with tendons and stuffed with grass.

Teams from different groups played against each other. The game was often played until sunset. Spectators used to mark their applause by calling out 'Ei, ei'.

## Language

The game is named for the ball (*buroinjin*) used.

## Short description

This is a running-and-passing ball game.

## Players

- Two teams of six to eight players

## Playing area

- Use a designated area approximately 50–70 metres long and 35–50 metres wide. A line is marked at each end of the playing area.

## Equipment

- A size 2 or 3 soccer ball as the *buroinjin* (ball)
- Use a high-jump stand or mark a line as the score line

## Game play and basic rules

- The *buroinjin* is thrown into the air in the middle of the playing area to begin the game.
- The aim is for a player of one team to run as far as possible with the ball and cross over a line at the other end of the field. He or she attempts to do this without being touched by an opponent.

- There are no player positions or offside, and the *buroinjin* can be thrown in any direction. The *buroinjin* may be passed from player to player but it cannot be hit with the fist or kicked.
- The game is played by running and passing and does not stop if a player drops the *buroinjin*. Players may not dive on the *buroinjin* if it is on the ground — they must bend over and pick it up.
- Immediately a player with the *buroinjin* is touched, it has to be thrown up and away (at least 2–3 metres in the air) by that player, for team-mates or the opposing players to attempt to pick up. The player who was touched may not catch the *buroinjin*.

### Scoring

If a player is able run past the score line one point is scored. The game is then restarted at the halfway mark.

### Variations

- Use a post at one end of the area only. When a team gains possession they aim to run past the post (or score line) to score.
- Either way. Players are allowed two running steps to pass the ball after they are touched or a 'one and two' count if touched while standing still. When a team gains possession, players must always run towards the longest end of the field. The opposing team gains possession of the ball for any infringements.
- Players may run towards either score line when the team gains possession.
- To score, a player has to run through a marked area 20 metres wide.

### Comment

It is expected that players follow the 'intention' of the game by throwing the ball up and away after being touched.

### Safety

For safety reasons players should not be allowed to dive on the ball on the ground — they must bend over and pick up the ball.

### Suggestion

This could be used as a skill game or a variation of touch football.

### Teaching points

- Teams ready. Start behind the line.
- First pass is a free pass.
- Everyone keep moving.
- Watch out for other players.
- Run and pass. Call the touches.
- Keep going. Play on.
- Keep going. Call for the ball.
- Hands up to catch the ball.
- Keep the game fast. Move to space.
- No interference please.



From Sports Ability

# kabi kabi buroinjin

'ka-bi ka-bi bur-oin-jin'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10-12

Post-school age

## Background

This was a traditional game of some Aboriginal groups such as the Kabi Kabi in south Queensland. The game was played with a ball made of kangaroo skin, which was called a *buroinjin*. The ball, which was smaller than a football, was sewn with tendons and stuffed with grass. The game was often played until sunset. Spectators used to mark their applause by calling out 'Ei, ei'.

## Short description

This indoor version of a game called *buroinjin* involves running and passing a ball in an attempt to score a touchdown. This is done by running across a line at the other end of the playing area without being touched by an opponent.

## Players

- Teams of five to seven players

## Playing area

- A basketball court works well

## Equipment

- A size 3 gator skin ball or similar to the *buroinjin* (see page 12)

## Duration

The game may be played in halves of ten minutes or as a seven-minute game (suitable for sport education lessons).

## Game play and basic rules

- There is no offside in the game except that players may not stand in the in-goal area to receive the ball. To score a touchdown a player must run across the baseline at the other end of the court without being touched.
- Start: One team starts the game from behind the baseline. Opposition players are not allowed to interfere with or intercept this first pass. A player in possession of the ball may run with it as far as possible unless he or she is touched by a player from the opposing team.
- Play: A player with the ball who is touched must pass the ball as soon as possible — he or she has two steps if running or a quick '1 and 2' count if stationary or walking. The opposition may not interfere with this pass but can intercept it. The idea is to pass to another player on the same team who is able to run across the baseline without being touched.

- **Touch:** Every time a player is touched the referee will call out the touch count. When a team has been touched in possession four times (three times can be used in some competitions) the opposing team will gain possession of the ball where the final touch was made. Minimum force must be used on all touches.
- **Infringements:** For any infringements the opposing team will take possession of the ball and pass to another player — no interference or interception is allowed on this pass. If a player runs out over a sideline, the other team gains possession on the sideline, whether he or she has been touched or not.
- **Passing:** The ball may be passed in any direction and may be played (including a bounce pass) off the floor. The ball may not contact a player below the knees (change of possession). For safety reasons no players will be allowed to dive on the ball on the court and the ball may not be contacted with the fist but can be tapped or hit to another player using the flat of the hand.
- A touch on the ball will count but a defender cannot hit the ball from the hands of the player with the ball.
- When an intercept or loose ball is retrieved by the opposing team, play continues unless there is no advantage. (If a player or the ball goes out over the sideline then there is a throw-in to the other team.)
- If an attacking player is touched and crosses the baseline, the opposing team starts with the ball from behind the baseline. After a touchdown (score) is made, the defending team re-starts play from behind its own baseline.
- Replacements may be made at any time. A player leaves the court across the sideline and makes contact with the player who is to replace him or her.
- Players who do not play in the spirit of the rules are to be sent off the court for a designated period of time without being replaced. A free throw for an infringement is taken from the place where it occurred on the court and must pass at least 3 metres to another player. (For all free throws defenders must move away at least 3 metres.)

- An advantage rule applies in the game.
- Depending on the situation, players may at the next opportunity be sent from the playing area — at the discretion of the referee — for a designated period of time for a breach of the rules.
- If a player runs with the ball behind the team's baseline and is touched, possession goes to the opposing team 5 metres out from the line. For safety reasons an in-goal area of 3–5 metres may be marked.

### Comment

This game may be used as a variation for the sport of touch football. The game usually proves to be popular and involves a good deal of activity and involvement. It is possible to have two teams playing and a team ready to rotate after a period of time (usually five to seven minutes) as part of a sport education program.

### Variations

- A set number of players or passes (such as four) must handle the ball for a team to score.
- To avoid defenders placing themselves along the defensive line, players in a team may be restricted to attacking or defending parts of the court.

### Teaching points

- Teams ready. Start behind the line. First pass is a free pass.
- Everyone keep moving. Watch out for other players. Go.
- Run and pass. Call the touches. Keep going. Play on.
- Touch 1, touch 2, touch 3, touch 4. Change over.
- Keep going. Call for the ball. Hands up to catch the ball.
- Keep the game fast. Move to space. No interference defenders.

# chuboochuboo

'chu-boo-chu-boo'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

A *chuboochuboo* is a wallaby skin stuffed with grass and about the size of a football. Men, women and children played the game.

The game generated a great deal of fun and enjoyment and never any arguments. It was observed being played in parts of South Australia.

The Aboriginal people of the Lower Murray and surrounding areas played a game similar to *chuboochuboo* called *dirlk* (or ball). The ball was thrown into the air and caught. After catching the *dirlk* a player would run about with the ball before throwing it in an unexpected direction into the air.

## Short description

This is a throwing and catching game during which a group of players make as many consecutive catches as they can of a ball thrown into the air.

## Players

- Groups of six to ten players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A soccer ball, rugby football or gator skin ball

## Game play and basic rules

- The players throw the *chuboochuboo* in the air and attempt to catch it in the hands. After catching the *chuboochuboo* a player throws it into the air for other players to attempt to catch.
- A player who is in position first to catch the *chuboochuboo* is allowed to do so without interference from other players.
- Players are allowed to jump to catch the *chuboochuboo*.

- If a player drops the *chuboochuboo*, another player nearby gathers and throws it into the air to continue the game. Count the most number of throws made in succession before the *chuboochuboo* is dropped.

### Variations

- Play a number of games in groups of six to ten players.
- Allow some limited physical contact.

### Safety

There is to be no pushing while attempting to gain the *chuboochuboo*. When the *chuboochuboo* touches the ground, play stops and the turn is taken again.

### Teaching points

- Spread out. Ready.
- Throw it up.
- Call for the ball. Jump and catch it. No contact.
- Good catch. Stop play. Let them throw.
- Throw it to different places in the area.
- Hands up to catch. Reach towards the ball.
- Keep going.

# keentan

'keen-tan'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

A keep-away game of catch-ball was played everywhere by both genders in the northwest central districts of Queensland. Because the action of the players jumping up to catch the ball resembled the movements of a kangaroo, the Kalkadoon people sometimes described this game as the 'kangaroo-play'. The ball itself was made from possum, wallaby or kangaroo hide tied up with twine.

## Language

*Keentan* is 'play' in the Wik-Mungkan language from northern Queensland. This name has been used in the absence of an identifiable Kalkadoon word for the game.

## Short description

This is a running, passing and catching team keep-away game.

## Players

- Teams of four to eight players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A ball such as a size 3 football (soccer ball) or gator skin ball

## Game play and basic rules

- When this game is played in teams the ball is thrown from one player to another player of the same team. The players of the opposing team attempt to intercept the ball while they are off the ground (only a small jump is needed). The ball is only gained if it is caught while the defender is in the air.
- If the ball is dropped or knocked to the ground by a player attempting to catch it, the other team

gains possession. A change of possession also occurs when a thrown ball falls to the ground untouched. No physical contact is allowed.

- Players cannot stop opposing players from moving around the area — no interference is allowed. Passes must be a minimum of 3 metres.
- The player in possession of the ball may run around the playing area for up to 5 metres. This player cannot be guarded (marked) or obstructed while he or she is attempting to pass the ball — the defender must be at least 1 metre away.

### Variations

- After catching the ball a player may pivot on one foot only (as in netball). Opposing players must be at least 1 metre away while a pass is attempted.
- All players (team in possession and defenders) must be in the air (two feet off the ground) to play the ball — throwing and catching. Players jump to catch (receive) the ball and jump to pass the ball. (This is recommended as the most successful way to play the game.)

### Suggestions

- Practice activities: Practise in pairs or with one player standing 5–10 metres out in front of a line of players. The player in front throws the ball for the first player in line to run out and jump into the air to catch it. After catching the ball and landing on the ground the player then jumps in the air and passes it to the thrower — players may take a few steps with the ball if they wish. Players may also jump into the air to catch the ball and throw it back to the thrower before they land on the ground.
- Team practice. Groups of four to six players form a team by running around and passing in a playing area. Teams could count the number of successful passes or play a cooperative game for fun.

### Comment

This game could be used as a skill game in sports such as netball, basketball, Australian rules football, rugby league and rugby union.

### Teaching points

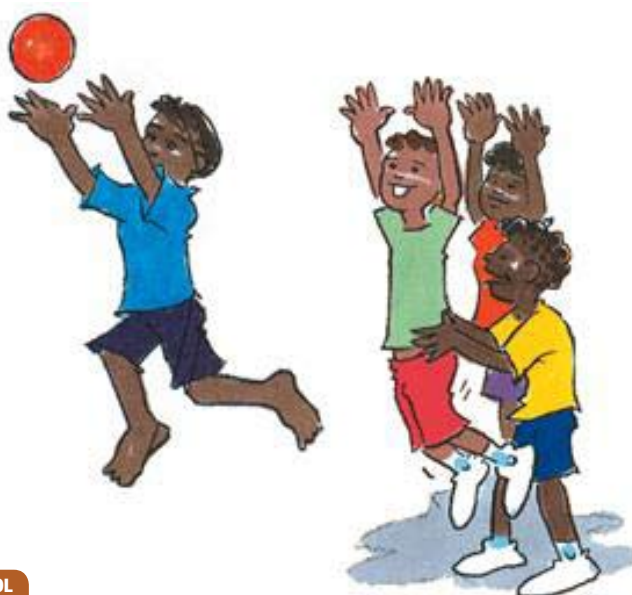
- Teams ready. Go.
- Pass and move.
- Call for the ball.
- Move to open spaces. Keep moving.
- No contacts. Watch the guarding.
- Quick passes. Jump to pass, jump to catch.
- Call for the ball.





# marn-grook

'marn-grook'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10-12

## Background

The *marn-grook* or 'game of ball' was played by some Aboriginal groups in Victoria. The men and boys would joyfully assemble when the game was to be played. The ball was often made of twine formed using the twisted hair of the possum. It was of a good size, somewhat elastic but firm and light.

The ball was given to the 'best' player or someone of 'note' to commence the game. The tallest players, and those able to jump the highest, had the best chances in the game. Some players would leap as high as 1.5 metres (or higher) from the ground to catch the ball. The game continued for hours and the players never seemed to weary of the exercise.

Some people believe that the game of *marn-grook* influenced the development of Australian rules football, but the evidence is not conclusive.

## Short description

A ball is kicked into the air and players attempt to catch it. This version is designed for younger players.

## Players

- Groups of six to 12 players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity. If the ball goes outside the area the game is stopped.

## Equipment

- A small soccer ball, gator skin ball or volleyball

## Game play and basic rules

- The ball is dropped and kicked high into the air using the instep of the foot. Players then attempt to secure the ball. The player who takes possession of the ball kicks it in the air and again a scramble for the ball ensues. Players may not dive on the ball on the ground to secure it and must try to avoid physical contact as much as possible. It is usual for the players to attempt to catch the ball, but if it is knocked or dropped to the ground by players it is still in play.

## Variations

- Players are in groups 15–20 metres apart. When a player catches the ball he or she kicks it towards the other group of players, who attempt to catch the ball. This works very well as a lunchtime or physical education class skill activity.
- Fast play. Use a number of light balls. One or two designated players kick balls high into the air for other players to chase and gather. The balls are handed back to the kickers and play continues in this manner. Change around kickers and observe safety factors — the kickers should kick balls in different directions. If players catch the ball without it hitting the ground or after it bounces, they are acknowledged.

## Safety

Restrict the amount of physical contact. Stop the activity immediately if safety is compromised.

## Teaching points

- Spread out. Ready.
- Kick it high. Drop the ball to foot and kick.
- Call for the ball. No contact.
- Good catch. Let them kick.
- Keep going.

# pukamitjal

'puka-mit-jal'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

A popular ball game of keep-away was played by adults in camps on Mornington Island in northern Australia. Grass and/or leaves were rolled into a ball and bound with hair-string or a piece of fishing net. The adults formed two teams and energetically threw the ball to each other until they tired.

## Language

The ball used in this game was called a *pukamitjal*.

## Short description

This is a keep-away throwing and catching ball game.

## Players

- Two teams of six to 12 players

## Playing area

- A suitable area with lines marked 10–15 metres apart

## Equipment

- A ball such as a volleyball or gator skin ball

## Game play and basic rules

- The game consists of the players of one team throwing the *pukamitjal* back and forth to each other. The players of the other team are in a middle area attempting to intercept passes.
- The team passing the *pukamitjal* splits into two groups and stands next to each other and on lines 10–15 metres apart.
- If a pass is dropped, goes past the players on the line or is intercepted by a middle player, the team that is responsible swaps over with the team in the middle. A change-over also occurs if a player holds the *pukamitjal* for more than three seconds or does not have at least one foot on the line when he or she catches the *pukamitjal*.

- No physical contact is allowed and the players in the middle may not move any closer than 1 metre from the players on the outside line.

### Variations

- Half the players from each team are in two groups about 15 metres apart. The players from one team attempt to throw the *pukamitjal* to a player from the same team who is with the other half of his or her team in the group opposite. The opposing team players attempt to intercept the *pukamitjal* and throw it back to one of their players.
- The teams throw the ball to each other from about 10–15 metres away. If a player from one team drops the ball, the other team scores one point. Use two balls.
- Play with three teams of six to eight players. The team in the middle replaces a team on the outside after a number of turns, after a set time or if a mistake is made.
- The passing team stands around in a circle — perhaps with a line through the middle.
- The other team is in the middle of the circle.

### Teaching points

- Teams ready. Start passing.
- Quick passes. Pass to a free player.
- Change over.
- A quick game is a good game. Hot potato.
- Hands up to catch. Reach towards the ball.

# puldjungi

'puld-jun-gi'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

In one area of Victoria the ball game of *puldjungi* was played. Two sides (*nangkera*) were chosen and a ball was kicked up between them by a non-player. When it was caught by a player of one side they attempted to throw it to one of their own team.

The ball was thrown from the shoulder and caught with one hand — if both hands were used it was regarded as slowing down the game.

The ball was kept as long as possible by members of one side and the team that kept it the longest was the winner. Players who demonstrated their skill in keeping the *puldjungi* in the hands of their *nangkera* were given a *priyinni* (headband) made of white swansdown and skin with white feathers fixed upright around it.

## Short description

This is a team keep-away game with throwing and catching using one hand only.

## Players

- Teams of four to eight players

## Playing area

- An area suitable to the activity is marked

## Equipment

- A tennis ball or a small covered sponge ball or similar

## Game play and basic rules

- Players spread out in the playing area. A team attempts to pass the ball to all players in the team, with the ball able to be passed to the same player more than once. The ball can only be thrown and caught or deflected with one hand. No hitting of the ball with a closed fist is permitted.

- When a player has the ball he or she may run with it for a short distance (3–5 metres) in attempting to pass to another player. The game is played very quickly and if a player attempts to slow the game down by holding onto the ball for too long (more than 2–3 seconds) he or she loses possession.
- Passes must be at least 3 metres long and a player may not pass the ball back to the player who passed to him or her.
- Passes may be intercepted, but physical contact with another player must be avoided. Players may only defend from at least 1 metre away. When a ball is dropped or goes out of the playing area the opposing team gains possession.
- For any infringement the other team gains possession of the ball.

### Variations

- Play with three teams in the playing area.
- The ball may be bounced on the ground in attempting to make a pass.
- Players are encouraged to tap or deflect the ball to other players of the same team.
- The ball must be kept below shoulder height.
- Use different types of balls.
- A team attempts to keep possession for a set number of passes (such as ten).

### Teaching points

- Spread out in the area. Move around.
- Ready. Go.
- Pass to your own team. Pass and move.
- Call for the ball. Use one hand only.
- Watch out for other players.
- Defend someone. No contact.
- Quick passes. Keep going.

# pulyugge

'puly-ugg-e'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

Keep-away types of ball games were played in many parts of Australia. *Pulyugge* was played between selected teams of different groups in the Murray, Lake Alexandria and Lake Albert areas of South Australia.

## Short description

A running, passing and ball-catching game of team keep-away.

## Players

- Four to six players (or more) on each team. One team can be the Ibis team and the other the Eagle-hawk team. Sometimes another team, such as the Water-rat team, may act as referee.

## Playing area

- An area approximately 20–40 metres square

## Equipment

- A ball such as a football

## Duration

- Play for 5–10 minutes or continue until both teams agree to stop the game.

## Game play and basic rules

- This keep-away game starts when a player of one team throws the ball towards another player on the same team. Passes must be at least 3 metres.
- Players of the opposing team attempt to catch the ball, and if they do, throw it to one of their team. A player with the ball may only run up to 5 metres before passing.
- The game continues with players of one team attempting to keep the ball among each other, catching and throwing it while dodging or evading their opponents.

- No physical contact is allowed and the ball should not be punched (safety rule). Players may only guard each other from 1 metre away and intercept or knock down passes. If a player who is standing still, running or walking holds the ball for more than three seconds then there is a change of possession.
- If the ball is dropped or knocked to the ground it can be picked up and play continues — but only if picked up by a player on the non-offending team. There is no diving on the ball on the ground or contacting it with any part of the body below the knees (including kicking).

### Scoring

A team is deemed the winner when it retains the ball for the longest time or for a designated number of passes (such as ten).

### Variations

- Some limited physical contact is allowed in attempting to gain the ball. (This is the traditional form of the game.)
- A player touched while holding the ball will lose possession.
- Players count the number of passes. The team with the highest number in one turn will be the winner.
- When a player catches the ball he or she may only pivot on one foot to pass the ball.
- If the ball is knocked out of the hands of a player (by using the flat of the hand) he or she loses possession. No other physical contact is allowed.
- If a player in possession of the ball is touched by a player of the other team he or she loses possession of the ball. The first pass made is a 'free' (unobstructed) pass. The team in possession aims to make ten passes.
- Vary the size of the playing area and/or the number of players.
- Have a small group (such as three attackers and two defenders). If a defender touches a player with the ball they swap places.

- Players run (up to 5 metres) and pass the ball to each other in an attempt to touch a designated player with the ball. Swap around roles.
- One player runs around the area and the other players pass the ball to each other (pivoting on one foot when they catch the ball) and attempt to catch the runner — touch the ball with two hands against their body.

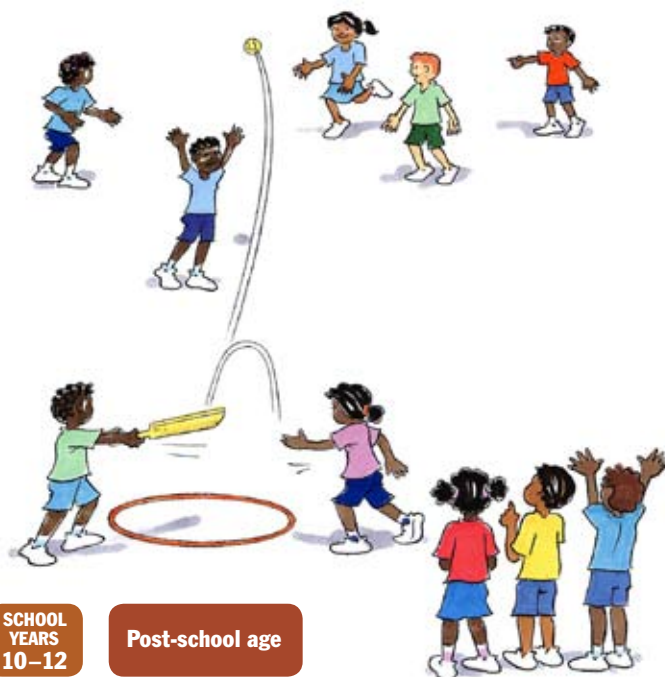
### Teaching points

- Teams ready. Go.
- Pass and move.
- Call for the ball.
- Move to open spaces. Keep moving.
- No contacts. Watch the guarding.
- Quick passes.
- Call for the ball.



# arrkene irreme

'arr-ken-e irr-e-me'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

The boys of the Aranda and Luridja of central Australia played a hitting game. A small cylindrical stick, sharpened at each end, was laid on the ground. A longer stick was held in one hand. The player hit one end of the stick to make it bounce into the air and as it rose it was hit with considerable force.

## Language

The game is named *arrkene irreme* after a word from the Eastern Arrernte language of central Australia, meaning 'playing' or 'having fun'.

## Short description

A hitting and fielding game in which the batter attempts to hit a ball as far as possible.

## Players

- Two or more players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Tennis balls or Kanga cricket balls
- Small hoops and a Kanga cricket bat or tennis racquet are also required

## Game play and basic rules

- The hitter has a Kanga bat or tennis racquet and another player (thrower) stands to one side with a ball. The thrower places his or her hand above a small hoop and does an underarm lob of a ball (tennis or Kanga cricket ball) above head height so that it will land in the hoop.

- After lobbing the ball the thrower steps out of the way and the hitter tries to hit the ball as far as possible. A player gets five attempts to hit the ball as far as he or she can. Hits for distance or along the ground can be used. The thrower and the hitter should be seen as a team working together.
- Teams swap around after five attempts to hit the ball. The fielders attempt to catch the balls and throw them back to the thrower ('ball feeder' for the batter).

### Variations

- A competition in pairs could be held with two players fielding the ball. When the fielders catch or field the ball they attempt to throw the ball back and land it in the hoop to end the turn of the hitter. If this happens the thrower becomes the new hitter and has a turn. Teams either swap over after five attempts or when a throw from a fielder lands in the hoop.
- A player steps on the end of a launch board, which causes the ball to jump into the air. It is then hit with a small bat or Kanga cricket bat. Allow a number of turns. The winner is the player who can hit the ball the longest distance.
- Use a large inflated ball, which is lifted with the foot and hit with the hand.
- Drop a tennis ball on the ground or onto a mini-trampoline and attempt to hit it as far as possible after it bounces.
- Place or throw (lob) a Kanga cricket ball on the end of a bat. Lift or tap the ball into the air and hit it as far as possible. A tennis ball and racquet can also be used. (This activity could be used as part of fielding practice in Kanga cricket.)

### Comment

This is similar to a game called 'tip-cat', which has been played in various places around the world. The version outlined would be suitable as a practice activity for softball or cricket.

### Teaching points

- Ready. Eyes on the ball.
- Throw (or feed) and step back.
- Hit through the ball.
- Call the catch. Watch the ball.
- Field and throw.

# kai

'kai'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

In this game from the Torres Strait Islands, a number of players stood in a circle and sang the *kai wed* (ball song) as they hit a ball up in the air with the palms of their hands. The game was played using the thick, oval, deep-red fruit of the kai tree, which is quite light when dry.

## Language

*Kai wed*, also used as *kamut wed* for string-figure 'ball playing'.

**Kai tupitare abukak kai o atimed kak kai o**  
*Ball strike without dropping it —  
ball throw not the ball.*

## Short description

This is a hand-hitting (volley) game in which players attempt to keep the ball in the air as long as they can.

## Players

- Groups of four to eight players

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A tennis ball, small beach ball, *paketa* or a small, soft ball

## Game play and basic rules

- Players form a circle. The ball is thrown into the air and each player passes it to another by striking the ball upwards with the palm of the hand.
- The ball is usually passed around the circle (players at least 1.8 metres apart) but the game can be played by hitting to any player in the circle other than the one next to the player.

## Scoring

In a team contest, the game is won by the group that is able to keep the ball going the best and does not allow it to hit the ground. If the ball hits the ground while attempting to achieve a designated target score, continue the score.

## Variations

- **Group Kai:** Use a sponge ball, beach ball or other light ball. Players hit the ball — with hands and arms only — around the playing area (30 metres x 15 metres) to each other, or divide into two teams and attempt to hit (volley) the ball past the baseline (or a wall) to score. After a score the ball is hit back to the other team to continue play. Only one hit at a time is allowed for players in general play. No physical contact is allowed.
- Allow players to make two contacts (one to control the ball and one to hit it).
- **Team Kai:** This can be played as a cooperative game in which players as a group attempt to make as many hits as they can without missing. Players stand in a circle about 1 metre apart. One player throws the ball into the air, and the players take turns hitting it upwards with the palm of one hand. They may not catch the ball, but must keep their hands open and flat. A player may not hit the ball twice in a row. Players may sing a song or recite the alphabet as they play (one letter for each hit).
- The ball must be hit to at least head height for younger players and at least 1 metre above head height for more-experienced or older players. When the ball hits the ground the game is restarted. The game can be played with the players taking turns in a set order, random hitting (with the ball not hit by the same player twice in a row), or individual players attempting to hit the ball the most number of times.
- Individual contest or practice kai: Players compete to see who can hit the ball into the air (above head height) with their hand the most number of times without it hitting the ground. This can be played using either hand, alternating, or combined with other stunts/skills such as through the legs, etc.

## Suggestion

- Use as a practice activity for sports such as tennis, touch football, Australian rules football, volleyball and speedball.

- In a physical education class the game can be played with a number of modifications as part of a hitting-skill activity. Progressions are:
  - Players hit the ball around in a circle (either direction).
  - Players hit the ball to other players who call out their name. Attempt to work through the whole team.
  - Players work as a team to hit the ball in the air and go through the letters of the alphabet. No player is allowed to touch it twice in succession or receive it straight back from another player.
  - Give each player a number and work through the numbers in a set order.
  - One player stands in the middle of the circle and the ball is deflected to the other players who in turn hit it back to the middle player. Change the middle player each time any player makes an error. The aim is to keep the centre player in as long as possible.

## Teaching points

- Players in a circle. Palms of hand up. Hit to start.
- Hit to different players.
- Hit and move back out of the way.
- Count the volleys. Keep going. Let's start again.
- Good work. Call for the ball.
- Watch out for each other.
- Direct the ball to another player.



Kai

# kai wed

'kai wed'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

In this game from the Torres Strait Islands, a number of players stood in a circle and sang the *kai wed* (ball song) as they hit a ball up in the air with the palm of their hands. The game was often played using the thick, oval, deep-red fruit of the kai tree, which is quite light when dry. This game was apparently introduced by people from the South Sea Islands.

## Short description

This is a hand-hitting (volley) game in which players attempt to keep the ball in the air for as long as they can.

## Players

- Groups of four to six players

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Light balls such as a small beach ball, sponge or gator skin ball

## Game play and basic rules

- Players use underhand and overhand one-hand and two-hand hitting/striking skills to keep a ball in the air. Groups count the number of hits they can make before the ball touches the ground. Start again and continue the count to a set number.

## Scoring

In a team contest, the game is decided by the team that is able to keep the ball going the longest and does not allow it to hit the ground as often as the opposition. In a class cooperative game, add up the best scores of all the teams to set a class record.

## Variation

- Use balloons to hit in the air.

## Teaching points

- Players in a circle. Palms of hand up. Hit to start.
- Hit to different players. Hit and move back out of the way.
- Count the volleys. Keep going. Let's start again.
- Good work. Call for the ball. Watch out for each other.
- Direct the ball to another player.



Kai Keep It Up (Sports Ability Program)

# mer kai

'mer kai'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

This is a version of a game from the Torres Strait Islands, using the thick, oval, deep-red fruit of the kai tree which is quite light when dry.

## Language

Mer is the name of one of the islands in the Torres Strait. A kai fruit was often used for playing.

## Short description

This is a hand-hitting (volley) game where players attempt to keep the ball in the air for as long as they can.

## Players

- Groups of six players

## Playing area

- Use a designated indoor or outdoor area. The centre circle of a basketball court with the line through the centre is ideal.

## Equipment

- A tennis ball, small beach ball, *paketa* or a small, soft ball (such as a covered sponge ball)

## Game play and basic rules

- Players form a circle. The ball is thrown into the air and each player passes it to another by striking the ball upwards with the palm of the hand.
- In this game, teams are presented with a set of activities that can be performed and after some practice develop a performance that highlights their ball skills, body handling and originality.

- Teams develop a routine that contains some of the following elements:
  - random hitting to other players in the circle
  - hit to every player in the circle in a set order
  - hit around the circle in one direction then back the other way
  - hit up to the middle of the circle and the person next to the hitter steps into the middle and hits it up — all players then have a turn, continuing around the circle twice
  - hit and follow to replace the person the ball is hit to as he or she hits it to another player — pass and follow
  - a player in the middle who hits the ball back to each person in order — all players have a turn in the middle
  - hit back and forth at speed in a zig-zag pattern to the three players in opposite halves of a circle
  - walk/march/jog around in a circle and hit the ball over the head for the next person (for advanced groups).

### Suggestion

Players learn the basic aspects of the routine and then work out their routine. When this is mastered they look to include more creative aspects to the performance.

### Performance considerations

- Introduce two or more balls as part of the routine (for advanced groups only).
- Show hits with both hands/arms up to the elbows.
- No gymnastic stunts such as handstands are allowed, but under the legs, high hits, kneel or sit down, behind the back, jumps into the air to hit the ball, turns, hand claps (individually or as a group) can help with a creative performance.
- For some stunts players may tap/block the ball in the air with one hand and hit it with the other.
- Players must not move more than 1 metre back from the marked circle.

### Judging

The overall performance of groups can be judged on criteria related to skill, teamwork, elements of the routine, flow and movement, originality, and overall appeal.

Dropped balls, etc. are 'penalised' in the final assessment.

### Comment

Different age groups will have different elements to include in their routines. For very young players it may be a case of compiling as many hits as possible in a set time, hitting in a set order, and basic 'tricks' or skill variations.

### Teaching points

- Players in a circle. Palms of hand up.
- Ready and go.
- Well done. Keep going.



# kalq

'kal-q'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

This was a spear game observed being played by some Aboriginal groups on Cape York Peninsula in north Queensland. The men used a throwing stick (*woomera*) to project a big killing spear (*kalq*) towards the next player. The spear would travel around the circle of men, who were armed only with their *woomera*, which they then used to deflect the spear to the next player. When the small boys played they used spears with blunted ends.

## Language

Although no name was given to this game in the source it has been named after the word for spear (*kalq*) in the language of the Yir-Yoront people from north Queensland.

## Short description

This is a cooperative team game in which players use a bat or racquet to continuously hit (volley) a ball in the air. The game outlined is a modified form of *kalq* for younger players.

## Players

- Four to six players form a circle about 2–3 metres apart — the distance depends on age and ability.

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Each player has a small bat or a tennis racquet.
- Use a tennis ball or airflow ball.

### Game play and basic rules

- Players stand in a circle.
- The aim of the game is to attempt to hit (volley) the ball without it hitting the ground. The ball may not bounce on the ground between hits. An underarm hitting action is the most successful and the ball must go above head height and travel at least 2 metres to another player — players will take turns to hit the ball in the air.
- For younger players two hits — one to control the ball and a second to pass it — may be used.

### Variations

- Players stand in a semi-circle with a player 2–3 metres in front. This front player lobs the ball to the first player, who attempts to hit it to the next player and around three to four players in the semi-circle and back to the thrower, who catches the ball. Repeat in the other direction and swap over. The group 'wins' if they can go all the way around and back to the thrower. Swap around positions.
- For younger players allow the ball to bounce on the ground between hits. Players may also be allowed a couple of volley hits to control it before hitting it.
- Hit the ball around the circle of players without allowing it to touch the ground — a player hits the ball to the player next to them in a set direction. Repeat in the other direction.
- As a group, aim for the highest number of consecutive hits (for example, 21).
- Count the most hits (not consecutive) made within a set time limit.

### Suggestion

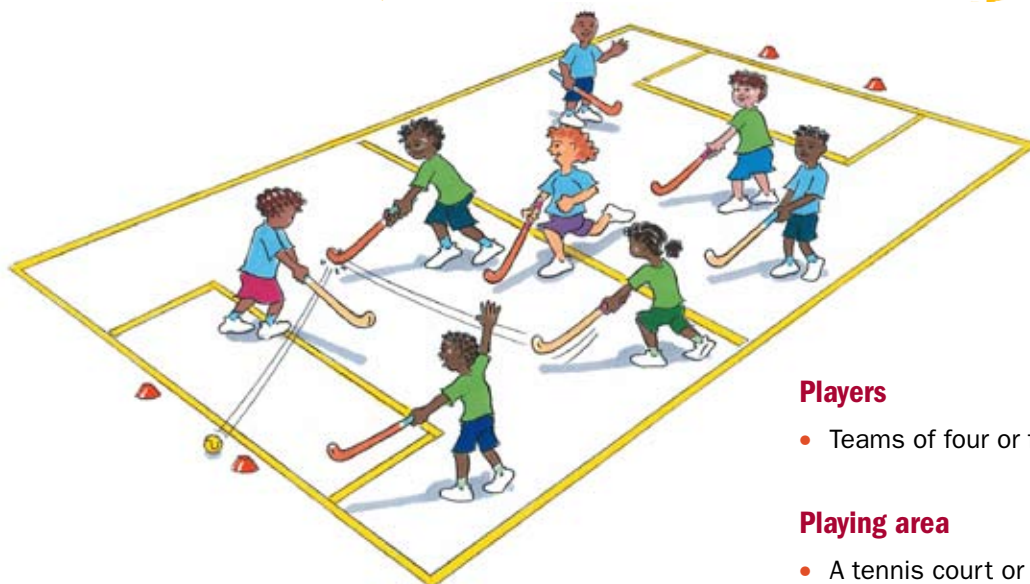
This game could be used as a practice activity for tennis or other racquet sports.

### Teaching points

- Players in a circle. Racquet faces up.
- Drop the ball and hit.
- Hit to different players.
- Hit and move back out of the way.
- Count the volleys. Keep going.
- Let's start again.
- Good work. Call for the ball.
- Watch out for each other.
- Direct the ball to another player.

# kokan

'ko-kan'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

Various hockey-type games were played in many areas of the Torres Strait and Papua and New Guinea. A hockey game called *kokan*, which was played on Mabuiag Island, was the name of the ball itself. This ball was 6–8 centimetres in diameter.

The game was played over a long stretch of the sandy beach. The *kokan* was hit with a rough bat or club, *baiwain* or *dabi*, which was usually cut from a piece of bamboo 60–85 centimetres in length on which a grip was cut. On Mabuiag Island the game was played by both genders.

## Short description

This is a form of hockey in which players are allowed two touches of the ball — usually one to control the ball and another hit to pass or shoot for goal. More-skilled players could use one contact only.

## Players

- Teams of four or five players

## Playing area

- A tennis court or similar sized area

## Equipment

- Each player has a hockey or unihoc stick (for the *baiwain* or *dabi*).
- Use a softball-sized, perforated ball (unihoc), a tennis ball or a larger, light ball as the *kokan*.
- Use markers or goal 60 centimetres high and about 1.2 metres wide. Mark out a goal area 4 metres wide and 2 metres in front of the goal. Goals may be placed against the walls/fences at the end of the court. There is no goalkeeper and players are not allowed in the goal area.

## Duration

- Play for 10–15 minutes.

## Game play and basic rules

- The game is started with a player hitting the *kokan* from the centre of the playing area to be contacted by another player. There is no offside in the game.
- Either side of the *baiwain/dabi* stick may be used to hit the ball.

- The main method of play is to hit/drive the *kokan*, with no dribbling allowed (push passes are strongly recommended). To reduce the risk of the *kokan* being dangerously lifted into the air, two ‘touches’ will be allowed for a player — one contact to control or stop the ball and one to hit it. More-skilled players may use one touch but can use two touches to shoot for goal. A player must be over halfway to shoot at goal.
- For safety, players must have two hands on the stick at all times. No body contact or deliberate hitting of another player’s stick is allowed. (All forms of physical contact or intimidation are to be avoided.)
- A player is not allowed to use his or her body to stop the ball, but unintentional contact/rebounds of the body are allowed, except where it greatly advantages the player or team in possession (free hit to the other team).
- If the ball goes out it is hit in by the other team — play off side fences in a single court. Players should stay away from fences as much as possible.
- The ball must not go above knee height at any time (it should travel along the ground as much as possible) and the head of the stick is not to be lifted above waist height. Push passes combined with running into space are encouraged as the main ways of moving the ball around.
- Players attempt to pass the *kokan* to players in their team and keep it away from players in the other team.
- For infringements or if the ball is out of play, a free hit is awarded to the other team. Defenders are to be at least 3 metres away (body and stick) when a free hit is taken. No free hit can be taken any closer than 3 metres from the goal. Intentional contact or entry into the goal area by a defender is a penalty goal attempt (attacker has a push pass into an open goal from 3 metres in front of the goal to score).
- The *kokan* must not be handled or touched in any way other than by the *baiwain/dabi*.

## Scoring

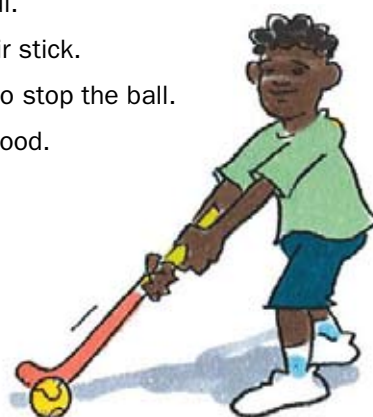
Score one point for each successful goal.

## Variations

- Keep-away: One point is scored by a team when a set number of passes (such as ten) is made between players of the same team without being intercepted by players of the other team.
- Play a two-on-two one-touch game using push passes in a small area.
- Two teams of three or four players. Use a tennis court, a large, soft inflated ball the size of a volleyball and Kanga cricket bats. Players attempt to hit the ball into a goal that is 2 metres wide. The first team to reach ten points with a two-point lead is the winner. Players are only allowed to hit the *baiwain/dabi* once before it is played by another player.
- Use a goalkeeper, who is restricted to the goal area. Players may enter the goal area to hit the ball.
- Players might be restricted to areas of the court. For example, two defenders who stay in their own half, two attackers who stay in the attacking half and a centre who can go anywhere (instead of a centre, a goalkeeper may be used). Players rotate around positions.

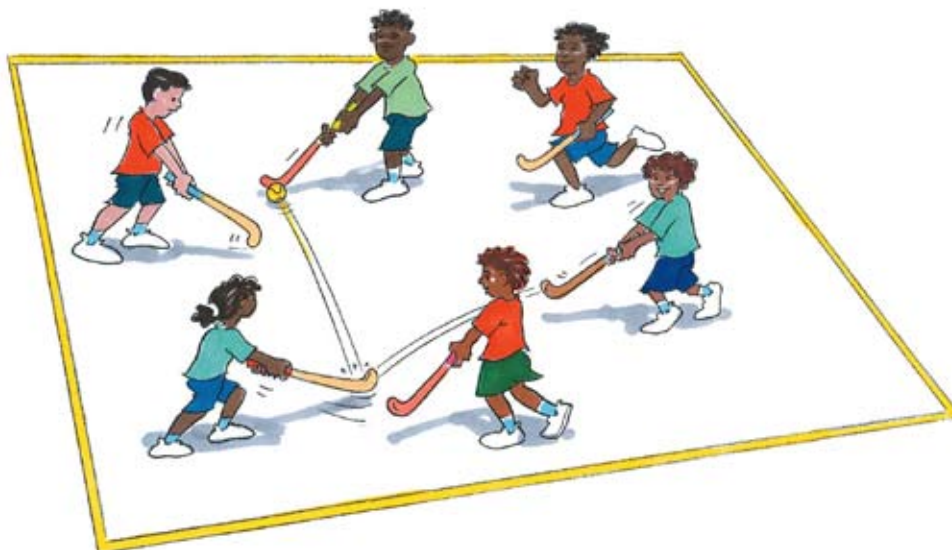
## Teaching points

- Teams ready. No offside. Point the way you are going.
- Sticks down. Ready. Go.
- Pass and move. Two hands on the stick.
- Keep the sticks down. Ball below the ankles.
- One to control, one to pass. Push and pull on the stick to pass.
- Call for the ball. Move to space.
- No contacts. Be careful.
- Defend. Do not hit their stick.
- Do not use your body to stop the ball.
- Play on. Keep going. Good.



# dabi

'dab-i'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

Various hockey-type games were played in many areas of the Torres Strait and Papua and New Guinea. A hockey game called *kokan* was played on Mabuiag Island.

The *kokan* (or ball) was struck with a rough bat or club, *baiwain* or *dabi*, which was usually cut from bamboo. On Mabuiag Island the game was played by both genders.

## Language

This game is named after the stick (*baiwain* or *dabi*) used in the game as part of the game of *kokan*.

## Short description

This is a practice version of *kokan* (hockey), where players are allowed two touches of the ball — usually one to control the ball and another hit to pass to another player as part of a continuous activity. More-skilled players could use one contact only.

## Players

- Teams of four or five players

## Playing area

- A half tennis court or similar sized area

## Equipment

- Each player has a hockey or unihoc stick (for the *baiwain* or *dabi*).
- Use a softball-sized, perforated ball (unihoc) or a tennis ball or larger, light ball as the *kokan*.

## Duration

- Play for 5–7 minutes per game.

## Game play and basic rules

- Players hit the *kokan* to other players within the playing area as part of a continuous and random passing activity.

- The object of the game is for the players to pass the *kokan* around among themselves while moving around the playing area. Use one or two contacts. The team counts the number of passes made in a designated period of time (for example, one minute). The *kokan* must travel at least 2–3 metres to count as a pass. It is recommended that players use push passes only.

### Variations

- One team may challenge another team to find a winner or a number of teams can compete against a time limit.
- Two teams use the same area and perform the same activity — one ball for each team in the area.
- Keep-away *dabi*: Two teams in the playing area attempt to pass to other players on the same team. Count the number of passes up to ten.
- Players might be restricted to areas of the court. For example, two defenders who stay in their own half, two attackers who stay in the attacking half and a centre who can go anywhere (instead of a centre, a goalkeeper may be used). Players rotate around positions. The goal is 1–2 metres wide.

### Safety

- Players are expected to play the game with some consideration for other players.
- For safety reasons the game should be played with no swings of the stick above waist high and the ball cannot be hit or bounced above the knees at any time.

### Teaching points

- Ready. Go.
- Pass and move. Two hands on the stick.
- Keep the sticks below the waist. Ball below the ankles.
- One to control, one to pass. Push and pull on the stick to pass.
- Call for the ball. Move to space.
- Be careful of others.
- Count the passes.
- Do not use your body to stop the ball.
- Play on. Keep going. Good. A fast game is a good game. Spread out.
- Pass to everyone.

# meetcha boma

'meet-cha bom-a'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

A hockey game was played by the Noongar people in the south of Western Australia. The game was called *meetcha boma* ('nut striking') in the Perth area. A *meeja* or *meetcha* (red gum nut) was used as the ball and a piece of wood with a crooked root (*bandeegurt*) as the hockey stick. The stick was generally bent into shape with the aid of fire.

The goals were certain spots at either end of the ground and arranged beforehand by the players. Sometimes a ring was marked as a goal at either end if nothing special could be observed in the place chosen. When goals were scored a mark was made on one side of a tree.

The team with the most marks on the tree was declared the winner when the game ended. The game was often played from almost sunrise to the late afternoon and resumed again the next day.

## Language

Hockey had various names: *meetcha toordeet*, *owt kambong* (*owt* 'game' or 'play') in Fremantle and Rockingham; *booloolul wabbin* ('playing hockey') in Albany; *nandap toordeet* and *owt-Murray* (red gum nut and hockey stick). In the York district *deedagurt* was the name for the hockey game.

In the Noongar language from the southwest of Western Australia, *warp condil* means to 'play hockey'.

## Short description

A one-touch game of hockey using push passes.

## Duration

- A game of 5–10 minutes

## Players

- The players divide into teams of three to four players each. There are no positions and players spread around the playing area.

## Playing area

- Use a designated area about the size of half a tennis court. A line may be marked across the centre of the area.

## Equipment

- Use a unihoc ball or tennis ball for the *meetcha*.
- A unihoc stick (plastic floor hockey stick) or light hockey stick can be used for the *bandeegurt*.
- For the goals, set up two cone markers 1 metre apart at each end of the court.

## Game play and basic rules

- A *meetcha* (ball) is placed in the middle of the half-way line. To start the game a player passes the *meetcha* to a player on the same team.
- Players in this game do not attempt to dribble the ball but just hit it (push-pass recommended) — one contact. Either side of the stick may be used. A player who is in position first to hit the *meetcha* will be allowed to do so.
- There is to be no physical contact or ‘tackling’ of a player and all players must have both hands on the stick at all times. Players attempt to intercept/block passes to team-mates who may hit (push-passes).
- The end of the stick should not go above waist height. For any infringement or the ball going out of the area, the other team has a ‘free’ pass.

## Scoring

Each team attempts to score as many goals as possible during the course of the game.

## Variations

- Play as a keep-away game or a practice game in which one team has possession until they lose control of the ball. The players on the other team ‘shadow’ the team in possession until either a set number of passes is made or there is an infringement. (This is a good practice activity for classes.)
- Play with two contacts on the ball — one to stop/control the ball and one to pass.
- For younger players, allow them to use their foot to stop/block (but not stand on) the ball and then make a pass to another player.

## Safety

For safety reasons players are not allowed to hit the ball above waist height or make wild swings at the *meetcha*. The *meetcha* should not go above knee height at any time. Physical contact or deliberately contacting another player’s stick is not permitted.

## Suggestion

Suitable as a hockey practice activity. Push strokes only are allowed. Players attempt to control and pass in the one action.

## Teaching points

- Spread out. Ready.
- Pass and move.
- Call for the ball.
- Sticks down (below the waist). Push the ball — push the bottom hand, pull the top hand.
- Pass to open players. Control the ball and pass.
- One to control, one to pass, if two contacts of the ball are allowed.
- Watch the contacts.
- Keep the ball on the ground.





# wana

'wan-a'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

The young Noongar girls in the southwest of Western Australia played many skill games. In one of these a short stick was placed on the ground and girls attempted to hit the stick while one girl defended it using her wana (digging stick).

## Language

A wana (or wanna) is a digging stick in the language of some Noongar people.

## Short description

Players use an underarm throw to hit a target, which is defended by the player with a wana (bat). This game version is suitable for younger students.

## Players

- Groups of six to eight players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A number of fleece balls, sponge balls or soft tennis balls
- A paddle bat or small Kanga cricket bat as the wana
- A large bin or container as the target

## Game play and basic rules

- Place a bin or storage cube in the middle of a large hoop or marked circle with a 1–2-metre diameter. Mark a circle or use cones to mark a larger circle with a diameter of 5–8 metres depending on the age and ability of players.

- Throwers with a ball each stand with one foot on the line/marker and in turns attempt to lob/underarm throw a ball into the bin. One player with a bat stands next to the bin but outside the hoop (or 1–2-metre circle area).
- The player with the *wana* blocks the ball but is not allowed to hit it away hard. As soon as the ball is blocked or missed by the batter the next player with a ball may throw at the bin.
- The game is continuous and all the balls are retrieved when every player in the group has had a turn. Count the number of balls that land in the bin. Change the player with the bat and continue the game until all players have had a turn.

### Variations

- Players throw in a numbered order to make it more difficult for the batter to react to throws from different directions.
- Change the player with the bat after a set time or number of hits.
- Players roll the ball to contact the bin.
- Swap over the batter when a ball goes into the bin.

### Safety

For safety reasons players are not allowed to retrieve a ball from inside the circle until all players have had a turn. Stop the game and retrieve the balls.

### Suggestion

This game could be used as a warm-up activity for Kanga cricket or as a hitting and throwing activity in physical education classes.

### Comment

Slightly different versions of this traditional activity were observed. One version had this as a game that taught girls to look after their possessions.

### Teaching points

- Form a circle. Player in the middle.
- Thrower ready. Go.
- Good throws. Watch the ball batter.
- Tap the ball away.
- Field the ball. Next thrower. Next.
- Catch the ball if you can. Hands towards the ball.
- Keep going.

# noongar wana

'noon-gar wan-a'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10-12

Post-school age

## Background

The young Noongar girls in the southwest of Western Australia played many skill games. In one of these a short stick was placed on the ground and the other girls attempted to hit the stick while the girl defended it using her *wana* (digging stick). Different versions of this game have been recorded by observers.

## Language

A *wana* is a digging stick in the Noongar language of the south-west of Western Australia. This game is named for the Aboriginal people who played it.

## Short description

Players use an underarm throw to hit a target, which is defended by the player with a bat. This version is suitable for older students or for use in the playground.

## Players

- Groups of six to ten players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Softball-sized unihoc balls are ideal, or use soft tennis balls for the thrown *wanas* (digging sticks)
- A paddle bat or small Kanga cricket bat
- A large pin, marker dome or bin as the target

## Game play and basic rules

- Place the target in the middle of a large hoop or marked circle with a 2-metre diameter. A batter stands near this area.

- A safety circle with a diameter of 5 metres is marked around this and no players may go into this area to retrieve a ball unless the game is stopped. Mark a circle or use cones to mark a larger circle with a diameter of 7–12 metres (depending on the age and ability of players).
- Players spread around the outer circle. Two balls are used and on a signal to start, players use an underarm roll or throw (below the knees) only to attempt to hit the target — no side or overarm throws. Players (fielders) must stay — with one foot at least — behind the outer circle when throwing the ball. The batter uses a bat (while standing outside the small circle) to hit balls away from the target.
- The ball can roll along the ground or bounce to hit the target. It cannot be thrown to hit the target on the 'full' and care must be taken not to hit the batter. A throwing player cannot have two balls in his or her possession at once.
- As soon as a player fields a ball he or she must throw it within 3 seconds. The two balls cannot both be thrown at once but can be thrown one after the other. If a ball goes past the players in the outer circle they chase it and return to the line to throw it or relay throw it back to another player in the circle. Players may pass (underarm throw) the ball to another player in the outer circle but cannot pass it across the 5-metre circle.
- The batter stays in the middle for a set time or can be replaced when he or she is 'out.' A player is 'out' and is replaced if:
  - he or she deliberately hits the ball hard past the players in the large circle. The ball should be tapped away to the fielders
  - the batter blocks the ball so it stays inside the 5-metre circle (this can be an optional rule)
  - he or she is caught out on the 'full' by a ball that is hit outside the 5-metre circle and inside the outer circle. A player may call for the ball and go into this area to catch the ball. If there is no call and the catch is made the batter is not out (a one-hand, one-bounce rule could also be used)
  - the ball travels past the outer circle on the full unless it has been touched/dropped by a fielder
  - he or she deliberately has contact with the ball using the body (such as kicking it away)
  - he or she displays poor sporting behaviour.
- The game is deliberately designed to make it difficult to stay in as a batter and thus there is constant swapping over. Newer players may be allowed two to three 'outs' before they are replaced.
- Whenever there is an 'out' or change-over of the batter, use either 'bat for ball' or take it in turns with players swapping into the middle. The game could also be played in teams with runs allocated to a set number of hits made (such as ten). A 'four' is scored if a catch is dropped, not called for (need to call, 'My ball!'), or a ball is hit along the ground past the players in the large circle — the ball must not be hit hard.
- The game is fairly continuous except when it is stopped for balls to be retrieved from inside the 5-metre circle, there is a delay in changing batters or while fielding the ball. (With two balls going and the batter working hard to defend the target the game can have a great deal of action.)

### Variations

- Play in teams after agreeing on a scoring system. For example, two for a ball that goes between the 5-metre circle and the outside circle, four if it passes through the outer circle but is not hit hard, six for a misfield, dropped catch, catch not called, illegal play by the fielders ('no ball' by stepping over the outer line to throw the ball), etc.
- Play with two balls but the second ball can only be used when the first one has been hit or is being fielded. (This is recommended for the early learning stages of the game.)
- Play with only one ball.
- Vary the dimensions and other rules to suit the age, ability and interest of players.
- Play with two batters in the middle each with their own half of the inner 5-metre area.

- The ball must bounce at least once — no rolling along the ground — before it hits the target. The ball must be below knee height at all times.

### **Safety**

Stop the game to retrieve balls from inside the 5-metre circle. Insist on observance of safety aspects, particularly in relation to throws/rolls at the target. Stop the game if it is not played in accordance with the procedures outlined, as this could be considered disrespectful to traditional owners and their intention to play the game with skill and enjoyment.

### **Suggestion**

This game could be used as a warm-up activity for Kanga cricket or as a hitting and throwing activity for physical education as well as a playground game. If played correctly it proves to be an enjoyable game similar in some respects to 'French cricket'.

### **Teaching points**

- Form a circle. Player in the middle.
- Thrower ready. Go.
- Good throws. Watch the ball batter.
- Tap the ball away.
- Field the ball. Next thrower.
- Catch the ball if you can.
- Keep going.

# wana wana

'wa-na wa-na'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

This is a version of a game played by the young Noongar girls in the southwest of Western Australia. A girl used her *wana* (digging stick) to stop the other girls hitting a short stick placed on the ground.

## Language

A *wana* (or *wanna*) is a digging stick in the language of some Noongar people of the southwest of Western Australia. This game version has been called *wana wana* to reflect the name repetition that younger players often call in their play.

## Short description

Players practise their throwing, catching and hitting skills. (This is a practice activity version of the game called *wana*.)

## Players

- Groups of four to eight players

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Tennis balls or unihoc balls and Kanga cricket or other bats

## Game play and basic rules

- Players in the groups form a circle (finger-touching distance apart or further) and have one player in the centre of the circle with a bat.
- Each player in the circle takes turns to underarm throw (lob) the ball to the centre player (batter). The ball is hit — not too hard — by the centre player to the person on the thrower's left. If the ball is not caught the player retrieves the ball and the throwing, hitting and catching continues around the circle of players.

- Practise with every player in the circle having a turn to bat.

### Variations

- Bowl/throw different types of balls, and the hit balls can be along the ground, fly-ball and 'bunts'.
- Groups compete and the group that successfully finishes a round first is the winner.
- Each player has a ball; as soon as the previous ball is hit, he or she bowls or underarm throws a ball to 'pressure' the batter.
- Older players may bowl the ball to the batter.
- If a catch is missed the throw is replayed.
- The batter may deflect the thrown ball to any player in the circle. Change the batter after a set number of turns.

### Suggestion

This game could be used as a warm-up activity for Kanga cricket, softball or as a hitting and throwing activity for physical education as well as a playground game.

### Teaching points

- Form a circle. Player in the middle.
- Thrower ready. Go.
- Good throws. Watch the ball batter.
- Field the ball. Next thrower.
- Catch the ball if you can. Hands ready to catch.
- Reach for the ball.
- Keep going. A fast game is a good game.
- Quicker.

# Wulijini

'wuli-jin-i'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

This hand-hitting or handball game was played with a zamia (*Cycas media*) seed by the people of Bathurst Island in northern Australia. In the Meda district of northwest Australia players hit flat pieces of wood.

## Language

The game is named *Wulijini* after the Tiwi (Bathurst Island) word for 'play'.

## Short description

This is a ball-hitting game.

## Players

- Play in singles games or in teams of two to three players

## Playing area

- A badminton court or similar sized area

## Equipment

- A small, inflated ball, *paketa* or a covered sponge ball as the zamia (*Cycas media*) seed

## Game play and basic rules

Different versions of this hitting game using the hands can be played:

- Singles or pairs
  - Practice/cooperative game: Players face each other and hit (volley) the ball back and forth with the palms of their hands, as in a game of tennis, as many times as possible.



- Competitive game: The lines (marked area) of a badminton court either side of the half-way line is out-of-bounds. One or two players make up each team. Players hit underhand, overarm or sidearm to each other in a game to 11 points (three serves each). Teams have one hit to return the ball. (Younger players have two hits for each team on each return — one to control the ball and one to hit.) A badminton net may be used, and a hand-paddle bat or similar may be used to play the game.
- Teams
  - Cooperative team game: Divide the players into two teams facing each other 3–5 metres apart and with a line in the middle to separate the teams. Players of both teams attempt to keep a rally going as long as possible — aim to set a record for the group. To make the game more of a team effort, allow each player up to two contacts (to control and then hit the ball) and each team at least two and no more than three player contacts (as in volleyball). When players become more confident, they can attempt to hit the ball higher and restrict each player to one contact and the team to three.
  - Competitive team game: Play in teams of two to three players. A net may be used — net height may be set to badminton height for older players. Serving is underhand, below the waist as in badminton. Volleyball serving rules (one point for each serve) and play to 11 points — best of three games.

The ball cannot be hit ('spiked' or 'smashed') from above net height from inside the front area — between the service line and half-way line — of the court. Only 'clean' volleys (not a 'carry') made with the fist or palms of the hands are legal hits. Overhead and underarm hits are allowed.

The game may be played with teams allowed two hits to return the ball over the net, but only one hit for each player.

### Variation

- Power *wulijini*: One to six players face each other about 7–10 metres apart and hit the ball back and forth to each other. They attempt to make the ball go through the player/s opposite or make them mis-hit the ball.

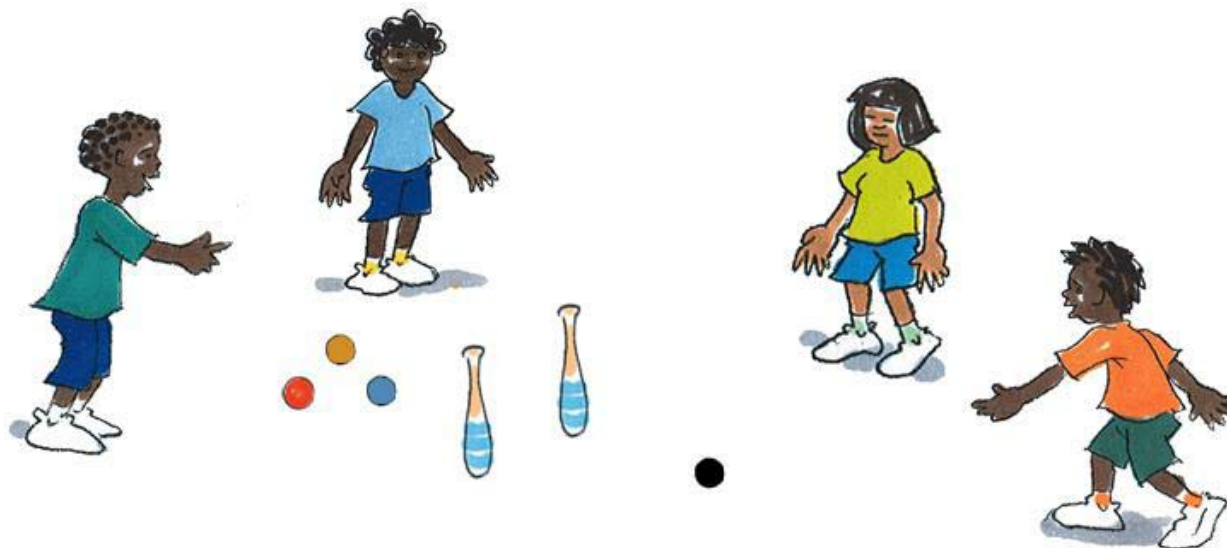
### Teaching points

- Players ready. Go.
- Watch the ball. Hit to make them move.
- Call if you have a partner. Anticipate the hit.
- Hit through the ball. Try different shots.



# apwerte

'ap-wer-te'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

Accounts from various parts of Australia outline bowling-type games using rounded stones. A game of rolling stones was played near Warrina in central Australia. Another rolling game was observed being played on a river flat at Goondiwindi in Queensland. Men used to roll the stones as far as they could to show their strength, or roll them towards other stones or between markers to demonstrate their accuracy in bowling.

## Language

This activity is named *apwerte*, which means 'stone' in the language of the Eastern Arrerente of central Australia.

## Short description

This is a game of bowling accuracy in which players aim to roll a ball between two markers or skittles.

## Players

- The game can be played with two players or as a team event involving two or more players in each team.

## Playing area

- Mark lines about 10–20 metres apart depending on the age and ability of players. Two stakes (30 centimetres apart) are placed in the centre of the area. If several sets of stakes are to be set up these should be 2–3 metres apart along the centre line.

## Equipment

- Use tennis or bocce balls as the rounded stones.
- Cricket stumps or cone markers may be used outdoors. Stakes or markers and Kanga cricket stumps or pins/skittles may be used for courts and indoors.

### Game play and basic rules

- Arrange players on opposite lines facing the two skittles.
- Each player takes it in turns to attempt to roll the ball between the skittles/markers.
- Players are positioned each side of the skittles so the ball can be retrieved and used by the next player.

### Scoring

One point is scored for each time the ball rolls through the skittles without knocking them down.

### Duration

The game continues to a pre-determined score such as 11, 15 or 21 points or for a set number of turns (such as 20).

### Variations

- Adjust the width of the markers according to the age and ability of the players and the distance to be rolled.
- Use a number of rounded rocks to roll. The unique characteristics of each rock can create an element of luck as well as skill, especially if played on a slightly uneven surface. (Good for outdoor education activities.)
- Play a game with three rounds. Players get five attempts per round to roll their ball through the pins without knocking them down — 0 points. Method of scoring: knocking down one pin but going between both pins is one point; knocking down two pins but going between them is two points; knocking down one or two pins and failing to go through the pins is three points; and, failure to roll the ball through the pins or hit any pin is four points. The player with the lowest score after five innings is the winner.
- Use medicine balls.

### Comments

This activity is suitable for seven to 13-year-olds.

### Teaching points

- Spread out. Ready.
- Roll in turns. Who is first?
- Bend down. Fingers towards, palm up.
- Good work. Stop the ball with the sole of your foot.
- Next turn.
- Keep going.

# aurukun

'aru-kun'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

This game comes from the Aurukun Aboriginal community in north Queensland, where it is known as 'bat and ball'. It is a modern game that has links to traditional hitting games of Aboriginal people in the area. It is the most popular of all the games played at Aurukun and can usually be seen being played at lunch time in schoolyards. However, it is usually played in the afternoons around the streets when it is cooler and the sun has begun to set. This game is outlined on the authority of Herbert Hudson and Stanley (Bo) Ngakyumkwokka, both students of the Aurukun Community School.

## Language

The name of the game has been taken from the town of Aurukun, where the game was observed being played.

## Short description

In this bat-and-ball game players in teams take turns and attempt to hit a ball back and forth.

## Players

- Numbers are unrestricted for this activity.

## Playing area

- A large open area such as a cricket oval is suitable. The more players the larger the area required.

## Equipment

- Equipment required is minimal; simply a tennis ball and 'bats' (sticks) such as Kanga cricket stumps. Less-skilled or younger players may use a small bat or racquet. Each player has his or her own 'bat'.

## Game play and basic rules

- The idea of the game is to create a fast forward-and-back momentum of the ball in a tennis-like fashion. Players in a team rotate turns. Play can be designed to make it a continuous fun activity or teams may attempt to win each round or turn.
- Players are divided into two teams separated by a middle line (usually unmarked, for example, using two trees or similar structures).
- Once the teams have been chosen, four to six players from each side stand in single file, with a space between players of approximately 1.5 to 2 metres. The heads of the line of players face each other 5–10 metres back from the middle or separation line. If there are more than six players in each team the remainder on each team stand well behind the line of players and close to the playing area boundaries to act as ‘back stops’. These players swap into the game.
- To begin the game the ball is thrown underarm from the front player of one line to the front player of the other. This throw must bounce at least once before reaching the hitter and once the ball is in hitting range the player attempts to strike it.
- Regardless of whether this player makes contact with the ball, fails to hit it, or hits it and the ball does not clear the middle/separation line, the hitter immediately rotates, either to the back of the single line of players or to a back-stop position, depending on the number of players.
- The ball is in play when it clears the middle/separation line. The player who first threw the ball attempts to contact the ball and after his or her turn rotates to the end of his or her team’s line.
- Note: The ball may bounce more than once but is ‘out of play’ once it is rolling. When this occurs it is picked up and thrown to the front player of the appropriate line to re-commence play.
- If a thrown or hit ball is missed by the front player in the line the player directly behind him or her is able to attempt a strike and so on down the line until either the ball starts rolling or a player makes contact to keep the ball in play. Players should move out of the way if they miss the ball to allow the players behind them the chance to hit the ball.

- A receiver/hitter is allowed to control the ball by either bouncing the ball with the bat similar to bouncing a basketball or by hitting/volleying the ball up in the air and then hitting it, comparable to lifting/juggling a soccer ball and then kicking it to another player.
- If the ball travels past all the players in the line the backstops come into play and they either hit the ball back to the opposition to keep the ball in play or for safety simply retrieve the ball for the next round.
- Disputed possession: If the ball stops on the separation line the two head players of each line move forward to perform the act of ‘Hockey 1, hockey 2, hockey 3’. The players stand facing each other separated by the middle line with their bats and feet either side of the ball. On the call of ‘Hockey 1’ the players clap sticks in the middle above the ball, and then they return their sticks to the starting position. This continues until ‘Hockey 3’ when, after clapping or hitting sticks in the middle, players attempt to ‘win’ the ball for their team.

## Variations

- A volleyball style of play could be introduced into the game, whereby each side is allowed a maximum of three hits/volleys between players before hitting the ball to the other team.
- Tennis-court play: Play with tennis racquets and ball. Use a tennis court with one player on the court at each end and the other players behind the baseline. After starting the game with an underarm hit the player joins the end of his or her group behind the baseline and is replaced by the next player. Play as a continuous rally or attempt to score a point.
- Teams alternate roles to start a new turn/round. After a round has ended the team that previously hit the ball restarts with an underarm throw of the ball.
- Introduce a scoring format into the game whereby each successful hit that is unplayable registers one point and award two points for a home run (outside the boundary on the ‘full’). Play the first to ten.

### **Comment**

After each successful hit players usually clap sticks in a 'high five' type fashion in celebration of the achievement and to reinforce team spirit.

### **Safety**

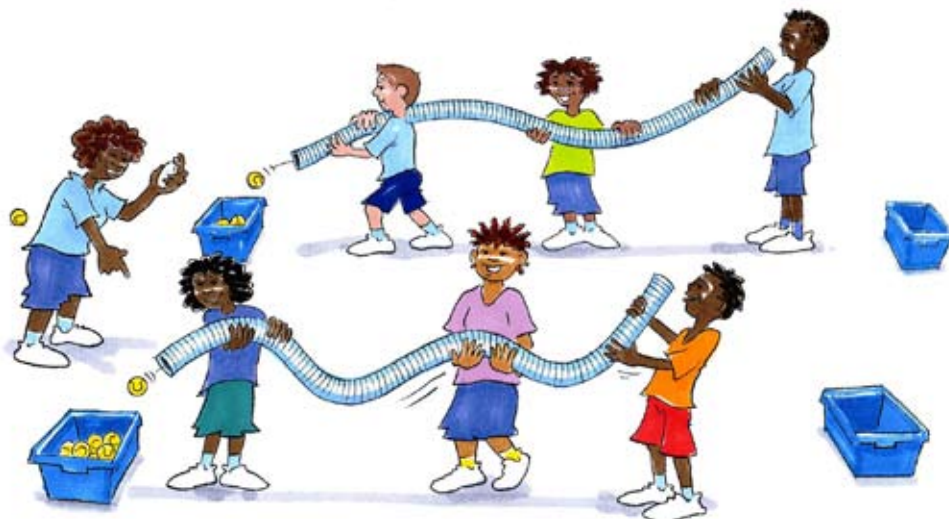
Players should be reminded of the danger associated with the swinging of bats when other players are standing nearby. It is important always to enforce the 1.5–2-metre separation of players standing in single file. Effectively survey the playing area prior to commencement and be sure to remove any potentially dangerous obstructions.

### **Teaching points**

- Two teams.
- Spread out. Ready.
- Roll in turns. Who's first?
- Bend down. Fingers towards palm up.
- Good work.
- Stop the ball with the sole of your foot.
- Next turn.
- Keep going.

# Juluhya

'ju-lu-hy-a'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

A favourite pastime of the Aboriginal children in the Numinbah Valley area of south Queensland was rolling small round pebbles down long sheets of bark. These were folded in a tubular fashion. Competitions were held to see whose pebble appeared first.

## Language

*Juluhya* means 'to go down' in the Bundjalung language of north New South Wales and parts of south Queensland.

## Short description

This activity involves a group of players working together to roll a ball down a tube.

## Players

- A group of two to eight players

## Playing area

- An indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A piece of flexible tubing approximately 6–8 metres in length and with a diameter of 10–15 centimetres
- A supply of tennis balls or large marbles and a stop-watch. Containers to hold the tennis balls may also be used

## Game play and basic rules

- On the signal to start players put 10–20 tennis balls in one end of the tubing (one after the other) and work cooperatively to move them through to the other end of the tube and into a container.

- Time the attempt. When the teams are finished allow them a few minutes to discuss their strategy and have them try to beat their first time to set a combined class or 'world' record.

### Variations

- Relay: One tennis ball is rolled through the tubing. When it reaches the end the player closest to the container where it came out collects it and runs to the other end to place it in the tubing. Players move down a place so that all have a turn to feed the ball through the tubing.
- Students attach two tubes to each other by holding them together and move the balls from one end of the tube to the other. See if they can do it quicker on the second attempt.
- Use bedsheets or long plastic sheets and roll a large light ball down the sheet. After the ball moves onto the next sheet the group of players holding the first sheet joins on to the end of the other sheet to progress the ball down the playing area.

### Suggestion

This activity is particularly suitable for younger children.

### Teaching points

- Line up bin ready and balls ready. Go.
- Work together. Keep rolling. Faster.
- Keep going. That's good.
- Well done. Let's try again.



# diyari koolchee

'di-ya-ri kool-chee'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

This ball-throwing and hitting game was played by the Diyari people from near Lake Eyre in South Australia. The balls were called *koolchee*.

## Language

This mini-game/skill activity is named for the Diyari people who played the game of *koolchee*.

## Short description

The aim of the activity is to roll a ball to rebound off a wall in order to hit a skittle.

## Players

- Play as individuals or in pairs

## Playing area

- An open space with a rebound wall

## Equipment

- One ball and one skittle or marker cone for each player or pair of players

## Game play and basic rules

- Players place a skittle 1–3 metres from a wall. From a line 5–10 metres in front of the wall players roll up to five tennis balls in a turn to rebound off the wall and attempt to knock over the skittle. The fewer the number of balls used to knock over the skittle the better.
- If the skittle is knocked over it is moved 1 metre further away from the wall. If the skittle is missed, the skittle is moved 1 metre closer to the wall. A goal line can be set 5–7 metres from the rebound wall. A goal is scored when a player has successfully been able to progress the skittle, metre by metre, back across the goal line.

## Variations

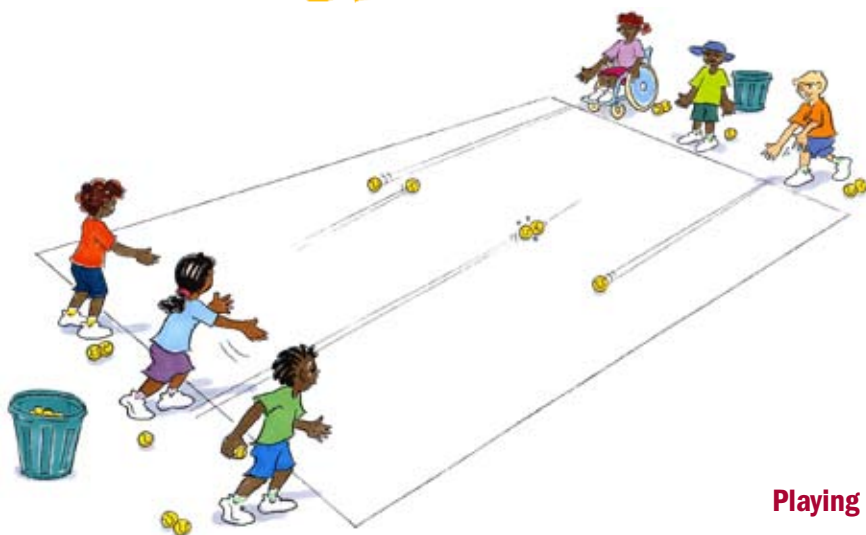
- Students alternate their rolling hand.
- Vary the angle of the rebound to increase the difficulty of the activity.
- Vary the distance of the roll and distance the skittle is away from the wall.

## Teaching points

- Line up facing the other team. Tennis balls ready. Skittle set up.
- Bend down and roll along the ground or underarm throw to bounce it off the wall.
- Aim for the skittle. Fingers towards, palms up, opposite arm and leg.
- Collect the balls. Keep going. Next player.
- Well done. Good hit.

# koolchee

'kool-chee'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

This ball-throwing and hitting game was played by the Diyari people from near Lake Eyre in South Australia. The balls were called *koolchee*. The balls used were as round as possible and were usually about 8–10 centimetres in diameter. Gypsum, sandstone, mud, or almost any material that was easy to work was used to make the balls. The game was played for hours and usually until the balls left were too few to cause any excitement.

## Short description

The aim of the game is for players to roll a *koolchee* (ball) to hit a ball rolled by a player from a team at the other end of the playing area. Players stay out of the playing area in this game.

## Players

- Two opposing sides of equal numbers (usually between two and ten or more).

## Playing area

- An area about 20–30 metres long and 10–15 metres wide (badminton and volleyball courts are ideal)

## Equipment

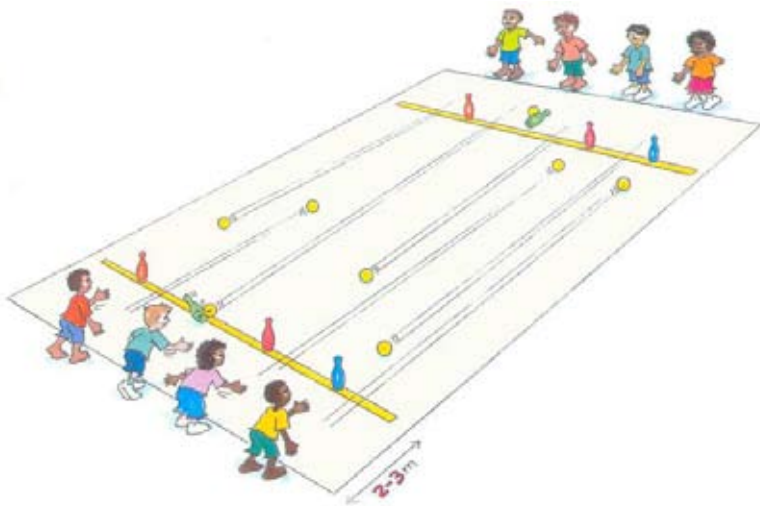
- Tennis balls, Kanga cricket balls or larger balls as the *koolchee* (ball)

## Game play and basic rules

- Players are in teams at each end of the playing area. Each team rolls their *koolchees* underarm (roll along the ground) towards the opposing team. The game is a continuous activity. The idea of the game is to hit a *koolchee* rolled by a player from the other team. Each player has a number of *koolchees* and each team has a large central supply in a bin/basket. Players may only use one *koolchee* at a time. Hits made within 3 metres of the line marked at each end of the playing area do not count.
- When there are no *koolchees* left, the game is temporarily halted for players to collect *koolchees* so that the game can continue. No set scoring is used. There is to be no interference with balls on the playing area. Players cannot go into the playing area unless the game is stopped.

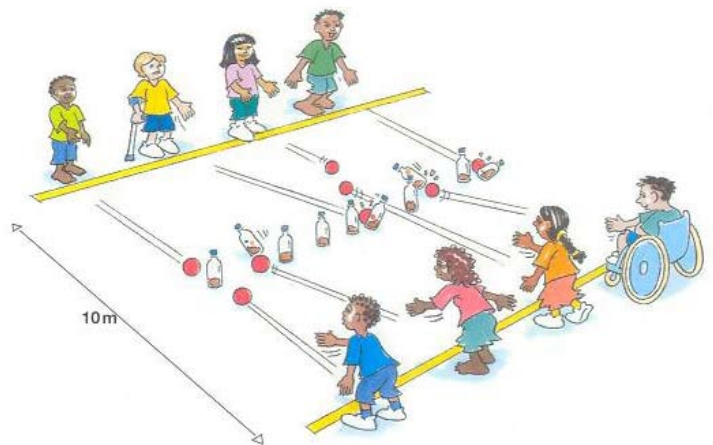
## Variations

- **Competition *koolchee*:** Use a badminton or volleyball court. Place a line of five bowling pins or skittles about 3 metres in front of each team. Each team attempts to roll their *koolchees* past these to knock over the pins at the other end of the court before the pins at their end are knocked down by their opponents. Players may 'defend' their own pins by rolling *koolchees* to hit other *koolchees* that might knock over one of their pins. Depending on the ability and age of the group the pins may be knocked down randomly or in order. No players allowed on the court.



Competition Koolchee (Sports Ability Program)

- **Cooperative *koolchee*:** A number of bowling pins or skittles (around ten) are placed along a line halfway between two groups of players. The two teams work together to knock them over. A time could be recorded until the skittles are all knocked over. Repeat a number of times with players attempting to set a *koolchee* record. For younger players the distance between the teams could be reduced and the pins or skittles placed closer together. Players may not retrieve balls from the playing area — players need a supply of balls at each end. (Recommended for physical education lessons).



Cooperative Koolchee (Sports Ability Program)

## Suggestions

In a physical education class use a badminton, volleyball or tennis court with the following progressions:

- Teams roll the *koolchees* (tennis balls) towards each other — no scoring.
- Each player has a *koolchee* (tennis ball). Place a set number of pins in the centre of the area and both teams attempt to knock them over in a cooperative activity, perhaps timed with several attempts to set the best time.
- Place five pins 3–5 metres in front of each group and the teams attempt to hit the pins in front of the team at the other end of the area. A class competition with four to six players in each team on a badminton court works well — matches are the best of three games. (Competition matches on a tennis court either to the best of 11 or the first to 11 games work well with older players. Change ends every five games.)

## Teaching points

- Line up facing the other team. Tennis balls ready.
- Bend down and roll along the ground. No throws or bounces.
- Aim for a ball. Fingers towards, palms up, opposite arm and leg.
- No players on the court. Stay behind the line.
- Collect another ball and keep going.

# koolchee koolchee

'kool-chee kool-chee'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

This ball-throwing and hitting game was played by the Diyari people from near Lake Eyre in South Australia. The balls were called *koolchee*.

## Language

This version of *koolchee* is designed for younger players. It has been named to reflect the fact that younger children often like to repeat names.

## Short description

The aim of the activity is to roll a ball to hit a skittle.

## Players

- Teams of four to six players, organised in a line

## Playing area

- A playing area suitable for the game

## Equipment

- A skittle/pin or any other target object that can easily be knocked over is set up about 5–10 metres from the front of the line
- A tennis *koolchee* (ball) or a larger ball

## Game play and basic rules

- The first player of one team steps up to the starting line and rolls a *koolchee* (ball) at the skittle. After their turn players go to the end of the line. The players roll the *koolchee* in turn. If the club/skittle is knocked down the player is congratulated and the game continues.
- The player rolling the ball should be 1 metre or more in front of his or her group to avoid contact with other players. A player may be positioned behind the skittle to return the *koolchee* after each turn or players retrieve the ball after their turn and hand it to the next player.

## Variations

- Divide each team and set them up opposite each other 10–20 metres apart with the skittle in the middle. Players take turns to knock the skittle over.
- Place two to five skittles in front of each team.

## Teaching points

- Teams line up side by side. Tennis balls ready.
- Bend down and roll along the ground. No throws or bounces.
- Aim for a skittle. Fingers towards, palms up, opposite arm and leg.
- Collect the balls. Keep going. Next player.
- Well done. Good hit.

# pucho-pucho tau-i-malle

'poo-cho-poo-cho tu-i-mal-le'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

This stone rolling and stopping game was originally described as 'stick-and-stone' and was played by men in the Boulia district of Queensland. The Pitta-Pitta people referred to it as *pucho-pucho tau-i-malle*.

## Language

*Pucho-pucho* signifies a 'spin-ball', and *tau-i-malle* 'to hit' or 'to strike'.

## Short description

This is a ball rolling and stopping activity involving two groups of players.

## Players

- Groups of four to six players on each side

## Playing area

- An indoor or outdoor area suitable to the activity

## Equipment

- A tennis ball
- A unihoc stick or small Kanga cricket bat for each player

## Scoring

- A team scores one point each time a ball rolls through a line of players of the opposing team who are attempting to stop it.

## Game play and basic rules

- The two teams stand at a distance of 15–20 metres apart. The players on each team stand one behind the other about 1–1.5 metres apart.

- The game consists of each team alternately rolling a ball towards the other team. Players attempt to stop/block the ball with their 'stick' as it rolls in front of them on the ground.

### **Variations**

- Players attempt to hit a ball rolled towards them by a partner. Safety is important for this and the ball should stay close to the ground.
- Rotate player positions around after each turn.
- Use a hockey stick and ball. Work in pairs.
- Limit the speed of the roll.
- Vary the distance between the groups.
- Players take it in turns to attempt to stop the ball (stone). Rotate to the end of the group.
- The ball is hit from one team to the other rather than being rolled. (Recommended for skilled players.)

### **Suggestion**

This could be used as a hockey skills activity or informal game.

### **Teaching points**

- Line up behind each other. Teams on opposite sides.
- Ready. Go.
- Roll (or hit) the ball.
- Stop the ball. Roll it back.
- Keep going. Faster

# turlurlu

'tur-lur-lu'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

*Turlurlu* is the name of a traditional ball rolling and hitting game played by boys in the Great Sandy Desert of central Australia. A rough ball called a *kamikami* was cut from the thick root of the *ngulyungu* tree. Each player held a *mukurru*, or fighting stick, as a bat. The boys formed teams and each side took turns to bowl the ball to each other.

## Language

The words of the Walmajarri language:

**Turlurlu palu rijikarrinyani yapangu jarlu puja.**

*The children used to play turlurlu in the bush in the old days.*

## Short description

A continuous hitting and stopping activity played between two teams.

## Players

- Two teams of four to six players facing each other. Players spread out behind a line next to each other (1–2 metres apart) and no further back than 2 metres from the line.

## Playing area

- An indoor or outdoor area about 15–20 metres long and 8–10 metres wide

## Equipment

- Kanga cricket stumps are ideal to use as a *mukurru* (fighting stick). Unihoc sticks or small Kanga cricket bats may also be used.
- Use a unihoc ball, tennis ball or similar as the *kamikami* (ball).

## Game play and basic rules

- Teams toss a coin to decide who will have the first turn. A player of the starting team hits a *kamikami* at the opposing team and aim to make it pass through the line. A defending player attempts to stop and/or hit (push passes are recommended) the ball using his or her *mukurru*.
- The ball is hit back and forth in a continuous play (stop the ball and hit the ball or just hit the ball — but keep it below knee height). Players take turns at hitting the *kamikami* to the other team when play stops. Players may also stop the *kamikami* and pass to a team-mate to hit.
- Players hit the ball from behind their line. No ‘wild’ swings of the bottom of the *mukurru* above the waist are allowed. The *mukurru* can be taped just below halfway and the stick must be held in both hands with one hand on this mark and one above it.
- The hitting team must not allow the *kamikami* to contact any part of their body. A turn that is delivered outside the playing area or is otherwise unsatisfactory is taken again.

## Scoring

The aim is to make the play fairly continuous. A team only scores if the *kamikami* is stopped or hit when they have it directed at them. If a player hits the *kamikami* it is counted as catching *kuyi* (game). If the *kamikami* passes through the line of players this ball is retrieved by a player while another ball can be used to continue play.

The teams keep score of how much *kuyi* they catch. The ‘winning’ team is the one to make the most hits in the time allowed, or the first to reach a set score (such as 11).

## Variations

- Allow an overarm throw/bowl (instead of a hit) so long as the *kamikami* hits the ground before the half-way line between the two teams. The *kamikami* must not be bounced above knee height.
- Play with a set number (five to ten) of turns for each team then swap over. Use a supply of balls.
- If the *kamikami* passes through the opposing line of players then the bowling team scores one point. If the hitting team take a ‘wild’ swing or infringe in any other way then the bowling team also gains a point. The hitting (or receiving) team gains a point when one of the players is able to hit the *kamikami*.
- Each team has a set number of turns (for example, five) before the other side has its turn. Each set of turns by players in a team constitutes a game. Have a number of games in a match.
- Play a mini-version of the game with two to four players per team on a badminton or volleyball court.
- Use unihoc or hockey sticks. Players hit the ball to each other and it must be stopped cleanly to count.
- Play in a circle (diameter of 8–10 metres) with a line through the centre. Players pass over the line to the other team.
- Sets of stumps can be placed behind players for them to defend.

## Suggestion

This could be used as a hockey or cricket practice game or warm-up activity.

## Teaching points

- Line up next to each other.
- Teams facing each other.
- Hit the ball.
- Keep the ball down.
- Sticks below the waist.
- Keep going. Faster.
- Stop the ball and hit the ball.
- Stick behind the ball. Take it in turns.
- Pass to the next person if you like.
- Keep the ball away from your body.



# kami kami

'kam-i kam-i'

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

*Turlurlu* is the name of a traditional ball-rolling and hitting game observed being played by boys in the Great Sandy Desert of central Australia. A rough ball called a *kamikami* was cut from the thick root of the *ngulyungu* tree. Each player held a *mukurru*, or fighting stick, as a bat. The boys formed teams and each side took turns to bowl the ball to each other.

## Language

In the words of the Walmajarri language:

**Turlurlu palu rijikarrinyani yapangu jarlu pujja**

*The children used to play turlurlu in the bush in the old days.*

The version of *turlurlu* outlined here has been named after the *kamikami* (ball) used in the game.

## Short description

A ball-hitting and stopping skills practice activity.



## Players

- Two teams of four to six players facing each other. Players spread out behind a goal line and no further back than 2 metres from it. (A 10-metre diameter circle with a centre line could be used.)

## Playing area

- An indoor or outdoor area about 20 metres long and 10 metres wide

## Equipment

- Players use a unihoc or hockey stick as a *mukurru* (fighting stick). Use a unihoc ball or soft (low pressure) tennis ball or similar as the *kamikami* (ball).

### Game play and basic rules

- Players spread out (half a metre apart) behind a goal line facing the other team, which is 5–10 metres away, or spread around a large circle (10-metre diameter) with a line through the middle.
- Players on each team attempt to hit (and/or roll the ball if agreed by players) the *kamikami* over the goal line and past the opposing players while preventing them from scoring in the same way. The *kamikami* must be close to the ground at all times (below shin height) and the end of the *mukurru* must always be below waist level. Players must have both feet behind the goal line and must not use their feet or other parts of the body to stop the *kamikami*.
- Players must stop the *kamikami* before it crosses the goal line and goes past them. When they stop it they immediately hit it at the opposite goal line or pass to another player on the same team to hit/shoot. A goal is scored when the *kamikami* crosses the goal line and goes past a player.

### Scoring

A team only scores if the *kamikami* is hit towards the goal line and past a player of the other team. If a player scores with the *kamikami* (ball) it is counted as catching *kuyi* (game). The teams keep score of how much *kuyi* they catch. The winning team is the one to make the most scores in the time allowed or the first to reach a set score (such as 11). The game may also be played in a non-competitive manner.

### Suggestion

This could be used as a hockey or cricket skills practice or warm-up activity.

### Teaching points

- Ready. Teams face each other.
- Hit the ball or push the ball.
- Keep the ball down. Sticks below the waist.
- Keep going. Faster. Stop the ball and hit the ball.
- Take turns. Pass to next person.
- Keep the ball away from your body.

# weme

'we-me'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

The Walbiri people of central Australia played a stone-bowling game. One player rolled a stone, which was used as a target by the second player.

In the traditional game players alternated turns, with each one aiming at the other's stone.

## Language

The game is named *weme* after a word from the Eastern Arrernte language of central Australia, which refers to 'throwing something at something else and hitting it'.

## Short description

This is a bowling game in which balls are rolled underarm along the ground to knock a ball out of a hoop. This version is designed for younger players.

## Players

- Play with two to four or more players. The game can be played alone, one player against another player, or in pairs/teams of players against another pair/team.

## Playing area

- Use a designated area. Two lines are marked 8–10 metres apart — the distance depending on age and ability of players. In the middle between the two lines draw a circle with a half-metre diameter or use a small hoop.

## Equipment

- Balls or bowls such as bocce balls (plastic bocce balls work well)

## Game play and basic rules

- Place a bocce ball in the circle/hoop with the players 3–5 metres each side of the hoop.

Players take turns to roll a ball and attempt to knock the ball out of the hoop — one to three turns each. Retrieve the balls after each player's turn.

- Play with no scoring in the game. Play for the fun of the activity.

### Variations

- Play a set number of turns (such as 20) for each player.
- Three balls are placed in the circle/hoop and players alternate turns in attempting to knock the balls out of the circle. If one or more balls are knocked out of the marked circle they are replaced before the next player's turn. Keep a score or use as a skills practice activity.
- Mark two parallel lines 8–12 metres apart. Play individually with one player against another. Players have a ball each. One player rolls his or her ball to stop before the other line. If it rolls past the line it is taken again. The player attempts to have his or her ball stop close to the line. The other player then rolls his or her ball to attempt to hit the ball. This player scores a point if he or she hits it. Players move to the other end and swap roles. (This is similar to the traditional version of the game.)
- Play in pairs. One player from each pair is at each end of the playing area. Players from one end have their turns. The player on the same team as the last player to roll his or her ball has a turn first — alternate play in this manner. The players do not swap ends in this game.
- If scoring is used a player scores one point for contacting the ball, two points for knocking the ball out of the circle and three points for contacting the ball and causing the rolled ball to remain in the circle.

### Teaching points

- Balls ready. First person ready. Aim for the ball.
- All know what to do? Ready. Go.
- Roll and retrieve. Next player's turn.
- Keep going.
- Remember; bend down arm towards, palm and fingers up. Opposite arm and leg.
- Keep going. Good. Work to help each other.

# kandomarngutta

'kan-do-marn-gut-ta'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

In some parts of Australia children were allowed to use the bullroarer (whirlers), or small versions of it, as a source of amusement. In other areas the bullroarer had a special significance and was not used as a 'toy'.

In parts of Victoria a bullroarer called the *kandomarngutta* was used. This was a thin piece of wood, oval, about 10 centimetres in length and about 5 centimetres in width. It was tied to a string and swung to cause a humming noise. In the north-west central districts of north Queensland bullroarers were used by either gender and at any age.

In the Bloomfield River area it was called *teripa*, at Lower Tully *chachalmo*, and at Cape Grafton *birbobirbo*. These were playthings and varied in size from 8 to 15 centimetres in length. They were never engraved, although they were occasionally painted.

## Short description

This activity is related to swinging a 'bullroarer' to make a noise (roar).

## Equipment

- Either purchase or make a *kandomarngutta*. A typical toy bullroarer is made from a flattened, spindle-shape piece of wood, 8–12 centimetres in length and 5 centimetres in width. It is attached, by means of a hole drilled through one end, to a length of twine.

## Game play and basic rules

- The twine attached to the *kandomarngutta* is held in the hand and the *kandomarngutta* is swung rapidly over the head and with an extra effort it is made to 'roar'.

### **Variation**

- Experiment with different sizes and thicknesses of toy bullroarers.

### **Comment**

The humming sound of the bullroarer is produced by the blade alternately presenting its flat surface and sharp edge to the air. Care should be taken to ensure that the twine is attached firmly to the bullroarer.

### **Note**

Although sold as souvenirs some care should be taken to ensure that the use of a 'bullroarer' in a particular region is not of special significance or restricted to use by certain people. It is advisable to check with the local elders if the activity is to be undertaken as part of a program.

### **Safety**

Safety must be considered in all aspects of preparing and swinging the bullroarer.

### **Teaching points**

- Watch out for others. Spread out. Stand back.
- Ready. Go.
- Swing it hard. Faster, faster.
- Good.
- Stop. Next person.

# dhandang

'dhan-dang'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10-12

Post-school age

## Background

Tree-climbing activities and climbing contests were widespread and helped to develop a skill of practical use. There were a variety of methods of climbing trees used in different parts of Australia. Some of these involved the use of vines or notches cut into trees.

The Victoria River people in the Northern Territory arranged competitions among the boys in tree-climbing. The boys were required to climb up a number of selected trees and down again in the quickest time possible.

The Noongar people of the south-west of Western Australia had climbing contests in the big timber areas, with the women being the best in this pastime. The highest and broadest trees were climbed with the aid of an axe.

## Language

In the Noongar language of the south-west of Western Australia the word for 'climbing' is *dhandang*.

From the Bundjalung language that was spoken in northern New South Wales:

*mala baygal wande-la muna:-ya dall-ya*  
*The man is climbing the tree.*

In parts of Victoria a champion tree climber was called a *berebom-biel*.

## Short description

This is a climbing contest.

## Game play and basic rules

- Use an indoor climbing wall to conduct climbing contests or climb up a rope ladder or climbing frame as quickly as possible.

- The contests could be undertaken individually and timed or against another player. Where possible the climbing course organised should attempt to imitate tree climbing.

### **Variations**

- Arrange a group competition to climb to the top of ropes or a pole.
- Have the players climb a number of ropes as part of a competition.
- For younger players a tower of high jump and gymnastic mats could be used.
- Construct an obstacle course with climbing activities. For example, run up an incline board and climb to the top of a climbing frame, climb down in a prescribed manner, climb up on a vaulting horse and jump down onto a high-jump mat.
- Have a long pole at an angle to represent a coconut palm for players to climb.
- Use climbing walls for various competitions.

### **Safety**

Appropriate safety gear such as harnesses and ropes should be used. Players should be given correct instruction on how to climb, and activities should be strictly controlled. Under no circumstances should players slide down ropes or jump from towers.



# wittchim

'witt-chim'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10-12

## Background

In Victoria, a corroboree game was played by different groups. Depending on the area it was played in it was called *tarratt* or *wittchim*.

## Short description

The game consists of stalking a feather, in imitation of hunting an emu. It is recognised that individuals will hunt in different ways.

## Game play and basic rules

- A feather is tied to the end of a long stick, which is held by a player in the centre of a large circle of players. The performer, who is dressed in a corroboree costume, enters the circle with a shield and boomerang, and moves around the circle for a few minutes with his or her eye on the feather.
- The player crouches and runs in imitation of stalking the emu and finishes by bending over and touching the feather.

- After the performance another player has a turn. This continues until all competitors have gone through the same movement. The contest is conducted in silence.

## Scoring

Traditionally a number of judges decide on the best performance and present the winner with the feather. The winner is expected to repeat the performance and present the feather to the other competitors as a compliment and as a way of dissolving any feelings of jealousy.

## Variation

- Create a competition with each player allowed only 2-3 minutes to complete his or her performance.

## Suggestion

This could be included in performing arts courses.

## Comment

Similar games to this one were played in a number of areas. Acknowledgment of the traditional origin of this activity and the nature of dance and music in traditional cultures should be made each time it is undertaken.

## Teaching points

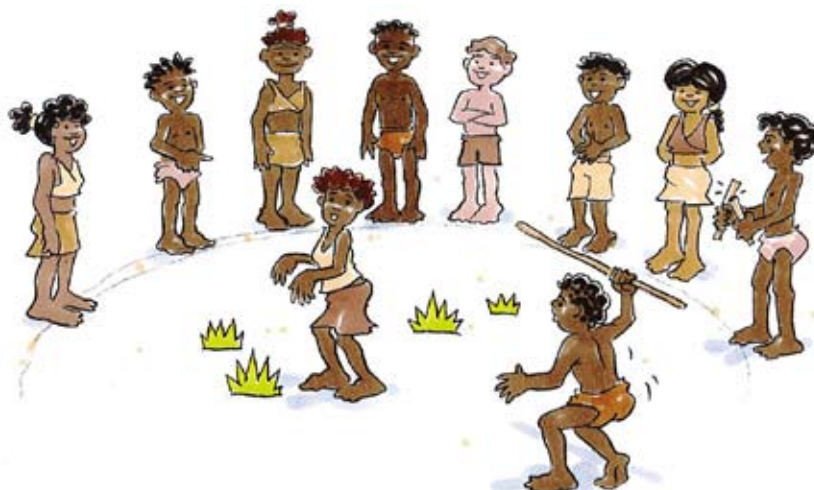
- Players as individuals and small groups should work together to rehearse their performances.



Imitation emu

# yongar ngardongin

'yon-gar nar-don-gin'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

The emu and kangaroo dance (play) games among the *Bibbuluk kening* (Bibbulum people's dances) were performed in Western Australia in the Vasse, Augusta, Bunbury, Murray and Swan districts and probably further north and east. The game was called *yongar ngardongin* by the Vasse district people.

Almost all large animal and bird dances deal with the chasing and killing of the animal represented, as well as with their habits and actions. In the kangaroo dance game the performers stood in a semi-circle while two of the performers, representing the kangaroo and the hunter, began the game.

Moonlit nights were chosen for this type of pastime, but the central fire also cast its light on the players. There may or may not be musicians and singers for these displays and the music was merely played for the rhythm and measure of the movements.

## Short description

The game is an acting dance contest whereby players undertake the roles of a hunter and a kangaroo.

## Players

- A group of performers who perform two at a time — one player is the hunter and the other player represents a kangaroo.

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Costumes and props such as spears

### Game play and basic rules

- One performer assumes the stance of a kangaroo when feeding, raising at intervals to look about for possible enemies, standing absolutely motionless in the exact posture the kangaroo adopts and then stooping down to graze again.
- The other performer — the hunter — creeps cautiously towards the quarry, against the wind and changing his or her position as the animal turns and changes position while feeding.
- The hunter moves backward and forward, throws him or herself on the ground and acts in every detail as though chasing a real kangaroo. Eventually the hunter closes in on the kangaroo, lifts his or her spear and pretends to send it hurtling close beside the kangaroo, which immediately falls to the ground.
- During the performance the remaining members stand perfectly still and watch the dance (play) game intently. When the display is ended two more performers take the place of the kangaroo and hunter and the game proceeds.
- As no two hunters track alike, the methods of each are noted by spectators and other performers, in order that some fresh hint may be taken in the mode of kangaroo 'stalking'.

### Variations

- Instead of the hunter killing the kangaroo he or she could simply catch it.
- A player (or group of players) imitates various movements and the other players guess the animal.
- Emu-hunting play. Emus are full of curiosity and are attracted to waving objects. Two players lie on their backs and wave their feet slowly in the air. A player acting as the emu simulates a slowly approaching emu. When the emu is close enough the players on the ground jump to their feet and spear (or capture) it.

### Suggestion

Players could watch a video on kangaroos and/or hunting as part of their preparation.

### Comment

Closely associated with the type of contest outlined were certain dance plays. *Yallor* was the name of a dance play in another area of the south-west of Western Australia. It was also the chant, or tune, to which the dance was performed. The dance play was generally performed by young men. Women seldom took any part in it.

The dance play frequently represented activities such as:

- the chase
- the actions of a kangaroo and/or emu
- the pursuit of a wounded cockatoo
- the movement of a snake
- the transformations or feats of a magician
- the measured step and concerted movement of a dance of ten or 12 persons

Dance plays were usually performed on a clear night, by the bright blaze of a fire, surrounded by groups of admiring spectators.

### Teaching points

- Players work as individuals and/or small groups to rehearse their performances.

# koabangan

'ko-a-ban-gan'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

A game called *koabangan* was a finding-object game observed being played in the early 1900s by the Kokominni boys of north Queensland. The object commonly used was a goanna claw, but other objects were also used.

## Short description

A player hides an object in a designated area and the other players attempt to find it.

## Players

- A group of four or more players

## Playing area

- A designated outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- An object such as a tennis ball or a paper clip for a goanna claw
- A number of short bushy trees are required. If this is not suitable then other areas can be used to hide the object

## Game play and basic rules

- The players sit in a circle with their heads low and hands over their faces. One player hides the object somewhere in the playing area.
- On a signal being given by the 'hider' the players jump up and start looking for the hidden object. The idea is to be the first to find the object within a set time.
- The player finding the object has the next turn.

## Variations

- Use a number of different objects.
- Restrict the size of the playing area.
- Players are blindfolded.
- Play in an indoor hall or similar using a tennis ball to hide.

## Comment

This game is suggested for younger children.

## Teaching points

- Close your eyes. Hide the marble.
- Keep looking.
- Find it. Are we 'hot' or 'cold'?
- Well done. Change over and we start again.

# luka-pul pul

'lu-ka-pul pul'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

Finding-the-object games were played in many parts of Australia as well as the Torres Strait. The objects to be found were usually the eye lens of a fish or other animal. The hidden article used would often be the lens, obtained after cooking, from the eye of a fish, possum, rat or wallaby. The usual method of hiding the lens was to pick it up with a little sand and drop it during the sprinkling — the palm was turned down.

In a game from central Australia a *luka-pul pul* (little grub) was used.

## Language

In north Queensland finding games were often named after the local term signifying an eye; for example *milti*, *chili*, *mil dambanbar* (eye to throw). In other places it had a special name applied, *palagin*, or *animo*.

## Short description

A player hides an object in an area of sand and the other players attempt to find it.

## Players

- Two players or a number of players who take turns

## Playing area

- A beach area or tray of sand that is smoothed out

## Equipment

- A small glass bead or marble to represent the object to hide — the *luka-pul pul*

## Game play and basic rules

- Players hide their eyes while a selected player places the *luka-pul pul* (marble or bead) in the sand.
- The sand is usually roughly levelled out. The *luka-pul pul* is hidden somewhere in the area so that a small part of it can be seen, or the 'hider' may push it just under the sand leaving some sort of evidence that it is buried there.
- The first player then attempts to find the *luka-pul pul* and if he or she cannot do so after a short time the 'hider' helps by pointing vaguely in the correct direction. Other players in the group have turns. This continues until the *luka-pul pul* is found ('recaptured').

## Variations

- The *luka-pul pul* is buried under the sand and the surface is smoothed out. The players are all given a stick to push in the sand where they think it might be. The winner is the nearest player to it. A small prize may be given for the winner.
- A finger ring is hidden in a pile of sand and players carefully dig for it using long, thin sticks. Turns can be taken or all players go at the same time.
- A length of thin rope about 10 centimetres (and tied at both ends) is hidden in a pile of sand. Players each have a long thin stick or ruler about 50 centimetres in length. The players push their sticks slowly and carefully into the sand and try to lift out the rope.
- A tennis ball or other object is hidden in the playing area. Players stand where they think the object is hidden. The winner is the player closest to the spot and digs up the ball. (Suitable for younger players.)

## Teaching points

- Close your eyes. Hide the marble.
- Take turns. Next.
- Find it and then change over.

# moka bandi

'mok-a-ban-di'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

This guessing game was observed being played by young and old at Cape Bedford in north Queensland.

## Language

The game is called *moka bandi*, which means 'to think' or 'remember' in the Kurna language of South Australia. No local word for the game was found for the people from north Queensland and the name selected recognises that this type of activity was played in various parts of Australia.

## Short description

A guessing game similar to 'I spy'.

## Game play and basic rules

- One of the group of players may notice a new flower just in bloom, a bird half-hidden in a bush, a tussock of grass uprooted, or whatever, and taking care to look in quite a different direction — anywhere but in the correct direction — says, 'What am I thinking of?'
- The other players take turns to guess what it is. The players laugh when the correct guess is made. Hints may be given if necessary.

## Variations

- Play indoors.
- Players may give the first letter of the object as a hint for the other players.
- Use 'animal, plant or place' questions to help guess.

# segur etug

'seg-ur e-tug'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

This is a guessing game that originates from Mer Island in the Torres Strait region.

## Short description

A number-guessing game.

## Language

The game is named *segur etug* for the Meryam Mir language (Torres Strait Islands) word for 'play'.

## Players

- Groups of four to ten players

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A number of small objects such as seeds or marbles

## Game play and basic rules

- One player takes a quantity of small objects and places them in a closed hand or cup.
- The other players attempt to guess the number. The player who is correct has the next turn. If no player guesses correctly the player has another turn.

## Variations

- Use numbered markers such as used in some eight-ball games (such as Kelly's Pool). One player chooses a number and the others attempt to guess it. The player who guesses the number (or is the closest) has the next turn. First player to ten wins the game if a competition is conducted.



- Players guess how many small sticks, fragments of bark or clods of earth are in a designated group.
- Conduct a team number-guessing contest in groups of four to six. Players take turns to guess. The first team to 20 is the winner.
- Partner guessing. Each player has a set number of pebbles or beads (such as 15). One player hides between one and five objects in his or her hand. The other player guesses. If the guess is correct he or she receives the objects. If the guess is incorrect the guesser gives one object to the hider. Change over roles and continue. End the game after a set time or if one player has all the objects. Cooperative play is encouraged.

### **Suggestion**

This game is very suitable for younger children.

### **Teaching points**

- Ready. Collect the objects and hide them.
- First person have a guess.
- Next. Keep going.
- Good.
- Well done. Next turn.

# paliwan

'pal-i-wan'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

Hide and seek constituted a series of very commonly played games, even by adults. In some games either a person or thing was hidden. The Kokominni people in the northwest of Queensland had a hide-and-seek game called *paliwan*.

## Short description

A version of hide and seek.

## Players

- A group of up to 20 players

## Playing area

- A designated outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Game play and basic rules

- A player is sent away to hide and the rest of the players attempt to find him or her.
- The player who first hides attempts to reach 'home' without being caught (touched) by the other players before he or she is found. The finders may not remain around the 'home' area.
- A new player is sent away to hide and the game continues.

## Comment

In the north-west central districts of Queensland there were up to three seekers. The seekers covered their eyes with their hands, or put their heads with eyes shut close to the ground, while the other players hid. If the 'seekers' could not find those who were hidden they made a whistling sound as a sign of defeat.

# thirring-nunna

'thir-ring-nun-na'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

This hide-and-seek game was described as being played by the Aboriginal children in an unidentified part of Queensland. It was called *thirring-nunna* (Where are we?).

## Short description

A hide-and-seek game where all players hide from a player who looks for them.

## Players

- A group of up to 20 players

## Playing area

- A designated outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Game play and basic rules

- One player is the 'seeker' and the other players hide. Once hidden the players are not allowed to move from their hiding places. As soon as they are all hidden the players call out, 'Yanman' ('go' or 'ready').
- The seeker searches for the hidden players as though stalking an animal.
- When a player is found he or she is brought back to the starting point one at a time. As each player is caught he or she calls out to inform the other players still hidden.
- The game ends and a new one commences when four players are caught. The first player found becomes the new 'seeker'.

## Variation

- When players are found they help the 'seeker' to find the other players.

# wallee ngnan weerrup

'wal-le nan weerr-up'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

In the west Kimberley area of Western Australia the young men were fond of playing a version of hide and seek called 'the hunting or bush game' (*wallee ngnan weerrup*).

## Language

A few sentences used by the players:

**Pindan yangarrama**

*We will play the bush game.*

**Joon wanjoolboo**

*You drive him.*

**Nowloo goon weerrup**

*Hit with club.*

**Joona joodoo joodoo wongoola**

*You throw him down there.*

**Booroo ngnan dammajinna**

*I missed him.*

**Kai! kala! ngnan barrin**

*Hurrah! I've got him.*

In the Gooniyandi language of the Kimberley area a male kangaroo was called *jamarra*.

## Short description

This is an imitation and acting game that is also a form of hide and seek. Younger players pretend to be on a kangaroo or emu hunt.

## Players

- A group of four or more players

## Playing area

- A suitable indoor or outdoor area (a tree area is recommended)

## Game play and basic rules

- The game is based on kangaroo and emu hunting. One or two players represent a kangaroo (*jamarra*) or emu and the other players are the hunters.
- The kangaroo is given a short time to 'disappear' into the bush (somewhere in the playing area). The other players pretend to hunt the kangaroo.
- When the hunters find the kangaroo they imagine they have 'captured' the kangaroo and return with this player back to the camp.
- The game is then restarted.

## Suggestion

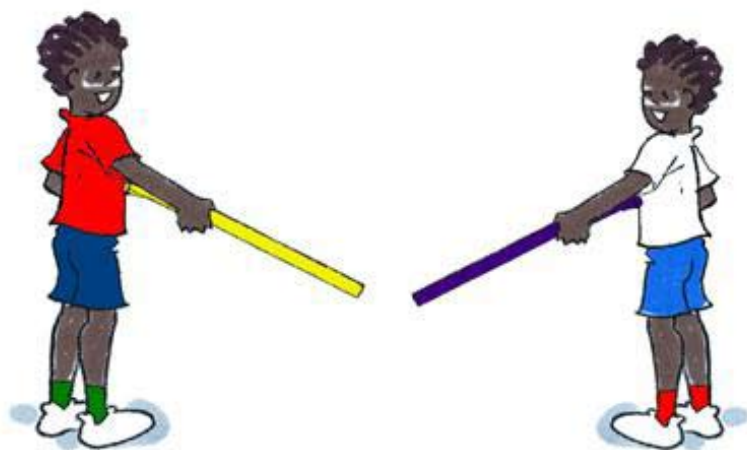
This could be used as an acting game for younger children.

## Teaching points

- Find a good hiding spot. Make it good.
- Finders ready. Go.
- Bring them home.
- Next turn.

# kutturi

'kut-tur-i'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

Small digging sticks were made for children in many parts of Australia. These were considered to be personal property and were usually well looked after. They were often used in play. In some areas the women would use digging sticks in play 'fights'.

This activity was reported from an unidentified place as a stick-practice game used by girls to prepare them for the digging-stick (*kutturu*) duels they would be involved in during adult life.

In New South Wales the Ngemba women had play fights with their digging sticks. The women held the end of the digging stick in both hands and a little above eye level. The women could strike with either of their hands and then guard with both. They were fearless fighters and had their own champions.

## Short description

This is a hitting-and-dodging contest between two players, with the feet as the target area.

## Players

- Two players compete against each other

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Foam pool 'noodles' around 1–2 metres long as the *kutturu*. Socks may be worn to identify the target area (feet and/or lower legs) to be used in the contest.

## Game play and basic rules

- The two players face each other in a ready position with one or two hands on the *kutturu* (foam sword) and alternately attempt to hit each other on the foot. The players use their *kutturu* to protect themselves.
- As soon as the opponent tries to hit him or her, a player may quickly take his or her turn.

## Variations

- Use scoring, with a player gaining a point for each successful hit — best of three hits.
- Players are allowed to move around in a restricted area (3-metre circle) to avoid being hit.
- Players do not have to take turns ('free for all').
- The players wear socks to represent a target area.
- Use large inflatable toys (such as baseball bats) as the *kutturu*. Players may use one or both hands.

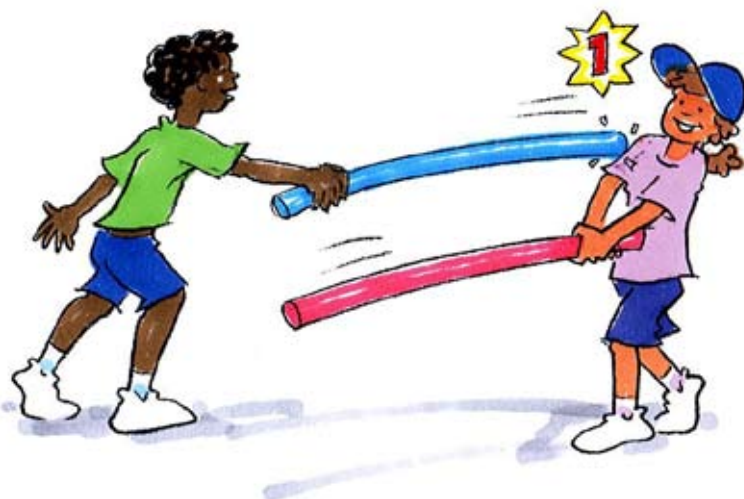
## Teaching points

- Face each other. Ready — go.
- Hold on tight.
- Block and hit. Move around. Hit their foot.
- Keep going.
- Good hit.
- Change — next players.



# the pan

'the-pan'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10-12

Post-school age

## Background

Large, heavy wooden swords were used by males in the rainforest areas of north Queensland, around Tully and neighbouring areas. These swords would be straight or slightly curved in shape. Swordplay was a popular ceremonial and recreational activity, and two contestants with a wooden sword and shield would compete.

Each would give and take blow after blow in strict rules of battle. After attempting to hit his opponent, the contestant would await his opponent's stroke, fending it off with his shield.

Finally, one would surrender. Sometimes one competitor would be slow with his shield and would receive a heavy blow on the head.

## Language

*Thepan* means 'to hit' in the Wik-Mungkan language spoken in parts of north Queensland.

## Short description

Players use foam 'swords' to attempt to hit each other on the body.

## Players

- Form groups of two to eight players. Players in the group compete against each other in pairs.

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Use foam *thepans* or inflatable toys (such as baseball bats) as a substitute for the wooden *thepans*. Swimming pool 'noodles' cut to a length of about 1 to 1.5 metres or so work very well.
- Plastic rubbish-bin lids or similar could be used as the shields.

### Game play and basic rules

- Players with a *thepan* each face each other and on the signal to start attempt to contact each other on the body from the shoulder down. The *thepan* may be held in one or both hands.
- The flat side of the *thepan* is used for contact rather than using the end in a 'poking' action. The soft *thepans* usually mean that they do not hurt at all.
- Players take it in turns to attempt to make a hit. If a player misses with his or her attempt to make contact it becomes the turn of the other player. (The game may also be played in a 'free-for-all' manner with no turn taking.)

### Scoring

Play the game for a certain time (such as two minutes) or for a nominated number of contacts (such as best of five). Two other players then begin another contest.

### Variations

- Players hit the other player on the top of the head. Helmets are worn in this traditional form of the contest. The contest continues until one player 'yields', the designated time (such as 60 seconds) has expired or a player is hit on the head.
- A number of players in a mock battle, which may be rehearsed.
- One player with a shield and the other with a *thepan*. When an oval shield is used it is held sideways (horizontally) rather than vertically.
- Both players with a *thepan* and a shield.
- One player with a *thepan* and the other with a plastic stick as the shield.
- Players attempt to hit each other on the legs when they can. No turn taking.

### Safety

Although the foam swords are very light and cause few problems, players who participate may choose to wear a helmet (cricket or baseball) or boxing head gear. Strict control of the game is necessary.

### Suggestion

As a practical art activity students can make small *thepans* out of wood or cardboard. Copy a design.

### Teaching points

- Face each other. Ready — go.
- Hold on tight.
- Take it in turns.
- Your turn, now your turn.
- Duck and move.
- Keep going.
- Good hit.
- Change — next players.



# jinnee ngaman billee billee billee dabbulgar

'jin-nee nar-man bil-lee bil-lee dab-bul-gar'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10-12

Post-school age

## Background

The stunt activity of *jinnee ngaman billee billee dabbulgar* was observed among the Capel district people of southwest Australia. It was usually only after much practice that this trick was able to be performed.

## Short description

This is a stunt of jumping over a line on the ground. It is suitable as a warm-up or 'challenge' activity.

## Game play and basic rules

A stick is laid horizontally on the ground (or a marked line). A player squats beside it and holds his or her big toes while still squatting. The player then attempts to jump over the stick.

## Comment

This was apparently a feat of some difficulty, which is only understood when an attempt is made to perform it.

## Teaching points

- Bend down, hold your toes. Ready.
- Jump.
- Try again.

# kangaroo

'kang-a-roo'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

Imitation activities were a favourite and popular activity for children everywhere. In one activity children would copy the actions of the kangaroo.

## Language

The word kangaroo appears to have originated from a word (*gangarru*) in the language of the Gouguyimithirr people in the (Wahalumbaal) Endeavour River area of north Queensland.

## Short description

A jumping relay race based on the actions of a kangaroo jumping.

## Players

- Teams of four to eight players

## Playing area

- An appropriate area with lines about 10–15 metres apart

## Game play and basic rules

- This simple relay game is conducted over a distance appropriate to the age group of the players.
- The players jump or bound (hop) like kangaroos, keeping their legs together. They hold their arms close to their bodies at waist to chest level and with hands pointing down. They jump in long strides using an up and down motion.

## Variations

- Players step and hop — 'hippety hop' — or gallop step.
- Place a large ball between the legs and hop.

- The relay course could include an obstacle to climb over or could be a winding rather than a straight path.
- Have races between pairs of groups of players.
- Players line up next to each other and all hop together past a line 10–15 metres away.
- On mats and over low hurdles.

### Teaching points

- Teams line up. Ready.
- Arms up, feet together. Go.
- Feet together. Hop.
- Keep going.
- Allow player to hop then one step, hop on two feet then step again.



Kangaroo

# nandrra-rna

'nan-dr-ra-rna'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

A small number of 'marble' type games (either traditional or introduced) were played in various parts of Australia. Gugada boys, living near Tarcoola in South Australia, used wooden marbles. The marbles placed in the ring were called *kooka* (meat) and the shooting marble was called *kodji* (spear). In the 1940s on Mer Island, a marble game was played in a circle. A ring was traced in the sand and cowrie shells were laid out in it. The players in turn thumb-flicked other small cowrie shells at these.

The marble game outlined below was observed being played by two young men at Santa Teresa in South Australia in 1974. It includes a cooperative element of play common to many Aboriginal games and activities.

## Language

The game is named after the Diyari language of South Australia word *nandrra-rna*, which means 'to hit'.

## Short description

A marble game in which players attempt to hit marbles out of a small circle of another player.

## Players

- Groups of two players play against each other

## Playing area

- A designated outdoor or indoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A quantity of large marbles

## Game play and basic rules

- The two players sit cross-legged and facing each other about 3 metres apart. In the area between their knees are spread several large marbles. Players take it in turns to attempt to hit the

marbles out of a small circle in front of other player's knees.

- When a turn is successful the hit marbles are given to the successful 'shooter', who places them with the other marbles between his or her legs.

### **Duration**

The game could continue almost indefinitely because as one player's cluster of marbles becomes smaller and harder to hit and the other player's cluster becomes larger in size and easier to hit.

### **Suggestion**

This game could be used as an indoor activity. For younger players tennis balls or similar could be used and small skittles or wooden blocks could be used as a target to hit. In a cooperative game there is no exchange of objects after a successful turn.

### **Teaching points**

- Face each other. Marbles ready.
- First turn. Go.
- Collect the marbles. Roll them over.
- Keep going in turns.

# Yangamini

'yang-a-mini'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

The game of 'holey' or *yangamini* is an object-throwing game played by the Tiwi people of Bathurst Island. Other versions of the game are found elsewhere in Australia among Aboriginal people. For example, the children at Maningrida, Arnhem Land, threw small *Anadara* bivalve shells into a hollow in the sand and applauded the competitor who holed the most.

## Language

*Yangamini* is the name of an object-throwing game observed being played by the Tiwi people in the Northern Territory.

## Short description

Players attempt to throw marbles or coins into a hole as a test of skill.

## Players

- A group of two or more players

## Playing area

- Use a suitable outdoor area. A small hole is dug in the ground.

## Equipment

- Each player has a set number of stones, coins or marbles.

## Game play and basic rules

- This is a throwing game whereby marbles (or similar) are thrown underarm — in turns — at the hole or other 'target'. If the marble lands in the hole the player retrieves it. If the marble does not land in the hole it is placed in the bottom of the hole.

- The winner is the last player to have a marble when all the other marbles have been placed in the hole. The winner gives the marbles out to other players so that the game can continue.

### Variations

- Non-competitive team play: Two or more players take turns to throw marbles or stones into a hole. The marbles that land in the hole remain there while the other marbles are collected and handed to the next player for his or her turn. Play continues until all the marbles have been thrown into the hole.
- Coins are tossed towards a small hole in the ground, a line or another marker. The most accurate player (closest to the hole) is the winner, who takes the coins thrown in that turn. Players do not keep the coins for themselves at the end of the game.
- Players all have a different-coloured marble of the same size. Dig two small holes 5–7 metres apart. Players start at one hole and throw to the other hole to decide on the playing order — the closest player goes first. Players then attempt to throw their marble into the hole at the other end. Play alternates from end to end. The first player to throw his or her marble into the hole a number of times (such as ten times) is the winner and a new game is started.
- Torres Strait version: In a more modern variation of this activity a two-dollar coin is placed out in front of a group of players. The player who can throw his or her coin (usually a 50-cent piece) the closest to the two-dollar coin wins.
- Indoor version: Throw beanbags or tennis balls towards or into a bucket.

### Teaching points

- Collect the marble. Line up. Ready and go.
- Take turns.
- Careful throws. Land it close. Lob or underarm roll.
- Put it in the hole if you miss.
- We have a winner. Share the marbles out and start again.

# Walbiri

'wal-bir-i'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

A memory-testing game was played by the Walbiri children of central Australia. Players were required to recall sand-drawing maps of the locality after watching for a short time. This was a game that helped the children remember and identify the surrounding topography.

## Short description

This is a memory-testing game using various objects.

## Language

This game is named for the Walbiri people observed playing a memory game.

## Players

- Groups of four to ten players

## Playing area

- An indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Use cards, markers or pictures to represent the 'landmarks' of the area. For more experienced and older players as many as 50 objects can be placed around the playing circle at one time.

## Game play and basic rules

- A circle (5–10 metres in diameter) is drawn on the ground and around it are placed a number (10–30) of sticks and stones (or other objects), with each 'representing' prominent local landmarks in the area.
- After studying the arrangement of the objects for a time the players turn their backs on the circle. With their backs to the arrangement the first player calls an object at a given point and continues to call each object on the line around the circle until he or she calls incorrectly. When this occurs the next player continues.



- If the players cannot remember all the objects they turn away once more while the objects are re-arranged for the next game. The first player to call all the objects correctly has the 'honour' of arranging the pieces in readiness for the new game.

### Variations

- Use cards of animals, people and places as well as objects such as a marble, ball, pencil and so on.
- Pattern game: Use about 30 small pebbles of as many different colours and shapes as possible (such as found in sample rock kits) or draw/ make objects out of cardboard and paint them with designs in different colours. The pebbles (or objects) are laid out in a pattern — design several charts before the game (these will show set positions for the pebbles). Players observe the pattern for 1–2 minutes. The pebbles are gathered up and the group (about six players), or an individual, attempt to arrange the pebbles in their original order.
- Another method of play is to cover the pattern and have players draw on a piece of paper the approximate sizes, positions, colours and markings of the pebbles. The game can be played several times going from more simple patterns to more complex ones. The player who is the best at remembering the pattern arranges the pebbles for the next game. Allow players to receive hints.
- Add and take: Arrange a display of objects. These are re-arranged, added to or taken away from, and players attempt to list the object/s re-arranged, added and/or removed.
- Have pairs of cards (10–20 pairs). These are turned up and players have 1–2 minutes to remember them all. The cards are then turned face-down and players take it in turns to remember where the pairs of cards are. If they make a successful guess the cards are removed and they continue with their turn. When a player makes an incorrect guess the next player takes a turn. Continue until all the pairs are found. Re-arrange the cards and play another game.

### Teaching points

- Form a circle. Look closely at the objects.
- Turn your backs.
- First player go. Good.
- Next player.
- Stop. Well done.

# tok

'tok'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

A 'secret' play-language game was reported on Waiben (Thursday) Island in the early 1970s. It was spoken by girls in Torres Strait Creole and was introduced to Dauan Island, where it was spoken in the local language. The language was spoken fluently in unprepared talk.

## Language

In Torres Strait Creole *tok* means 'to speak' or 'say'.

## Short description

This is a play-language game in which players insert the syllable 'k' when they are talking.

## Game play and basic rules

- The speaker has to insert after each normal syllable an additional one starting with a 'k',

followed by a vowel used in the preceding syllable. Some examples in Torres Strait Creole:

- *Yawo* (goodbye) becomes *yakawoko*. *Ngalaga* (where) becomes *ngakalakaga*. *Ngai* (I) becomes *ngakai*.

- Conversation example:

**Ngalpa ngalagapa ludi?**

*We — where (do we) go?*

**Ngagalpaka ngakalakagakapaka lukudukuipaka.**

- With some practice the words can be spoken quite fluently in unprepared talk. Small mistakes are overlooked.

## Suggestion

Players can prepare a script following the procedure outlined in English or any other language. The other players attempt to repeat what is said.

## Variations

- A player says a phrase and another player attempts to repeat it in the 'new' language.
- Invent another language following a different procedure — such as in the game of 'Pig Latin'. For example, in this game you could take off the first letter of the word and say the word — then take the first letter and add 'ay': 'dad' becomes 'ad day' and 'mum' becomes 'um may.' For words starting with the letter 'i' say the word then 'yay': island becomes 'island yay' and it becomes 'it yay'.

# thurnda-gu

'thur-nda-gu'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

Rollers (toy cars) are to be found in many Aboriginal settlements in more remote parts of Australia. For example, toy trucks are made of wheel rims and toy cars from wire or twine attached to large tins filled with sand or damp soil.

The tin-can rollers are pushed with handles made of wire or pulled using wire or twine. This game involves doing 'wheelies' and sudden stops and sharp turns. Sometimes groups of children with roller cars and trucks (cans stacked or in line) have races.

When a tyre rim is used as a roller it is propelled with a forked stick held by the 'driver'.

## Language

The activity is named *thurnda-gu*, which means 'to roll something' in the Yindjibarndi language of central parts of Western Australia.

## Short description

A fun activity using cans to make roller cars to push or pull around.

## Players

- Any number of players but usually two to six in a group

## Equipment

- A roller may be an empty food tin (closed at the top with a lid) through the centre of which a wire or string has been threaded from end to end. This wire is wound up tightly (or tied in the case of twine) to make a long handle. The tin is filled with sand or rocks and pulled or pushed to make a track. Tyre 'treads' may be dented in the sides of the roller.

### Game play and basic rules

- The skill involved in playing with a roller, especially one that is pushed rather than pulled, is to manoeuvre (steer) it around trees, dogs, people and other players with rollers without bumping into anything. Often the wire threaded through the can is also used to fashion a steering wheel (and even gear sticks) and allow for greater control.
- Some players pretend that the roller is a sports car and sometimes add one or more cans to make a 'road train' truck. This requires greater skill. Car or truck noises usually accompany the activity (for example, starting and changing the gears).

### Variations

- Conduct races either along a straight path or an obstacle course.
- Have relay races.

### Making a roller

To make a simple roller use a long piece of fencing wire and an empty food can (with a lid on it) or other tin. A hole is punched at both ends of the can and the wire is passed through to act as an axis around which the can rotates like a wheel as it is pushed or pulled along.

### Comment

In some places rollers is a 'fill-in' activity that is taken up when nothing more exciting is on offer. Any outdoor area is suitable for this activity.

### Suggestion

In some parts of Australia roller races, including sprints, relay and obstacle races, are included as part of school activities such as athletic carnivals. The use of rollers in these events allows for an opportunity to use an activity that has developed an Indigenous Australian identity in parts of the country. Indigenous play culture should be seen as a continuing and dynamic one that has developed its own unique forms of play in particular contexts.

### Teaching points

- Line up with rollers. Steer them around.
- Leave other people alone. See how well you go.

# edor

'e-dor'



SCHOOL YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL YEARS  
7-9

SCHOOL YEARS  
10-12

Post-school age

## Background

This version of a chasing-and-tagging game originates in the Aurukun Aboriginal community and has been popular and played for as long as most can remember.

This game has been frequently played around the streets, in the school at break time and before physical education lessons as a fun warm-up activity.

The enthusiasm and vigour that the players display (all the while conversing freely in the local language of Wik-Mungkan) is a joy to watch and a clear indication of the vibrant strength of the traditional culture still evident in this community today.

The game was observed by Troy Meston and is presented on the authority of Aunty Cathy (local Elder and Aurukun Community School Teacher's Aide). *Edor* has been played since she was a child and well before.

## Language

The names *edor*, *idor*, *ida* or 'the running game' have all been used to refer to this game. The term *edor* has been commonly used in the north Queensland and Torres Strait regions.

## Short description

*Edor* is a goal-orientated, chasing-and-tagging game for a large group of players.

## Players

- A large group of players can play. Players are divided into two teams.

## Playing area

- A football field or other open area suitable to the activity

## Equipment

- Assign 'goals' at opposite ends of the playing area by using a large tree or other structure.

## Game play and basic rules

- Players assemble in the middle of the playing area. All the organisation and discussion related to the game is left to the players. Players decide on the teams, the goals, the direction in which teams will run and who will start. A player is selected as the *Edor* and this player is given five seconds before he or she takes off, running towards the goal.
- A player who is the *Edor* attempts to reach his or her designated goal at the end of the playing field. The player attempts to do this without being tagged (touched) by a player from the opposing team. To become the *Edor* a player of the defending team tags the player who was the *Edor*. This player then runs towards his or her designated goal at the other end of the playing area. The direction of the game changes each time a tag is made on the *Edor*.
- The game continues until a player is successfully able to reach the goal. When a player reaches the goal his or her team wins the round and all players meet in the centre of the field to start a new game.
- Players are not allowed to interfere with each other or to stand in front of or near the goal to stop the *Edor*. These actions are not seen to be in keeping with the intention of the game. If necessary a 5–15 metre semi-circle can be marked in front of the goal.

## Variations

- In part of the Torres Strait region, the game is played on the beach using two trees up to 50 metres apart. One selected player starts by running towards one tree to try and touch it. If he or she is touched by another player this player calls out loudly, 'Ida', and starts running towards the tree that is the longest distance away. Continue in this way.
- *Edor* can be played as a competition, with one point for each successful goal.
- Tag-team *Edor*: To avoid being tagged by the opposition the *Edor* may pass the tag to a teammate in the hope of him or her reaching the goal.

Play with a maximum of three tags for a team. The *Edor* must be tagged (touched) three times by different players from the other team. When the third tag has been made the new *Edor* is the player who made the last tag.

- Introduce a ball for the *Edor* to carry and once he or she is tagged the player must release the ball to allow the tagger a chance to pick it up and run with it. A combination of the three-tag rule can be integrated as well as passing the ball in any direction to another player on the same team.

## Comment

There is some evidence that a form of this game was introduced to northern parts of Australia through missionaries from Samoa in the early 1900s. The game has elements of both individual and team play.

## Suggestion

A method of starting the game is to have all the players close their eyes and someone is designated to discreetly select the player to be the *Edor*. Once selected a countdown of five seconds is given before the *Edor* must commence running.

## Safety

Thoroughly survey the playing area prior to the start of the game to remove any potentially dangerous obstructions. Enforce that a tag (touch) is made with minimum force and is not a slap or a punch — demonstrate the acceptable form for players to replicate.

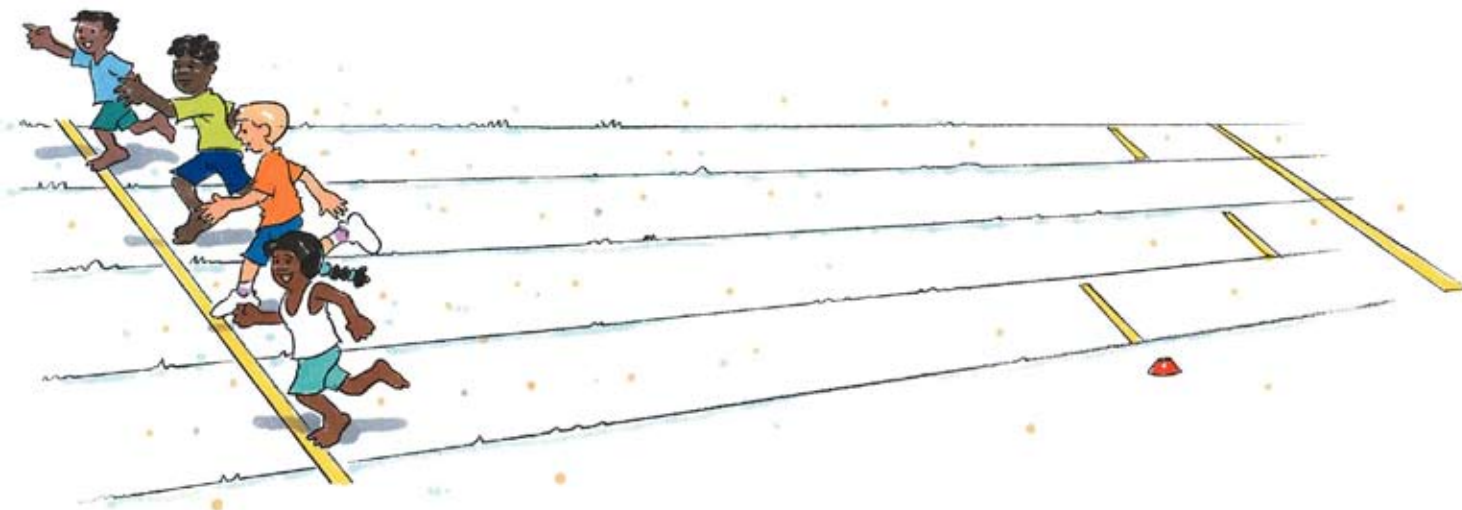
## Teaching points

- Teams ready. Who is starting?
- *Edor* ready. Go.
- Run. Tag and change.
- Change. Keep going. Run hard. Chase them.



# Inkanyi

'in-kan-yi'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

Although not a universal activity, athletic events were common. In a part of central Australia the children would have running races together. The race was a cooperative effort. According to age, running speed and fitness levels, runners started at different distances and all players attempted to finish together.

This activity is a more 'recent' observation.

## Language

The word *inkanyi* means 'play' in the language of the Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara of central Australia.

## Short description

This is a running activity whereby all players attempt to finish the race together. In some respects it is a cooperative activity.

## Game play and basic rules

- Players in this activity attempt to run as fast as they can and attempt to finish together.
- Use a set distance or a set time to 'organise' for a final race where all players attempt to finish together.
  - A. Players run for a set distance of 50 to 100 metres. A quick method of determining a starting place in the final race is to have the players all run in a couple of trial races and work out roughly where they finish.
 

By taking into consideration the distance between the runners at the finish of the race, the places where they start are set accordingly. (This is a fairly imprecise method and depends on the cooperation of the runners.)
  - B. Instead of a set distance players, run for a set time and see how far they can run. If a time is used the idea is to measure how far someone can run in a set time, for example 12 seconds. Players have a few attempts to

see how far they run. After all players have worked out their average distance, a race is organised where players are placed at various points along a running track. If a player can run 80 metres in 12 seconds he or she starts at a 20-metre mark. If another player can only run 60 metres in 12 seconds he or she starts at 40 metres. When all players are organised along the running track a race is held. Players should be encouraged to try their best. The fun comes from running as fast as they can but all attempting to finish at the same time. (Adjust the starting positions to fine-tune the results and run the race a second time or on another day.)

### **Variation**

- Players can all run the same distance or start from different places but adjust their running speed so that they all finish together. There should be no 'winner'.

### **Comment**

This activity may be more practical for younger age groups in a physical education lesson.

### **Teaching points**

- Practise your runs. Time your distance.
- Work out where you will start.
- Run. Try to finish together but run hard.
- Let's try again. All run hard and work to finish together.



# kungirruna

'kun-gir-run-a'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

Various types of running and stepping games were played in many parts of Australia.

## Language

The name of the game is taken from the language of the Dieyerie (Diyari) people of South Australia, which is an area where this running-and-stepping activity was observed. *Kungirruna* means 'playful' or 'merry'.

## Short description

This is a running-and-stepping activity in which players step on (or over) markers.

## Players

- Groups of two to six players for each marked area

## Playing area

- Any flat outdoor area suitable for this activity

## Equipment

- Mark lines or use flat markers of any size that will not cause a player to slip.

## Game play and basic rules

- Four or more markers are placed in a line on the ground about a half a metre apart. This distance can be varied according to the age, height and ability of the players.
- Players run and step on or over each of the markers. The markers may be moved further apart for more challenge.

## Variations

- In a traditional form of the game the players attempt to run and step on a line of flat rocks. This can be imitated by using a line of small hoops (up to ten) and have the players run at speed and step in each of these. The distance could be varied or small circles of different colours could be marked on the ground at set distances for the players to step on according to their ability. Care must be taken that players do not slip on the hoops or markers used. Different coloured lines could be used in place of hoops.
- Each player has their own set of markers and attempts to step the longest possible distance in four steps. The competitive aspect between players is not encouraged.
- Players step with alternative legs over the first three markers and then jump (to land on both feet) as far as they can over the fourth. The fourth marker is then placed where the player landed. Players should choose to better their personal best distance or have a friendly competition to see who covers the longest distance. The activity can be organised so that the final jump is into a sandpit.
- If a player touches any of the markers when attempting to step over them this turn does not count.

## Teaching points

- Markers in line. Ready.
- Run and step over the markers. Try to improve each time. Spread them apart.
- Go. Run fast. Step and step.
- Well done. Try it again. Next.
- Be careful not to try to step too far.

# tarnambai

'tar-nam-bai'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

Although not a universal activity, athletics-type events were common. On Tiwi (Bathurst) Island the children collected the seed heads of the 'spring rolling grass' (*Spinifex hirsutis*) that grew on the sand hills near the coast. These were taken to the beach and released. The children allowed these to be blown along by the wind and after a start chased after them and picked them up while running at full speed past them.

In the same area the children competed in running and jumping.

In the Batavia area of north Queensland running (*tarnambai*) as well as long-jumping (*brá-acha*) was often indulged in.

## Language

*Tarnambai* means 'running' in the language used in the Batavia area of north Queensland.

## Short description

This is a running-and-chasing game in which a ball is rolled and returned to the starting line.

## Game play and basic rules

- Players roll a ball away from their partners, who sprint after it, pick it up on the run after it crosses a line 20 metres away, and return to the starting line. Time the attempts, hold a team relay, or use this as a tabloid event in small groups (two to four players) with a set time (2–3 minutes).

### Variations

- Players roll a ball so it passes a line 20 metres away. As soon as it is released they chase and retrieve the ball and return across the starting line. Players time each other. Add the time together for all players to set a class or 'world' record. Repeat for a number of turns or at another time.
- A version of this activity has been successfully used by special-needs students who use wheelchairs. The student works with a partner and after rolling the ball is either pushed or accompanied to retrieve the ball. The ball is placed in the lap of the player in the wheelchair and both players return to the start.

### Suggestion

This activity could be included as part of a track-and-field carnival event, recognising traditional Indigenous Australian play culture.

### Teaching points

- Players ready. Roller with the ball. Runner ready. Go.
- Run. Let it cross the line. Pick it up. Run hard.
- Change over. Try your best.
- Good work. Time your rolls to their speed so your partner picks it up as it crosses the line.



# brambahl

'br-am-bahl'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

A favourite game of the old men of the Juwalairai people of the Narran River in New South Wales was *brambahl* (skipping). Men of more than 70 years were often the best.

## Short description

This is a skipping game where players perform various actions.

## Players

- Groups of four to eight players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A number of skipping ropes 4–6 metres long

## Game play and basic rules

- A player stands at each end of a long rope and turns the rope. When it is in full swing, a player moves in as the skipper.
- After skipping in the usual way for a few rounds of the rope the player begins to perform the variations. These consist, among other things, of:
  - taking thorns out of the feet
  - digging as though for larvae of ants
  - digging for yams with a digging stick
  - grinding grass-seed
  - jumping like a frog
  - doing a type of dance
  - appear to be looking for something in the distance

- run out, pick up a child (or object) and skip with it in the arms
- lying flat down on the ground and raising the body as the rope turns
- measuring his or her full length while lying flat on the ground, rising and letting the rope slip under him or her
- imitate animals such as a kangaroo
- walk on all fours
- perform various antics.
- The rope is kept going the whole time and never varies pace nor pauses at any time during the variations.

### **Scoring**

The player who can most successfully vary the performance is considered the winner.

### **Teaching points**

- Turners ready. Go.
- Skip and change, skip and change.

# gunane

'gun-ane'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

Skipping with a vine was an amusement for the Jagara (or Jagera) people in the Brisbane area. Some of the people were excellent skippers. A popular place to skip was on the hard sand near the water at the beach.

The kind of vine used was the one that was handiest at the time — either those of the scrub or a creeper that grew on the seashore. The skipping was done amid great interest and amusement from the onlookers.

An extra-determined attempt by the 'rope-turners' to put the skipper out always caused roars of laughter, for a good skipper was sure to be ready for this.

## Language

The game is named after the word for 'jump' (*gunane*) in the Wakka Wakka language used in southeast Queensland.

## Short description

A simple skipping game

## Players

- A group of up to ten or more players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A skipping rope up to 6 metres long

## Game play and basic rules

- This is a skipping game that is familiar to most people. The rope (vine) is circled round and round and either one or two players skip at a time.
- The players skip away and attempt to keep going for as long as they can. The players turning the rope try to put the skipper/s out by varying the speed of the turning.
- To stay in for as long as possible the player/s skipping must watch every movement of the hands of those who turn the rope.

## Comment

In central Australia camel fur and long-stemmed paddy-melon vines were observed being used for skipping ropes.

## Teaching points

- Rope turners ready. Skippers ready. Off we go.
- Keep skipping.
- Change the speed.
- Watch the rope.
- Next group.

# Jirrakayi-ku

'jir-ra-kay-yi-ku'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

This rope-skipping game was played by Aboriginal children inhabiting the Riverina area between Victoria and New South Wales.

## Language

This game is named after the word in the Panyima dialect of Victoria for jumping (*jirrakayi-ku*).

In the Wiradyuri language, spoken in the central and southern parts of New South Wales, the word for 'jump' was *dyutbi*.

## Short description

This is a skipping game suitable for a large group of players.

## Players

- A group of up to 20 players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A skipping rope of 4–6 metres or more

## Game play and basic rules

- The rope is 'turned' by a player at each end. The players with the rope will be just far enough apart to allow the sag of the rope to touch the ground. As the rope is swung round the skippers jump in one after another — until there are as many as 12 players skipping at once.
- When the players become tired they jump out and their places are filled immediately by other players who are ready to display their agility. The rope is kept going until those turning it become tired. When this occurs other players take their place.

## Duration

The game continues until the players are exhausted and/or agree to end it.

## Teaching points

- Rope turners ready. Skippers ready. Off we go.
- Keep skipping. Next player. Next one.
- Watch the rope. Keep going.



# Julba

'jul-ba'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

Skipping with a vine was popular with the Jagara (or Jagera) people of Brisbane and surrounding areas.

The game outlined below was based on a 1950s account by an elder named Gaiarbu. To play this skipping game successfully, the players needed to be very active and had to have plenty of practice.

## Language

The game is named *Julba*, which means 'to jump' in the Bundjalung language spoken in northern New South Wales and southern Queensland.

## Short description

A skipping game for two pairs each turn. These pairs change places while they are skipping.

## Players

- Any number of players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Use a skipping rope about 4–6 metres in length to represent a suitable vine. Each end of the rope is held by a player ('rope-turner') or one end may be tied to a 'tree' and held by a player ('rope-turner') at the other end.

## Game play and basic rules

- Four players at a time skip — one pair in front (Daroin team) and the other pair (Ggaiar team) behind them. Each pair of players changes places (pass each other) while skipping.

- At the same time each player has to carry out the appropriate action to indicate the totem (team) to which he or she belongs. If the rope hits any player his or her team has to leave and a new pair/team enters.

### **Variations**

- Play as a competition. Call 'Change' every 30 seconds for five minutes. Continue until one team is out. If both teams are still in, it is a draw.
- Have a round-robin or elimination competition between totems (teams).

### **Teaching points**

- Pair in front, pair behind.
- Ready. Skip. Change places.

# koara

'ko-ar-a'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

## Background

In various places accounts have been recorded of leaves being folded into shapes to make a propeller or 'spinner' type of toy. The children ran with them or held them into the wind, or they were thrown into the air to drop to the ground.

This is an activity using a small propeller (plastic or wood) fixed to the end of an 18-centimetre long, small-diameter dowel. Aunty Ruth Hegarty of Cherbourg recalled using cardboard and a straw to make propellers. The cardboard was decorated with coloured flowers and the players ran against the wind.

## Language

*Koara* means 'play' in the language of the people who once inhabited Sunday Island in Western Australia. The word used to represent the play activities of these people.

## Short description

This is an activity in which groups of players use propeller-type toys.

## Players

- Any number of players suitable to the available equipment.

## Playing area

- A suitable area without obstructions

## Equipment

- It is possible to purchase toy propellers, or to use paper or cardboard and fold it to make a propeller that can be pinned to the end of a piece of dowel.

### Game play and basic rules

- When the propeller (attached to a light piece of plastic) is spun rapidly in a clockwise direction between the palms it will travel up in the air to a distance of 10 metres or higher.
- Steps:
  1. Hold between the heel of the left hand and fingertips of the right hand.
  2. Keep the left hand still and move the right hand forward.
  3. Release as the propeller reaches the fingertips.

### Variation

Some trees produce 'propeller' seeds. These provide for a great deal of fun if a large number are collected and are thrown in a large group or individually from some height.

### Safety

Players should not spin their propeller near or towards the face of another player.

### Suggestions

Purchase or make a number of propellers.

#### Games for the propellers:

1. Accuracy — land within a designated target area (such as a hoop about 5 metres away).
2. Propeller golf — spin the propeller towards an agreed-on goal (tree or rubbish bin) and count the number of turns necessary to hit the target. Have larger groups play in groups of four.
3. Partners — partners face each other 3–5 metres apart. See how many catches can be made by the two players 'spinning' simultaneously. Use one propeller between the two, and after a successful 'spin-and-catch' sequence, each player moves back one step. Continue until a player misses catching. The measured distance between the two players at maximum is their paired personal best.
4. Spin for height — attempt to spin the propeller the highest. The blades may be adjusted.
5. Trick catching — for example, one-handed, behind the back.

# ngor-go

'nor-go'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

A form of spin-ball was played among the lower Tully River people. The spinner was made out of a gourd of the *Benincasa vacua*. This game was played by women more often than men.

It was known among the Mallanpara people of north Queensland as *ngor-go*, after the name of the gourd used.

## Short description

Making and playing with a spinner toy.

## Equipment

- Use a very large button or object such as a flat stick or small round wheel from a toy.
- Sticks may be used at the end of the string to protect the thumb/fingers when the spinner is twirled.
- A length of strong twine up to 2 metres.

## Game play and basic rules

- Two holes are drilled either side of the centre of a small wheel or other object. A length of string is passed through both holes and joined to form a large loop with the spinning object in the centre.
- A thumb is inserted at either end of the loop of string, and the 'spinner' rotated over and over.
- The hands extend and the doubled string untwirls the ball or spinner. The hands are brought together and the spinner untwirls in the reverse direction. Continue in this manner so it may be kept spinning for a long time.

## Comment

This is an activity that has been observed as part of play culture in many parts of the world.

# kamai

'kam-ai'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

Using a length of twine, adult women and young children of both genders often amused themselves for hours at a time with cat's cradle (string-figure games). These were played almost everywhere throughout Australia and also in the Torres Strait. In some areas older boys and adult men also played these games.

Elaborate figures resembling such things as animals and natural objects were made by skillful manipulation. Similar string figures from different locations often had different interpretations.

## Language

*Meeroo-meeroo* (string games) was played in one area of Western Australia. Imitations of animals' and birds' feet and many other most ingenious designs were reproduced with fur or fibre string.

Among the local names applied to string figures in north Queensland included the following: *kápan*, *morkuru*, *ane-ingá*, *man-jing*, *yirma*, *mianman*, *andia-ibi*, *kumai* and *kamai*. *Wame* is the word used for string figures in the Torres Strait.

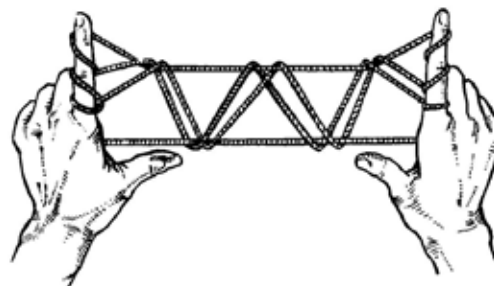
## Comment

String figures are made with a length of string up to 2 metres long, with the ends spliced or knotted together. The loop is then placed on the fingers of the hand and manipulated in a series of movements.

The diagrams available often only record the finished article. Some of the string figures are extremely complicated. During their creation, the figures often require not only the hands, but even the mouth, knees, and so on, to make the different loops, twists and turns. Occasionally two endless strings are used and one or even two assistants are involved.

## Suggestion

Use a 20–30 metre length of skipping rope and have small groups of four to six players copy (from a book) or 'invent' string figures.



# emu

'e-mu'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

This game is based on a chasing game observed being played by Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory in more recent times.

## Language

In the absence of a name this game has been called *emu* in recognition of this large flightless bird found throughout much of Australia.

## Short description

This is a chasing and catching (tag) game.

## Players

- Any number from 10–30

## Playing area

- Depending on the number of players, an area of 40–60 metres long and 20–30 metres wide would be appropriate. For younger or fewer players a much smaller area such as a backyard is suitable.
- Two bases (of about 2 metres square) are marked near each end of the playing area. One is the 'home' of the emu and the other is a home base for players.

## Game play and basic rules

- A player who is called *emu* chases the other players around the playing area and when one is caught (touched) he or she becomes the new *emu*. Play continues in this manner.
- Players may go to their home base at any time. They may stay there as long as they wish but if the *emu* goes up to the base and begins to count aloud to five, all the players must leave. If there is a player still at the home base after the count of five, he or she becomes the new *emu*.

- If the *emu* goes to his or her home base the other players must all go up to the player and from about 5 metres away they taunt the *emu* to chase them. The *emu* may leave the base whenever he or she wishes but can only stay in there for up to ten seconds.

### Variations

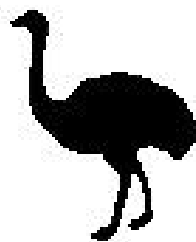
- Use two players as the *emu*.
- Players can wear tags on their waists and one of these has to be removed by the *emu* for a player to be caught.

### Safety

Players are expected to play the game with some consideration of other players. Players need to be careful of contacting other players or falling.

### Teaching points

- Chaser ready. Spread out.
- Ready. Go.
- Run and dodge. Watch out for other players.
- Go to a base. Five seconds only.
- Keep going. Good.
- Play on.



Emu



# Munhanging

'mun-hang-an-ing'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

The game of *Munhanging* was played by children of the Arnhem Land area in northern Australia.

Children played this, and other running games, in the flickering lights from firebrands of the grownups, sitting about a camp site.

## Language

The game is named after the small nocturnal 'gecko' lizard. A gecko is called *munhanging* in the Datiwuy language spoken in the Arnhem Land area.

## Short description

A running-and-chasing team game in which players attempt to touch players on the opposing team.

## Players

- Up to 20 players in two even teams — teams of six to ten are suggested. One team is called, *munhanging* (gecko lizard), and the other team is named after a beetle or other insect, for example, a fly (*wurrurlurl*).

## Playing area

- Use an area 40–50 metres long and 20–30 metres wide. A tree area 3 metres square is marked 10 metres in from one end and in the centre of the area.

## Equipment

- A set of party clickers for each player (if possible)

## Game play and basic rules

- One team (*wurrurlurl*) is scattered around the playing area while the other team (*munhanganing*) starts behind the line at one end of the playing area.
- On a signal to start the *munhanganing* players begin chasing the players of the *wurrurlurl* team. The players in the *munhanganing* team must keep clicking the party clickers — in imitation of the sound of the *munhanganing* — as they move around the playing area. The *munhanganing* players attempt to catch (touch) the *wurrurlurl* players and must make a noise with their party clickers while moving about. Only the hand without the party clicker can be used to make a touch.
- The players that are caught are sent to the tree area, where they remain until all the other players in the team are caught.
- As well as being touched, players from the *wurrurlurl* team can be ‘caught’ if they go outside the playing area when they are being chased.
- If agreed by the players the game can be played with players being ‘released’ from the tree area if they are touched by a player on the same team who has not been caught. (This avoids an elimination aspect of the game.)
- When all players are caught, swap the team roles and start again.
- On their turn, the *wurrurlurl* team can use the party clickers although they could make buzzing noises (for a fly) continuously instead.
- (If the *wurrurlurl* team chooses to make buzzing noises they place one hand on their hip and use the other hand to touch *munhanganing* players).

## Variations

- Competitive game. The teams take turns in running and chasing by swapping about their names/roles. Teams are timed to see which team can catch the other team in the fastest time.
- Continuous play. When the referee calls, ‘swap’, the teams change roles. All caught players become ‘free’ when a swap is called.

- Players who are caught (touched) sit down where they are touched. Only the *wurrurlurl* players that have not been touched are able to move around the playing area.
- Players from the *wurrurlurl* team wear a velcro belt or a piece of cloth tucked into their shorts. They are caught when this is removed. The caught players go to the tree area and the belts/pieces of cloth are placed in a hoop just outside the playing area.

## Safety

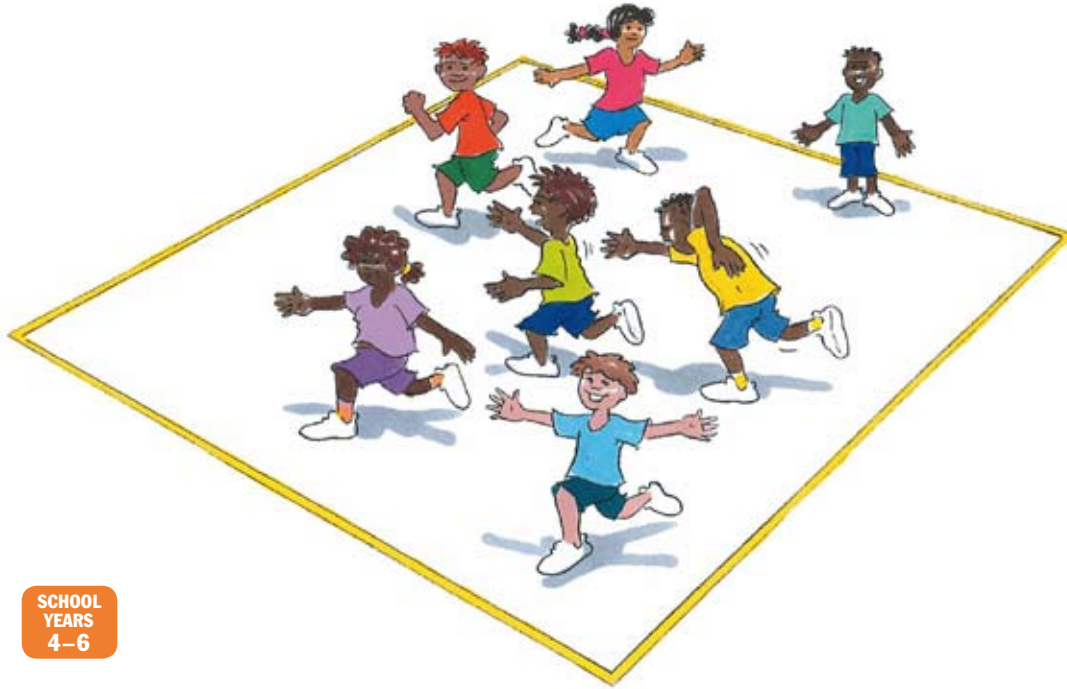
Players need to be aware of the risk of running into other players and falling, and safety aspects need to be considered. Allowing time for players to rest and have a drink needs to be considered.

## Teaching points

- Two teams ready. Go.
- Spread out and keep moving.
- Use your clickers.
- Go to the tree when you are caught.
- Catch them all. Good work.
- Change over. Let’s go.

# thapumpān

'tha-pum-pan'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

The tag game of *thapumpān* (shark) was observed being played by little children at Cape Bedford in north Queensland.

## Language

The name of the game was taken from the Wik-Mungkan language of north Queensland.

## Short description

A chasing-and-tagging game

## Players

- A group of four to eight or more players

## Playing area

- A designated area of around 10–15 metres square, depending on the number of players

## Game play and basic rules

- A player bends one arm over the top of his or her head like a *thapumpān* (shark) fin — (or may touch with a palm on the back between the shoulders or a hand on the head). The player then bends over and chases the other players in a manner to represent a *thapumpān*'s movements in the water.
- When a player is touched he or she becomes the new *thapumpān* and the game continues.

## Variations

- Have a couple of hoops, which are 'islands' for players to rest on for up to 5 seconds — (the game can also be played with a hoop for each player). Players walk or jog around the playing area and every so often a whistle is blown and players are safe if they reach their island before being caught (touched) by the *thapumpān*. Keep playing the game but change the *thapumpān* after a set time.

- Play the game in waist-deep water. The players stand in a circle and the *thapumpun* swims around (underwater or on top of it) and attempts to catch/touch a player below the knees as he or she attempts to jump out of the way.

### Teaching points

- Make the shark. The rest spread out.
- Ready. Go.
- Keep away from the shark. Look out.
- Caught. Next.



# Wanambi

'wa-nam-bi'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

*Wanambi* was a large snake. This game was observed being played by the Pitjantjatjara people of central Australia.

## Short description

This is a chase-and-tag game. Players in a line move towards another player, who suddenly chases and attempts to catch (touch) them.

## Players

- A group of four to eight players for each game

## Playing area

- A suitable indoor or outdoor area marked with a large spiral

## Game play and basic rules

- *Wanambi* sits in the middle of the large spiral drawn to represent a large snake. The other players place their hands on the hips of the player in front of them and slowly move around the spiral towards *Wanambi*.
- When the line of players reaches a set point about 5 metres away, *Wanambi* jumps up and attempts to catch (touch) the players as they quickly attempt to retreat backward (or turn and run) out of the spiral and back past a marker or line.
- Change over the *Wanambi* and continue playing.

## Variations

- When *Wanambi* attempts to touch the players in the line they drop hands and turn and run back to a marker or nominated line.
- The first person caught (touched) becomes the new *Wanambi*.

- Players next to each other in a line walk towards *Wanambi*. On a signal (whistle or call) they drop hands and turn and run back past a marker while *Wanambi* attempts to catch (touch) them.
- The player who was *Wanambi* joins on to the end of the line for the next turn and the players move forward one place.

### **Comment**

Accounts indicate that this game does not have any special ceremonial significance. The activity was played for enjoyment.

### **Safety**

Due care must be taken to avoid accidents through falls or contact with another player. Players should use minimum force when they catch (touch) another player.

### **Teaching points**

- From a line. Hands on hips.
- Make a spiral. Move forward.
- Go. Unwind. Quickly.
- Watch out. Don't get touched.

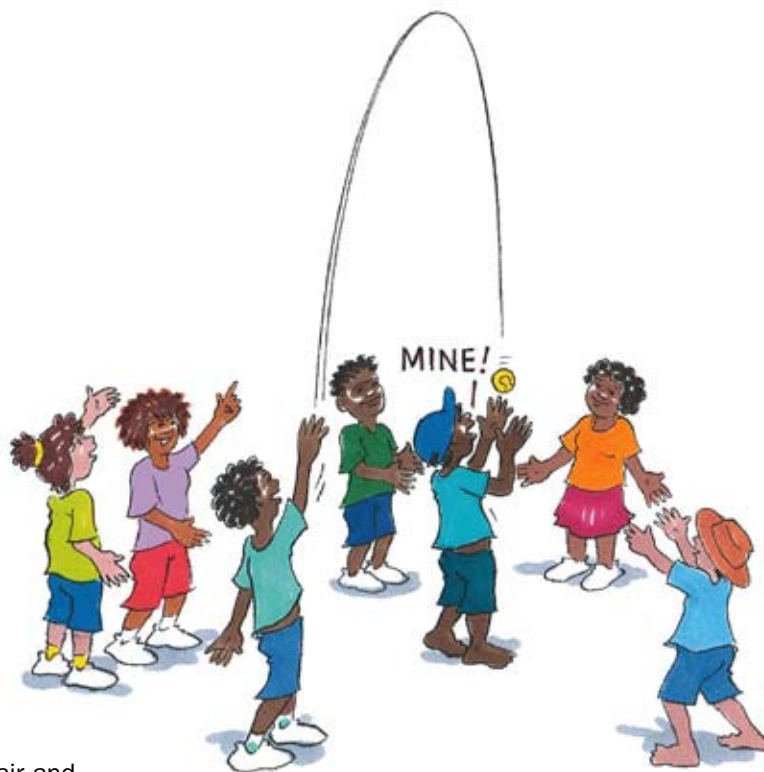
# barambah gimbe

'bar-ram-bah gim-be'

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10-12



## Background

Throwing a ball or object high into the air and attempting to catch it was an activity observed in various parts of Australia.

This proved to be a particularly popular activity at Barambah (now Cherbourg) after an Aboriginal settlement was established by the Queensland government on the lands of the Wakka Wakka people in the early twentieth century.

The game was often played by children and men in the afternoons after work, using a tennis ball. The game provided some social contact, a diversion from daily life, and fun.

## Language

*Gimbe* means 'play' in the language of the Wakka Wakka people of south Queensland. *Barambah* was the name of the waterhole that was near the site of the Aboriginal settlement.

## Short description

Players aim to throw a ball as high as possible into the air and catch it.

## Players

- Groups of four to ten players

## Equipment

- A tennis ball or soft ball of some description is used. The ball should be one that the players can easily throw straight up in the air in an attempt to catch it.

## Playing area

- An outdoor area suitable for the activity

### Game play and basic rules

- One player begins by throwing the ball as high and as straight as possible. The other players try to catch the ball before it touches the ground, and the player who catches it or gains control of it throws it up again.
- Every so often a thrower is able to nominate a player who must attempt to catch the ball.
- If no one catches the ball the thrower must pick up the ball and then tag another player (by touching or by gentle underarm throwing). The tagged player either becomes the new thrower or has to attempt the next catch.

### Variations

- Use a bat to hit the ball high in the air.
- For younger players throw a light ball (such as a gator skin or beach ball) high in the air and let them chase and retrieve it. Several balls could be thrown up, with players chasing and retrieving balls that are immediately thrown up as part of a continuous activity.
- Allow a one-hand catch of the ball if it contacts the ground (one hand, one bounce rule) after being dropped or without being touched.

### Comment

Games similar to this one are to be found in cultures in various parts of the world.

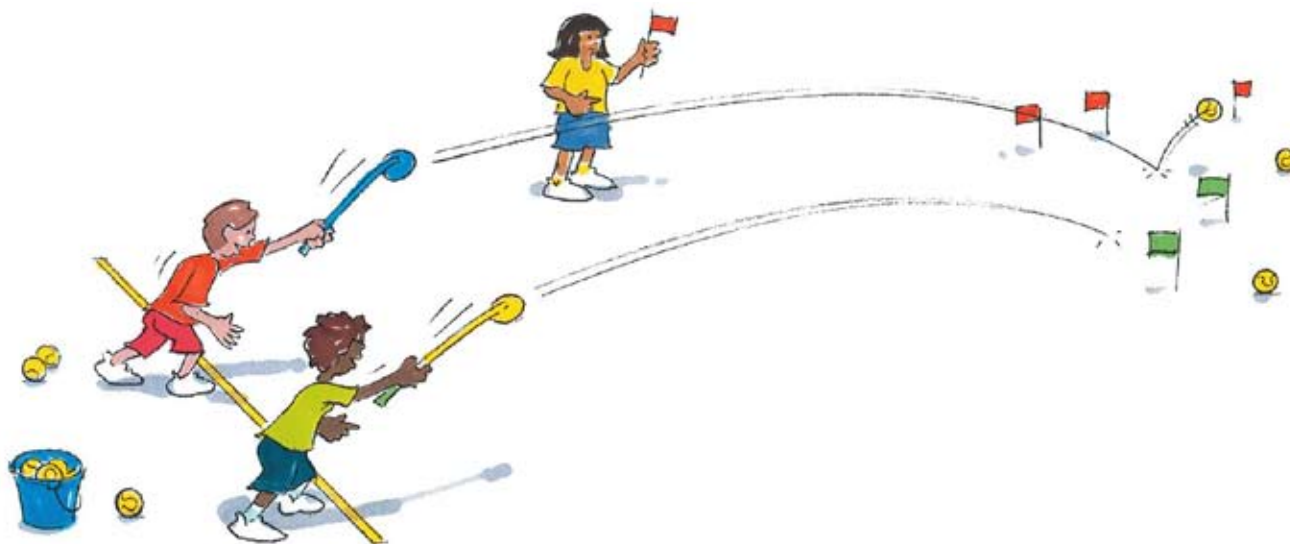
### Teaching points

- Spread out in the area. Ready. Go.
- Throw the ball up high. Throw and move out of the way.
- Chase the ball. Call for the ball.
- Hands ready. Reach for the ball. 'Soft' hands to catch.
- Watch the contacts.
- Nominate a player this turn.
- No catch. Tag a player.
- Next turn.



# battendi

'batt-end-i'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

A spear game was played by Aboriginal people in the Lake Murray, Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert areas of southern Australia. A prize such as a newly made shield was offered to the winner. The contest was in two parts: distance throwing and target throwing.

## Language

The game is named *battendi*, which means to 'throw a spear' in the Kurna language spoken in the southeast area of South Australia.

In the Western Desert language of central Australia:

**nyuntuku nyintji**  
*It is your toy spear.*

## Short description

This is a distance-and-accuracy throwing contest using a *woomera* to propel a tennis ball.

## Players

- Organise players in teams of two to four, or player against player in an individual contest.

## Equipment

- Use a pet toy commonly called a 'dog thrower'. This consists of a 1-metre long plastic stick with a 'cup' at the end to hold a tennis ball. When used correctly it acts like a *woomera* and projects a tennis ball for some distance and accuracy.
- A large supply of tennis balls is used. If several players use the same target in the target contest then different-coloured balls are recommended, otherwise get the players to throw in turns.

## Game play and basic rules

- Players take turns in the contest, which consists of a distance throw and a target throw.
- The first contest is a distance-throwing contest. Each player gets three attempts. Allow a 10-metre area to run up and throw. Wind conditions should be the same for all players. The measurement is made from the throwing line and in a direct line to where the ball landed — different coloured markers can be placed at different distances as a guide.
- The target contest consists of throwing at a target (such as a large wheelie bin) to represent a kangaroo 20–30 metres away. The distance to the target depends on the age of the players. A round of 20 attempts is allowed and the ball must hit the target on the full to count. If time and availability of targets allows then two rounds can be conducted. If players have the same score at the end of the contest a tie-break for first place, with additional throws (rounds of five throws), is conducted to determine the winner.

## Scoring

The player who wins the distance-throwing contest receives 50 points, the next player 49 points and so on. The winner of the target contest receives 75 points, the next player 74 points and so on.

The target contest was the most important one so the points are allocated to reflect this, but it is possible to use the same point scoring for both contests.

The overall winner of the event is the player or team who places best (most points) when both contests are considered. The winners of the individual contests may be acknowledged along with the overall winner.

## Variations

- Have targets at distances from 15–50 metres.
- Throw at a 1-metre square target from 20 metres.
- Use a moving target pulled by a long rope from 15 metres.
- Distance and accuracy throw: Players throw from the 40-metre line of a rugby field and attempt to throw over the crossbar and between the uprights (closer for younger players).

## Comment

The game has been outlined to reflect the traditional nature of the contest.

## Safety

If this activity is undertaken due regard should be given to safety factors, and instruction should be given in accordance with relevant procedures. Only children under responsible adult supervision should be allowed to perform this activity.

## Suggestions

Along with throwing of small spears at rolling discs, throwing boomerangs, throwing play-sticks (weeet weeet) this activity requires certain organisation and precautions. The activity is outlined to allow it to be used in physical education and outdoor education classes. Although it is possible to use spears and *woomeras*, this would not be feasible in most circumstances and requires much practice by players to be worthwhile.

# borna jokee

'bor-na-joke-e'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

In parts of Western Australia mimic battles with toy spears frequently took place among the younger male members of the camp. Mock fights and duels were fought. There were also trials of skill with *kyley* and spear and kangaroo and emu hunts, the children taking turns at being hunter and hunted. In these activities the boys are encouraged by their elders in order to acquire dexterity in handling their weapons, and boys are usually watched closely by the men, especially in their spear-throwing games.

The game of *boorna jokee* was the throwing of blunted spears at a human target. In this manner a player perfected skills in spear throwing and spear dodging. In displays of skill some men could expertly dodge three spears thrown together. They would use their shield or *woomera* to deflect the spears at the last moment.

## Language

*Noongar* is the word used by the people of the southwest of Western Australia to describe who they are.

## Short description

In this game players throw soft balls at a player, who attempts to avoid being contacted.

## Players

- Groups of four to ten players (*Noongars*)

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A sponge or some other type of soft ball instead of small spears

### Game play and basic rules

- One player (*Noongar*) stands in the centre of a line of *Noongars* and about 10–15 metres away. The line of throwers is spread out along the throwing line.
- The *Noongars* throw sponge balls or similar at the ‘dodger’. The *Noongar* in front attempts to dodge these. *Noongars* collect the balls when there are none left to throw. The *Noongar* in front is changed and the game continues. Only contacts below the shoulders count.

### Variation

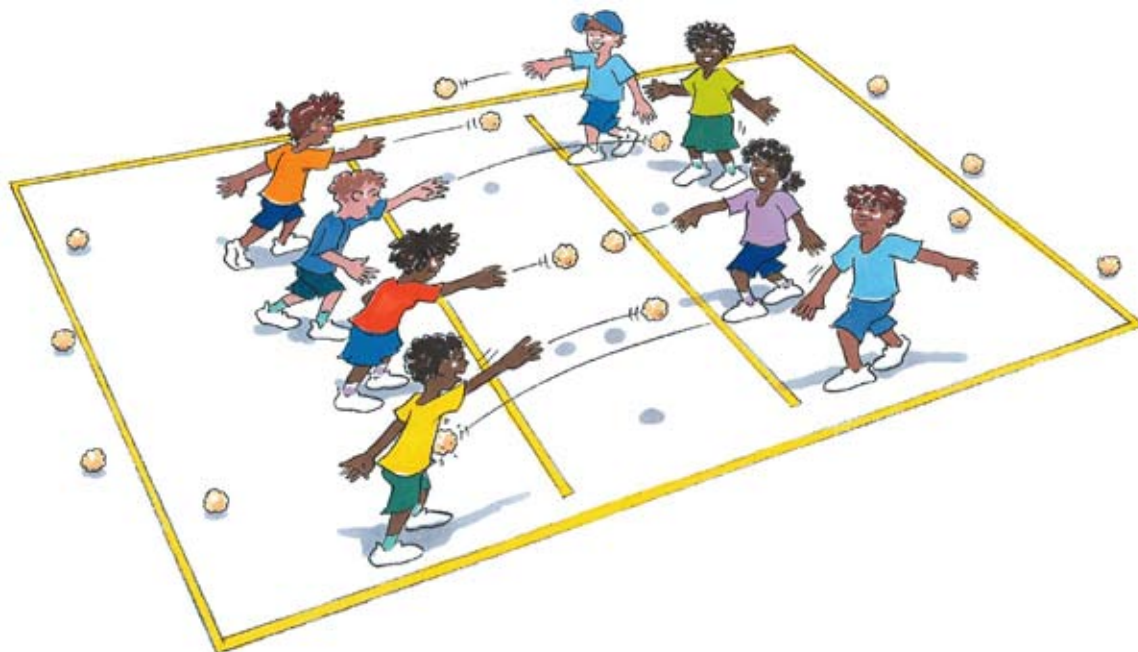
- Two teams of players 10–15 metres apart. One player at a time stands 5 metres in front of his or her group while the opposing team throw balls at them. The player must not move his or her feet and may only dodge the balls thrown by turning the body or moving the head. He or she may knock the balls aside by using a cricket pad or cricket bat as a shield. Alternate roles between teams.

### Teaching points

- Spread out. Dodger ready.
- Dodge and move.
- Throw and hit. Below the shoulders.
- Stop. Collect the balls.

# chiba

'chi-ba'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

At Clump Point in north Queensland, regular mock-warfare tournaments were held. These were called *chiba* or *malla*. The name of the actual site where it took place in the close neighbourhood was called *yirri*.

In Cairns the Yidinji people called this activity *puloga*.

## Short description

A game of mock warfare between two groups, using 'sponge' balls as weapons to attempt to contact an opposing player. This version is suitable for younger players.

## Equipment

- Sponge balls or similar soft balls to represent spears and boomerangs

## Duration

- Play a game five to ten minutes long. Every couple of minutes there is a short rest and the 'weapons' are collected and returned to their owners.

## Playing area

- Use a badminton court or volleyball court. The service (badminton), or front (volleyball), court lines mark restricted areas where players are not allowed during the game, unless it has been stopped.

## Game play and basic rules

- Players form into two teams, who spread out on their court areas. Teams may use zinc cream or coloured shirts to identify their team (clan). Team war cries, chants, taunts and dances are encouraged.

- Each team has a supply of sponge or fleece balls and, on the signal, start throwing them at the opposing team in an attempt to contact a player.
- Play is continuous and players retrieve the balls thrown by the opposing team and throw them back as part of the fun.

### Variations

- The number of contacts made on the opposing team can be counted or the number of balls that are in the opposing team's court after a set time may be used as a competitive activity.
- To add some extra excitement players may be allowed to use foam kickboards as shields to protect themselves.
- Every player for him or herself. Use foam (nerf) balls on a volleyball court.
- Use large sheets of newspaper crumpled into balls. A classroom with the desks or a row of chairs down the middle could be used. The aim is to try to have the most paper balls in the other half of the room within a set time. Care must be taken that the paper balls are not so tightly rolled that they could cause injury if a player is hit.

### Safety

Fair play is important in this game.

### Teaching points

- Teams ready. Lined up and ready.
- Collect the balls. Ready. Go.
- Throw. Dodge and weave.
- Good throw. Got them.
- Keep going. Watch out for other players.

# gorri

'gor-ri'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

Bowling-ball or disc games were played by Aboriginal boys and men in all parts of Australia. A piece of rounded bark (disc) was rolled by one of the players for the other boys to use as a target for their short spears.

A version of this activity is still played in the Kimberley area and Northern Territory (and perhaps elsewhere) using flattened tin lids as targets and stones or other missiles.

## Language

*Gorri* was a disc-bowling game played in central Australia.

## Short description

This is a game involving the throwing of a ball (for a spear) at a moving target.

## Players

- A group of players of up to 20 or more

## Playing area

- Use an area about 15–30 metres long. Markers are placed at each end of the area, and throws may only be made by players when the target is between these markers.

## Equipment

- Marker cones are used to designate the playing area
- Large gym balls
- Two tennis balls for each player

## Game play and basic rules

- The player who will roll the target ball stands 5–10 metres to one side of the playing area, away from the throwing marker, and about 10 metres or more in front of the other players.

- The players who are to throw at the target stand behind a line along one side of the playing area and parallel to the direction that the ball is to be thrown.
- These players call out for the ball to be rolled when they are all ready.
- The thrower calls out 'gool-gool' and starts the ball rolling towards the other end of the area.
- As the target ball rolls between the markers in the playing area the players either throw or roll their tennis balls at the target in an attempt to hit it. Players stop throwing when the rolled ball goes past the marker at the other end of the area.
- After their turn players wait until told and then collect the balls they have thrown. (A whistle is useful here.)
- Vary the speed, distance and angle of the rolls and the number of balls rolled. For younger players some stationary targets might be used.
- Note: When a player makes a hit he or she is greeted with applause. Successful players are expected to be modest about their achievement.

### Variations

- Spear the hoop. Use a small hula-hoop or rubber quoit as the target and 1-metre pieces of medium-sized dowel that can be marked with different colours. Players stand behind a line marked 5 metres away from a target area, which is 10–15 metres long. The aim is to either make the hoop (or quoit) stop rolling, or to throw through it.
- Human *gorri*: Have players either side of the area and 15 metres apart. Players gently roll a soft ball underarm at a target player as they run through the area between them. Players must be hit below the knees. This can be played with three teams (two throwing and one running).
- Attach a cardboard box to a long length of strong twine and pull it through the target area.
- Use spear throwers (*woomeras*).

- *Gorri* contest: Conduct a contest for a set time or number of turns. Each player or team has a set number of balls. The player or team that hits the target the most number of times is the winner.

### Safety

The area to be used should be marked out and players who roll the ball have no chance of a thrown ball being directed towards them. The players should not move after they have thrown their balls, until a signal to retrieve the balls is given.

### Teaching points

- Wait for the signal.
- Pick your target. Stand side on. Ball in your fingers.
- Ready. Ball back behind the ear, wrist bent.
- Step, elbow leads, points the fingers.
- Throw and follow through.
- Wait. Retrieve.





# jumpinpin

'jump-pin-pin'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

## Background

This activity is based on a description to Troy Meston by Uncle Ronny Ahwang of Brisbane, who told of his days fishing off the jetty on Stradbroke Island and how it was similar to a game they played.

This is an adapted game loosely based on the essential components of traditional spear fishing.

## Language

The game is named *jumpinpin* after a meeting place for Aboriginal people on Stradbroke Island. It is also the name of a part of an edible root. It is now used as the name of an entrance (bar) at the southern end of Moreton Bay between Stradbroke Island and Moreton Island, near Brisbane.

## Short description

This activity is similar to dodge ball and can be played both in and out of the water. It is based on the principles of fishing — hunter and prey.

## Players

- Up to 30 players

## Playing area

- Prior to commencing play, decide whether this game will be played in the pool or on an oval. If playing in a pool, a 25-metre venue will be adequate. Younger children use the shallower portion of the pool for play.
- If an oval is used, and depending on the group size, an area of 20 metres x 40 metres will be sufficient for a group of 25–30. Scale the playing area size to better suit the number of players.

## Equipment

- Use a size 3 gator skin or similar soft balls.
- Select and arrange items of equipment prior to commencing the game and ensure that the equipment reflects the variations and modifications undertaken.

## Game play and basic rules

- One player is nominated as the 'fisherman' and the other players spread around the playing area. The fisherman is armed with a soft gator skin

ball or soft sponge ball. On a given signal he or she begins to 'hunt'. The fish are eliminated when they are hit below the shoulders with an underarm throw. The elimination part of the game can be avoided by designating a set number of times (such as ten) 'fish' players need to be hit with the ball — a single player may be hit more than once but not in succession.

- The 'fish' (players) who are eliminated become fishermen to help catch the rest of the fish. The game may be played with one to three balls, depending on the number of players and the size of the area.
- The fishermen may pass the balls to each other and, depending on the age and ability of players, the fishermen may be restricted from moving around when they have a ball in their possession.
- Continue until all the fish are caught. The last fish caught is congratulated. For the next game the first fish caught becomes the new fisherman.
- If the game is played in the water it should be played in the shallow end of the pool, where possible. If a full pool area is used the fisherman must touch (catch) the fish.

### Comments

This activity can be played as a competitive or non-competitive game.

### Safety

Ensure that the necessary safety precautions are observed and that throws by the fisherman are underarm and make contact below the shoulders. Physical contact is to be avoided.

### Variations

- Night fishing: Use a blindfold on one or two fishermen. A player is designated as a retriever of the balls for the fishermen. Count the number of fish caught in a set time. The ball retriever can use signal calls to help the fishermen.
- Fish shelter: Introduce various marked areas (such as a 2-metre square) to provide 'shelter' for the fish. Players are only allowed to stay in a shelter for five seconds at a time and may not

use the same shelter twice in succession. This will force a constant movement of the fish.

- Fish school: All the 'fish' are lined up at one end of the pool or along sidelines of a marked area on the oval. All players must run/swim from one side to the other on a given signal. This signal can be given by a designated player, or the fisherman. In this variation the fisherman is free to roam around in wait for the 'school' of fish as they attempt to move to the other side of the area. Caught fish join with the fisherman and are given a ball each.
- Deep-sea fishing: Fish are numbered off in pairs or designated and named groups of three or four. These pairs/groups sit directly opposite each other on both sidelines of the marked area, or against the sides of the pool. Once the fish have assembled in the appropriate areas the fisherman stands with his or her back to the fish and must remain that way until a number or group name has been called.
- On this call, all the fish with the same number/name must run/swim from their starting point on the sideline/side of pool to the other side of the playing area/pool without getting caught by the fisherman.
- The fisherman remains until a fish is caught. When this occurs the fisherman and the caught fish swap roles and the game begins again.

### Teaching points

- Players spread out. Ready everyone. Go.
- Underarm throws. Fish move. Dodge and move.



# kalkadoon kee'an

'kal-ka-doon kee-an'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

In areas of north Queensland, a game of throwing skill was played. A large bone, such as an emu shinbone (with twine attached to it) was thrown over a net (used to catch emus) into a pit or hole. Considering the distance to the hole, great skill was required to correctly aim the bone and ensure that it did not touch the net.

## Language

The game is called *kee'an*, which means 'to play' in the Wik-Mungkan language of north Queensland. The Kalkadoon people from around the Mount Isa area also played a game similar to the one outlined and their connection has been recognised as part of the name of this game.

## Short description

This activity involves throwing a ball into a small bin target as many times as possible, as part of a tabloid activity or a skill game.

## Players

- Play singly or in groups of two to four players

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Use 'foxtail' or a tennis ball in a stocking (or long football sock) as the bone, with twine attached. When a ball in a stocking is used the length of the foxtail may be adjusted.
- Use a large plastic bin or hoop as the pit or hole.

## Game play and basic rules

- Players in groups of two to four line up behind one another. Players hold the foxtail a short distance away from the ball and take it in turns to attempt to throw the foxtail ball into a small bin from 3–5 metres away.

- To avoid interference, the player throwing the foxtail is 2 metres in front of the rest of the line of players (mark a line for this).
- As an extra challenge the balls are held further down the tail. Players retrieve the ball after their turn and give it to the next player.

### Scoring

- The game is usually played for fun and recognition for a successful throw, but players can keep a team score from a set time (2–3 minutes) or set number of turns (four to six).

### Variations

- Players throw into a hoop 3–5 metres in front of them. They score one point if it touches or bounces in and out of the hoop and two points if it stays in the hoop. A group score can be used. (Suitable for younger players.)
- Players have a set number of turns (for example, five) before the next player in line has a turn. Either play a competition between individual players or groups, or add all the individual scores together for a class total.

### Teaching points

- Form a line.
- Player in front with the foxtail.
- Thrower ready. Go.
- Good throws.
- Watch the target.
- Point your hand and follow through.
- Collect the ball.
- Next player move up and ready.
- Go to end of line. Keep going.

# kolap

'ko-lap'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

This object-throwing game was observed being played on Mer Island in the Torres Strait region in the nineteenth century. More recent versions have also been observed.

## Short description

A game based on throwing accuracy. Teams of one to two players throw objects, attempting to make them land on a target on the ground.

## Players

- Two players form a team to compete against another team, or the game can be played with one player against another.

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Two mats (softball bases, carpet squares, rubber mats or small towels) placed 5–7 metres apart
- Beanbags, coins, large buttons or flat bocce balls to represent the *kolap* beans

## Game play and basic rules

- Two players sit (or stand) behind each mat.
- The players who are partners are diagonally opposite each other.
- Each player has four *kolaps*, which he or she attempts to throw to land on the mat opposite.
- One player has a turn. The *kolaps* are collected and then the player on the opposite team at the other mat has a turn. Continue in this manner.

## Scoring

A combined total of 20 finishes the game for a team. The *kolap* must land completely on the mat to count.

## Variations

- Use wooden markers such as used in the game of draughts.
- Players stand to play the game and use rubber mats or carpet squares.
- Throw coins or flat bocce markers onto large carpet squares, or into hoops.
- Skills practice — consecutive throws
- Players take turns to see how many times in a row they can land the *kolap* beans (markers) on the mat. Play from a standing position.
- Tabloid *kolap*: Players (two to six) line up behind each other and take it in turns to attempt to land the *kolap* on the mat. Throwers collect the *kolap* and give it to the next player. Count the number in a set time (2–3 minutes).

## Teaching points

- Line up behind the mat.
- Teams face each other.
- First thrower ready. Go.
- Underarm or sidearm throws. Be careful. Aim for the target. Bend the knees a bit.
- Good throw. Watch the target. Point your hand and follow through.
- Next turn. Keep playing.

# mer kolap

'mer ko-lap'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

This object-throwing game was observed being played in the Torres Strait on Mer Island in the nineteenth century. More recent versions have been observed.

## Short description

This version of an object-throwing game is a relay event.

## Players

- Teams of four to six lined up behind a starting line

## Playing area

- A marked indoor or outdoor area suitable to the activity

## Equipment

- One hoop for each team
- Beanbags, coins, large buttons or marbles to represent the *kolap* beans

## Game play and basic rules

- Place a hoop about 5 metres in front of each team.
- On a signal to start, the first player in each team throws the disc (or beanbag) and attempts to land it in a hoop — it must land completely in the hoop without touching the hoop. After his or her turn the thrower runs out, retrieves the disc and hands it to the next person before joining the end of the line.
- Repeat for each team member and continue play for a set time (2–3 minutes) or set number of turns (20–50).

## Variations

- Cooperative *kolap*: Teams continue until they reach a required number of throws or use a set time and add up the score for each team to set a class record. Repeat the activity a number of times.
- Teams compete against each other in a timed or numbered competition. A series of events (such as two minutes or 90 seconds) could be used to determine the 'champions'. This activity could be used as part of a tabloid event or skills circuit.
- *Kolap* golf: Set up a series of hoops around a playground or indoor area. Players use an underarm throw of their beanbag or marker from different distances and attempt to land it in the hoop. Add up team and/or individual scores or use this as a practice activity.

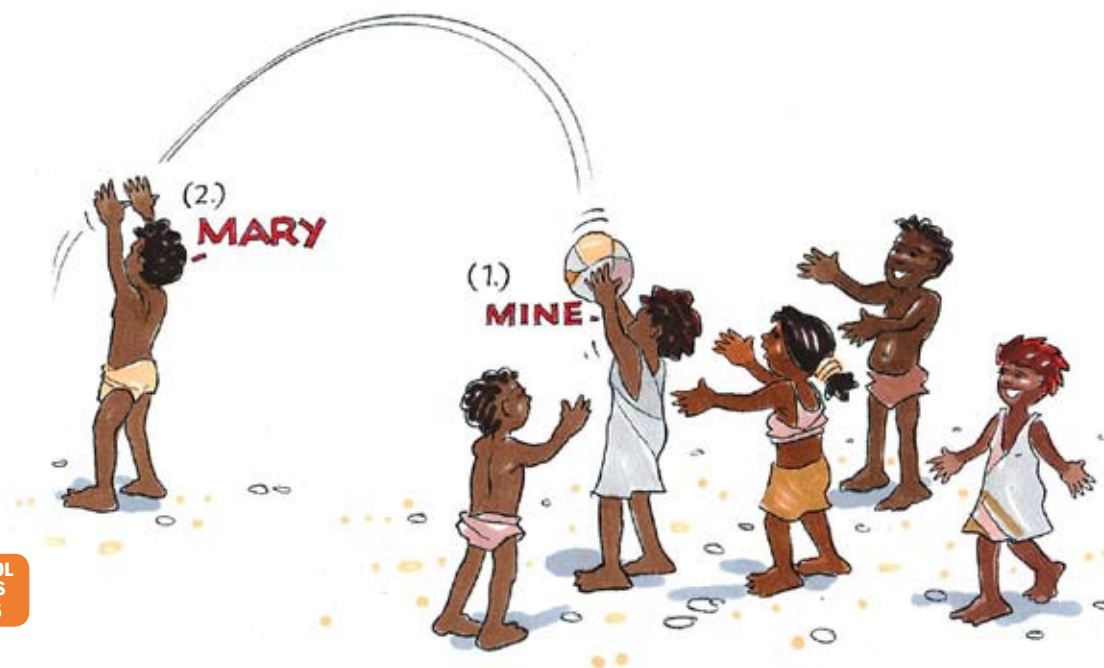
## Teaching points

- Set up the hoops. Stand in line.
- Ready. Go
- Aim and throw. Underarm. Hand towards.
- Retrieve and hand to next player.
- Keep going. Quick.



# nanyima

'nan-yi-ma'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

Catch-ball games were played in many places. The balls used were made of seeds, stones, clay, seaweed, grass, hair-string and stuffed fur. In one game a player tosses a stone (ball) over his or her shoulder to a number of players and attempts to guess who caught the stone.

## Language

*Nanyima* means 'to play about' in the language of Aboriginal people from the northwest district of Victoria.

**Malnangyer, wida umeit warreete, umuk  
perperduuk**

*Now let us see who throws out the farthest.  
Throw it out.*

(From the language of Aboriginal people from an unidentified part of Victoria.)

## Short description

A player throws the ball over his or her head (and behind) to a group of players and then attempts to guess who has the ball. This activity is suitable for younger players.

## Players

- Groups of six to eight players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A soft ball

### Game play and basic rules

- A player with a ball stands 5–10 metres in front of a group of players and facing away from them. The player then throws the ball high and back over his or her head to the group of players. These players attempt, without physical contact, to catch the ball.
- When a player has caught the ball (or secured it if it drops to the ground), the player who threw the ball must guess who caught it.

### Variation

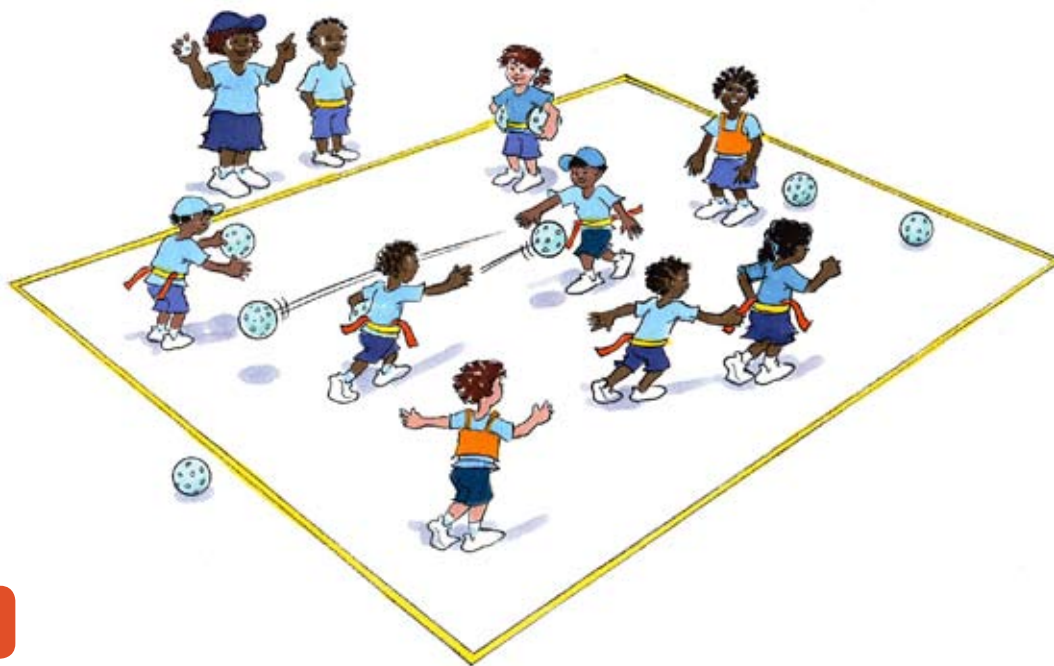
- To help the thrower guess who has caught the ball the catcher might have to say something. The catcher can attempt to disguise his or her voice.

### Teaching points

- Player in front with the ball.
- Face away from the group.
- Throw it high back over the head.
- Ready. Go.
- Call for the ball. Watch out for other players.
- Take the catch. Good. Guess who it is?

# pulo<sub>ga</sub>

'pul-o-ga'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

Regular mock combat tournaments took place in the Cardwell and Tully River areas of north Queensland. The Mallanpara people called this a *prun*. It was essentially an entertainment activity, though the opportunity was taken to settle disputes, real or imaginary. It also gave the men a chance to show off their prowess and courage before the women.

At Cairns the Yidinji people called these activities *pulo<sub>ga</sub>*.

## Short description

A game of mock warfare held between two groups, with players using 'soft' balls in an attempt to contact an opposing player.

## Players

- Two teams of eight to 15 players or more. Use animal names such as 'emu' and 'cockatoo' for team names.

## Equipment

- A number of size 3 gator skin balls or similar
- A belt and two tags, such as those used in Oztag, for each player to wear
- A number of coloured team bibs

## Playing area

- An area approximately 30–40 metres wide and 60–70 metres long

## Duration

- Play a game of five to ten minutes.

## Game play and basic rules

- Players organise into two teams and start by facing each other from opposite ends of the playing area. Teams wear different coloured tags to identify their team (clan).

- Each player has one to two soft balls, and on the start signal move into the playing area and attempt to contact a player of the opposing team below the shoulders by throwing the ball. For older and stronger players throws may be limited to underarm throws. For safety reasons, throws should not be made from closer than 3 metres and only with moderate force.
- Play in the game is continuous and players can retrieve the balls thrown by other players. If a player is contacted by a ball thrown by an opposing player the contacted player must drop the ball/s, he or she has and remove one of the tags — but can then continue in the game. The removed tag is dropped on the ground.
- Players with or without a ball can attempt to remove a tag from opposing players (no physical contact allowed). Players may not protect their tags from being removed.
- A player who loses two tags — either by being hit with a ball and/or having a tag removed by an opposing player — will be required to collect two tags from the ground and go to the side of the playing area for a set time (count aloud to 30 by ‘one and two and three’) before putting on his or her tags again and rejoining the game.

### Variations

- ‘Capture the flag’ version. Mark circles with a diameter of 10 metres at each end of the playing area and place a flag in the middle of this area. Defending players may not be inside their own area. Attacking players attempt to enter the circle at the other end of the playing area and return to their own circle with the flag. When a player with the flag is either hit by a ball or ‘tagged’ the flag is returned to the circle.
- A player who is hit with a ball — loss of tag — or has a tag removed by an opposing player must return to his or her team’s end of the field before being allowed to continue in the game.

### Comment

This game works well for physical education classes.

### Safety

Fair play is important in this game.

### Teaching points

- Teams ready. Lined up and ready.
- Collect the balls. Ready. Go.
- Throw and dodge.
- Hit, drop a tag.
- Good throws. Keep moving.
- Try to tag. Tag the other players.
- Keep going. Watch out for other players.
- Dodge and move.



# puth

'pu-th'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

A number of games were and still are played on former mission sites and settlements in the central parts of Australia, to fill in time. These include introduced card-playing games, including local variations such as *kuns*, tossing objects and other line and object games.

During the heat of the day many people spent their time sitting in the shade in small groups of men or women, talking. In some areas the women played a simple game of tossing a cotton reel.

## Language

*Puth* means 'to throw away' (more than one item) in the Murrinh-Patha language of the western coast people in the Northern Territory.

## Short description

Players aim to make a cotton reel or soft drink can stand upright.

## Players

- Groups of two to six players

## Equipment

- A cotton reel or an empty aluminium drink can

## Game play and basic rules

- A player uses a large cotton reel (or substitute) and throws it on the ground in an attempt to make it land upright. Players take turns.

## Scoring

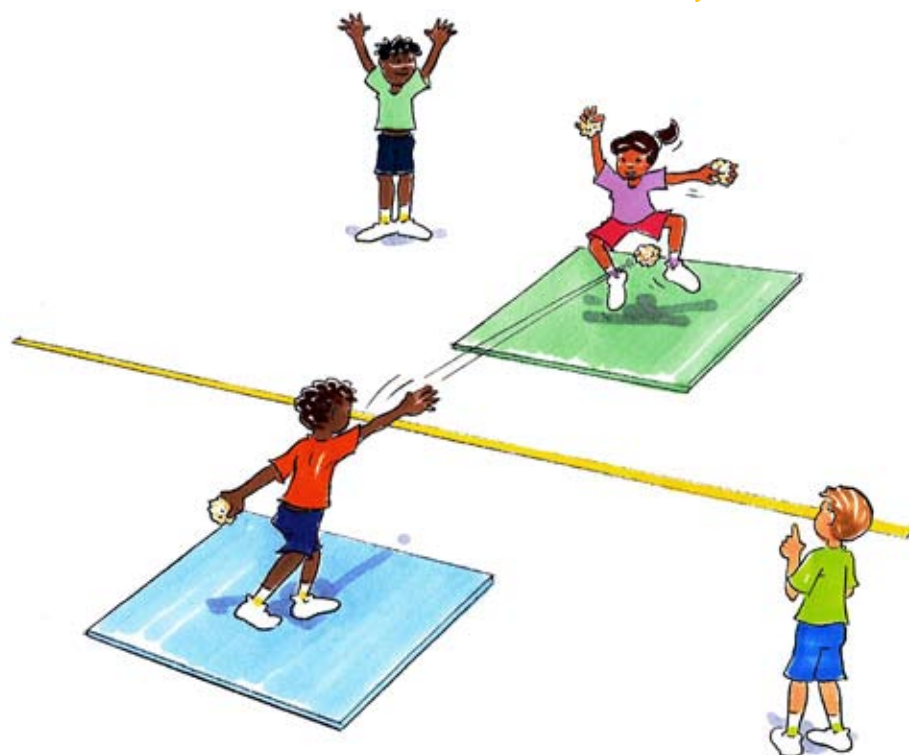
A point is recorded when a player is successful. The player scoring the greatest number of points is the winner.

## Variations

- An empty aluminium drink can is tossed into the air, with players guessing which way the can will land.
- An empty drink can or two is tossed into the air, with points allocated for the way in which they land.
- As a simple game, a player throws two dice. The highest-scoring player wins, or a player needs to nominate a score to gain a point.

# taktyerra

'tak-ty-err-a'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

In most parts of Australia the young boys (and sometimes girls) played mock combat games for enjoyment and as a practice for adult life. Toy spears were made from thin, light sticks, or else from grasses, reeds and rushes.

The spears were held at their lighter ends and thrown either with the hand or with a toy *woomera* (throwing stick).

In Tasmania, children used pieces of kelp to throw at each other in a 'sham' fight. There are also accounts from here of snow fights.

## Language

The activity is named after the word 'to fight' or 'hit one another' (*taktyerrain*) in the Wembawemba language of Victoria.

## Short description

This is a team throwing-and-dodging game, suitable for younger players.

## Players

- Two teams of two to eight players

## Playing area

- A volleyball court

## Equipment

- Sponge balls, paper balls, fleece balls or rolled up socks
- Large carpet squares

### Game play and basic rules

- Two players stand on carpet squares (or small mats 2 metres x 2 metres) and face each other about 3–7 metres apart. Players have a fleece ball in each hand and attempt to hit their opponent without being hit themselves.
- Players may move around on the mats: dodge, jump into the air, bend over or fall down to avoid being hit, but they must remain on the mat. After the balls are all thrown they are gathered and the competition continues.
- Play for fun or conduct individual contests to three or five hits as part of an elimination contest.

### Variations

- Small-group *taktyerrain*: Players are organised in groups of three. One player stands in the middle of two players, who stand 7–10 metres apart. The two outside players take it in turns to try to hit the middle player, who dodges and jumps to avoid being hit.
- Circle *taktyerrain*: One team stands inside a circle (10–15-metre diameter) and the other team spreads out around the outside of the circle. Players on the outside of the circle have a supply of soft balls (sponge or fleece) and use them to attempt to hit the two to four players inside the circle. Players who are hit join the throwers in the circle. Underarm throws only.

### Suggestion

Safety factors need to be considered to avoid injury to the dodging player. The use of a helmet, eye and face protection and a tracksuit could be considered.

### Teaching points

- Players on the mats. Ready. Throw.
- Jump and weave. Stay on the mat.
- Aim below the shoulders.
- Wait. Stop. Retrieve the balls.

# tambil tambil

'tam-bil tam-bil'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

In many areas of Australia people played skills-practice games, where they threw objects at each other. These included sticks, mud and stones of various sizes.

A spear-dodging game called *tambil tambil* (refers to the blunt spears used) was played by the Jagara (Jagera) people of the Brisbane area, as part of sham fights and mock war. These sham fights taught the boys how to manage when it was required as they grew into manhood.

In parts of Australia the girls were taught to fight and use the digging stick (called *kalgur* in one area) so they could protect themselves later on in life.

## Language

In the Wembawemba language from western Victoria the word *ngalembert* referred to a 'champion dodger' or 'expert at dodging spears'.

## Short description

This is a throwing-and-dodging game.

## Players

- Groups of four to 12 players

## Playing area

- A designated area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Fleece balls, paper balls, or sponge balls
- A small shield (bat) for protection only — optional.

## Game play and basic rules

- One player represents a kangaroo. The kangaroo stands 10–15 metres in front of a group of players, who are spread out along a line.
- The 'kangaroo' hops or runs around in front of the group, dodging the throws until he or she is hit by a thrown ball. When hit the player falls over, and the player who hit him or her becomes the new kangaroo.
- A supply of balls is provided for the throwers. Players do not move out past the line to retrieve thrown balls unless the game is stopped and they are directed to do so.



## Variations

- Players throw their weapons 'weakly' at each other by lobbing, rolling or bouncing tennis or sponge balls towards each other. (This is recommended for younger players.)
- Circle dodge: One player (dodger) is in the centre of a circle of six to eight players. Throwers use a fleece or sponge ball to throw, or they roll/bounce a large soft ball to attempt to hit the dodger. Players take turns to stay in the middle as long as they can.
- The game can be made more difficult by having the dodger stay inside a small circle or hoop, or by using a number of balls. (This game works well for class groups of younger students.)
- Obstacle dodge: One or more players acting as kangaroos (targets) start at one end of a course and 5–10 metres in front of several throwers. The 'targets' start with four to six small beanbags in their hands and run/walk through a line of markers in a zigzag, slalom-like course. Each time they are hit by a sponge or fleece ball they drop a beanbag. Count the number of times they are hit.
- A number of players walk across 5–10 metres in front of a line of throwers who have fleece or sponge balls. As the kangaroo 'target' moves across the area they step up and walk along benches. They can only be hit when they are on the benches. When hit they step off the back of the bench and start again. Count the number of hits.

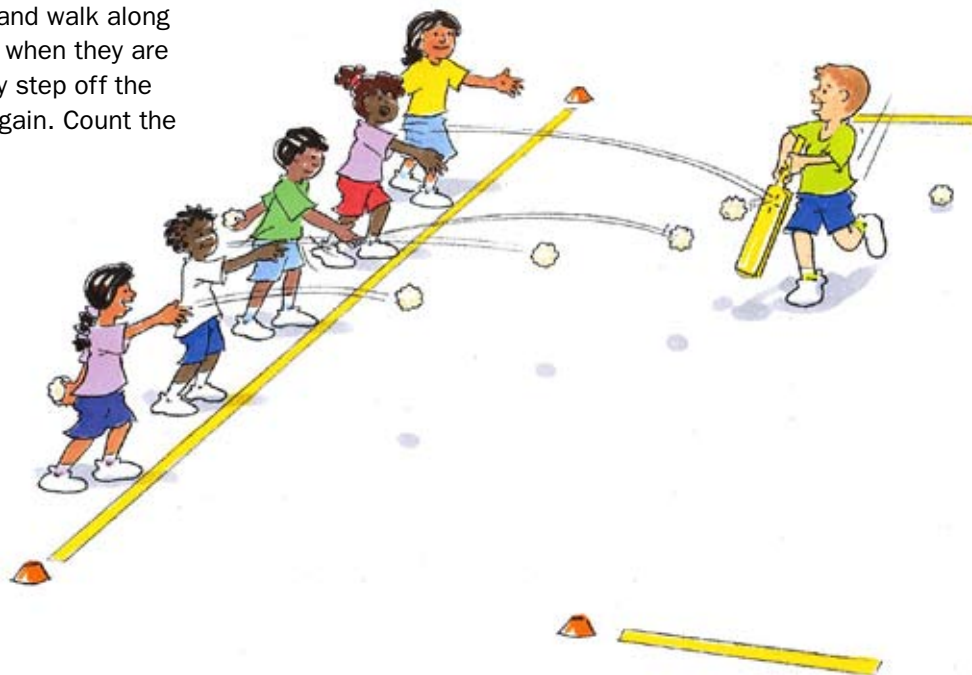
- Gauntlet run: The 'kangaroo' starts at one end of a line of players and 5–10 metres in front. They run past the line of players as they either roll or underarm throw a soft ball to attempt to hit their legs. Swap around the kangaroo.
- Use two to four players as the kangaroos. Throwers may be required to take turns rather than all throw at once.

## Safety

Safety factors needed to be considered to avoid injury to the dodging player. The use of a helmet, eye and face protection and a tracksuit could be considered. It is possible to substitute a person for some types of targets.

## Teaching points

- Move around 'kangaroo'. Duck and weave.
- Aim below the shoulders.
- Throw and wait for the signal.



Gauntlet run

# Wadai

'wad-ai'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

In the 1890s, children in parts of the Torres Strait were observed playing a ball-catching game in the water called *udai* (*wadai*) or *doamadiai*.

## Language

A *wadai* is a red bean from the *Mucuna* and a *doamadiai* is a hard fruit.

## Short description

This is a throwing-and-catching game in which players compete for possession of a ball. The versions outlined here use the original water game (*udai*) and adapt it for use on land.

## Players

- Players are organised into two groups with two to six players in each. Teams can also be organised within each group.

## Playing area

- A designated playing area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- A rugby or other suitable ball as the *wadai*

## Game play and basic rules

Two different versions are outlined for this game:

- **Two-on-two *wadai*:** The two groups of players are 10–15 metres apart. One player throws the *wadai* in the middle of the other two players, who stand 1 metre apart. The players attempt to catch the *wadai*. The player catching the *wadai* throws it back to the other group of two. Play continues. Limited physical contact is allowed.
- **Rugby-lineout practice *wadai*:** This is suitable as a walla rugby practice, or a game by itself. Players are organised into teams of three, 5–10 metres apart. Players on the same team line up behind

each other and each team is 1 metre apart and facing towards the thrower. A player throws the *wadai* down the middle of the line between the two teams as in a rugby union lineout. Players may jump individually for the *wadai* or work together to lift and support a player to attempt to catch the ball for their team.

- Depending on the thrower, some calls or moves could be worked out. Limited physical contact is allowed.

### **Suggestion**

This is suitable as a limited-contact competitive activity.

### **Teaching points**

- Next to each other. Groups facing.
- Go. Throw and catch.
- Watch the contact. Time your throw.
- Move to catch.
- Jump to catch. Work together.
- Help each other.
- Keep going. Take turns.

# weet weet

'weet weet'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

The throwing of the play-stick, commonly called the *weet weet* ('wit-wit') was a popular activity among Aboriginal people in some parts of Australia, and various contests were held.

The *weet weet* was often referred to as the 'kangaroo rat', because when thrown correctly its flight resembled the leaping action of this small marsupial. A *weet weet* was like a giant tadpole. The tail was a flexible stick and in some types when it was thrown it was swung backward and forward and bent almost double.

After being thrown onto (or through) a small mound or pile of bushes, a *weet weet* could:

- leap along in a succession of bounds
- travel along the ground
- spin in a 'bouncing' action as it turned end over end

- travel in a parabola and strike the ground before travelling further
- be thrown to slide along the ground (such as along a sandy beach).

## Language

In the language recorded from some people in the western district of Victoria:

**Malnangyer, wida umeit warreete,  
umuk perperdunk**

*Now let us see who throw out the farthest.  
Throw it out.*

## Short description

This is a throwing competition for distance and accuracy, using a club or pin to represent a throwing stick or *weet weet*.

### Game play and basic rules

- Although a popular sport with Aboriginal people in parts of Australia it is very difficult to recreate the weet weet. To give some idea of the throwing for accuracy and distance associated with this activity, rhythmic gymnastic clubs or juggling clubs are worth using.
- Players use different coloured clubs and conduct contests of distance and accuracy. Players may have three turns each as part of an athletic event.

### Scoring

The player who throws the weet weet the longest distance or who hit — or was closest — to the target was considered the winner of the game.

### Variation

- For younger players use a 'foxtail' ball (or a tennis ball in a stocking). These are twirled around and either thrown directly into the air or bounced from an inclined board or mat. Players aim to throw the longest distance or for accuracy at a target.

### Safety

Strict observance of safety measures is necessary to conduct any activities associated with throwing of the weet weet.

### Comment

Use a number of clubs (three to five) as the weet weet. These can be made by copying designs and experimenting, or using a rhythmic gymnastic club or similar as the weet weet.

### Teaching points

- Ready. Throw and follow through.
- Watch the target. Watch where you are throwing.



# Wirrwuyu

'wirr-wu-yu'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

As in various other cultures, stone skipping (throwing) along a surface of water was played by Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

On Dunk Island in Queensland, the throwing of cuttle-fish (*krooghar*) bones was observed. The bones were thrown along the surface of the water like 'skipping stones' and often reached surprising distances in a series of skips.

## Language

The word *wirrwuyu* means 'throwing stones' in the Djapi dialect of the Yolngu language of northern Australia.

## Short description

An outdoor education activity where players take turns in throwing the stones to make them 'skip' as many times as possible along the surface of the water. It provides a fun activity as well as practice for throwing.

This activity is usually known as 'ducks and drakes' and is a well-known favourite.

## Players

- Any number of players but usually two to six in a group spread out in a row

## Equipment

- A large supply of small flat pebbles or stones

## Playing area

- An open area near water

## Game play and basic rules

- This game of throwing skill was played by both children and adults who lived near a sea, lake or river.
- Players collect a supply of small flat stones or pebbles.

- The idea of the activity is to throw a small flat stone across the surface of the water to see how many times it skips or bounces before sinking.

### Comments

This activity requires considerable skill and much practice. The thrower attempts to release the stone as low as he or she can towards the water at a flat angle.

If performed well, the stone skips along the surface of the water in a spectacular fashion. A stone that skips or bounces across the water more than five times is a very good throw, and more than ten would be excellent.

### Variations

- Use a 'target' such as a stick or large rock to aim at.
- Use tennis balls and a bin or wicket. Players 'bounce' the ball off the ground (or even water) once or twice to hit the target.
- Use a suitable light ball and standing in waist-deep water bounce the ball off the water for a partner or other players to attempt to catch.

### Safety

Ensure that appropriate safety aspects are observed for all activities. It is recommended that only one player throw at a time.

### Teaching points

- Collect the stones. Spread out in a line.
- Off you go. Keep the arm low, bend the knees, flick the wrist. Elbow leads.
- Count the bounces.
- Keep going.

# Woomera

'woo-mer-a'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

A woomera or throwing stick was used by Aboriginal boys and men in all parts of Australia to propel spears with great force, often over considerable distances.

On Dunk Island in Queensland a favourite target for spear-throwing contests was the white ant nests hanging from the gum trees.

## Short description

This is a throwing competition for accuracy, using a woomera and a tennis ball.

## Players

- A group of players

## Playing area

- A playing area about 15 to 25 metres long

## Equipment

- Use 1-metre square pieces of board as targets. Targets are set up on the ground and tilted at a slight angle away from the throwers. As an alternative, large wheelie (rubbish) bins can be used as the targets.
- Have a large supply of tennis balls.
- A pet toy called a 'dog thrower' works in a similar fashion to a woomera and a spear. A tennis ball is placed in the end and is thrown.

## Game play and basic rules

- Players use tennis balls and a woomera. Players take turns in throwing at the target from behind a line 15 and 20 metres away (10 and 15 metres for younger players). The player who hits it gains one point. Players should be encouraged to perform for their own enjoyment and personal achievement, but it is recognised that many will seek to engage in competition against other players.



- As a competition (individual or team) players have two rounds of 20 throws at 15 metres and three rounds of 20 throws at 20 metres.
- There is a total of 100 throws in a full competition. In a competition the player with the most points at the end of the game (from the set number of turns) is the winner.
- For most class events players will have one round of 20 throws at 15 metres and one round of 20 throws at 20 metres.
- In the event of ties between players for major places (first, second and third) in all competitions have a 'sudden death' throw for the decider.
- If there are several targets available, players may be allocated up to four to a target.
- Players take turns after each other and may use the same or different coloured balls. Collect the tennis balls as required.
- Players not involved in throwing stand 5 metres back and behind a restraining line. These players are involved in scoring.

### Scoring

Players score one point for each time the target is hit. The ball must hit the target on the full and be clearly seen to rebound or deflect off the target for a score to count. Special awards may be given to the winners of each round.

### Safety

Marking of the area and clear instructions regarding throwing and retrieving balls are important to ensure the safety of the players in the activity.

### Variations

- Players throw for distance using a 'ball thrower'. Players have four attempts to throw as far as they can. The throw is made from between two lines, 10 metres apart.
- A useful comparison might be to compare the best throw of the spear without a *woomera* with the distance obtained when using a *woomera*. Allow a run-up and throw area of 10 metres.

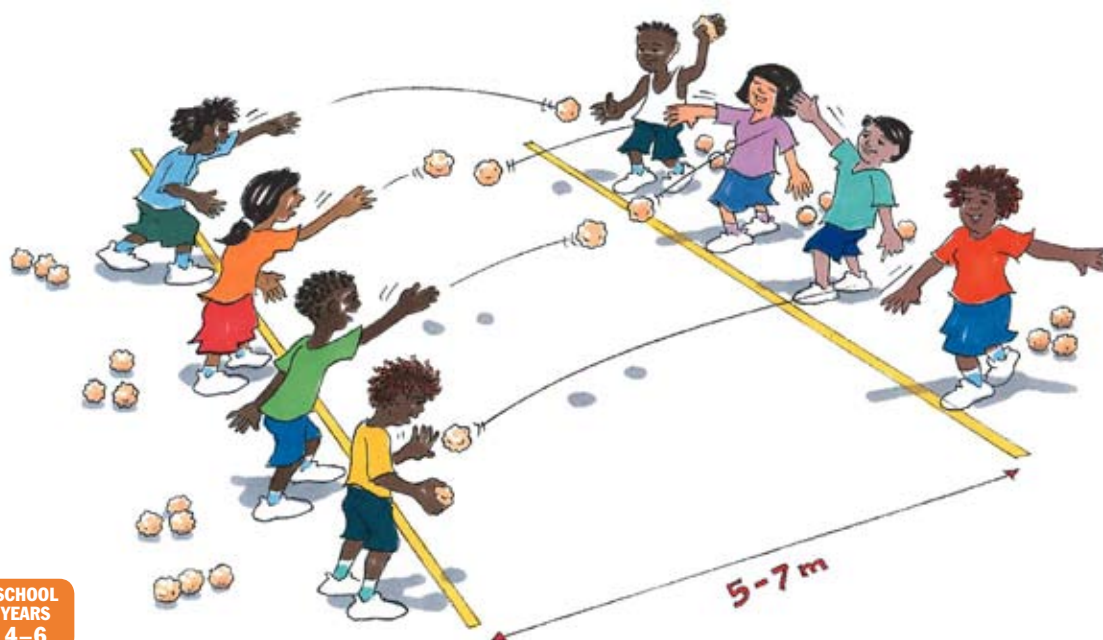
### Teaching points

- Line up. Ready.
- Arm back, elbow leads. Follow through.
- Watch the target not the ball.



# yeeboo ngandoonyoo

'yee-boo nan-doon-yoo'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

In most parts of Australia young boys played fighting games or mock combat games for enjoyment and as a practice for adult life. In one part of Australia the boys would rise early in the morning to practise their self-taught skills of spear throwing.

The little boys also indulged in imitating the skills of fighting as practised by their elders. The miniature weapons they used were either manufactured for them by their older male relatives and friends, or else made themselves. These included boomerangs, throwing sticks, spears, knives and axes.

## Language

Yeeboo *ngandoonyoo* means 'just for fun' in the language of the people of the Broome district of Western Australia.

## Short description

A throwing-and-evading game where players attempt to hit each other with sponge balls.

## Players

- Two lines of about eight to 12 players facing each other 5–12 metres apart, depending on the age of the players

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Sponge balls or some other type of soft balls

## Game play and basic rules

- Players spread out in two lines and face each other. Each player has up to five balls.

- On a signal to start the players throw their sponge balls to attempt to hit a player in the opposing line. Players try to avoid being hit on the body.
- The balls are thrown very quickly and may be warded off by the hands, which act as shields. Players cannot go in front of the throwing line to retrieve balls. An extra supply of balls may be positioned behind each group.
- Play is continuous but may be stopped from time to time to allow players to retrieve sponge balls.

### Variations

- After a few throws a signal is given and the players of both teams run towards each other — but not over a half-way line — and attempt to hit opposing players (until all the balls are thrown).
- Players stand about 3–5 metres apart and use under-arm throws of fleece or sponge balls to try to hit each other.
- Use plastic cups of water to hit an opponent. Players stand at least 3–5 metres apart.
- Use sponge balls dipped in water. Underarm throws only are allowed and from no closer than 5–7 metres.

### Teaching points

- Spread out. Five balls each.
- Ready.
- Dodge and move.
- Throw and hit.
- Stop. Collect the balls.

# Waayin

'waa-yin'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

The study of different animal and bird tracks was an important part of the education of Aboriginal children.

These were drawn in the smoothed earth or sand by means of the fingers, fingernails, palms, small sticks and so on. A great deal of care was taken by adults in imitating the tracks of various animals for the benefit of the children. The children in some areas were often encouraged to compete in reproducing these.

## Language

In the Dativuy language of the northern part of the Northern Territory, *waayin* refers to 'land animals and reptiles'. These are classified as eaten or not eaten or by their movements (such as flying, crawling or slithering).

## Short description

In this activity players attempt to make the tracks of animals on the ground and other players guess what they might be.

## Game play and basic rules

- An experienced player draws the tracks of several animals in the sand and the other players attempt to guess what they are. The watching players may comment on how well the tracks have been made.
- It might also be possible to obtain plaster moulds of different animal tracks and use these. They would also serve as a good way to learn and understand the different tracks.
- Photos of animal tracks would allow the players the opportunity to learn some different and unusual tracks of animals. Players could find tracks and take photos or use some books.

## Examples

- An **emu track** is made by impressing lengthwise the thumb and first finger in the sand. Changing the thumb to the other side without lifting the first finger, a second impression is made with the thumb in this position at about the same angle as the first. The pad of the emu foot can be added by an impression of the thumb at the intersection of the three toes.



- A **kangaroo track** is made by pressing a finger or the big toe twice into the sand, a short distance apart so that the resulting marks are two parallel grooves to represent the impressions of the long central toes. A shorter mark at the centre of these, at an angle of 45 degrees, will indicate the lateral toes when the track is complete. A small scratch or hole can be made at the end of each of the 'toes' to represent the claw marks.



- A **dingo track** is made with the fingers alone, the thumb making the impression for the pad, and the tips of the fingers those of the toes, the imprints of the claws are added by a small stick.



- A **turtle track** is made by moving the hand backwards in a sudden jerky movement, with the result being a good imitation of the real flapper prints.



## Variations

- Draw an outline of various tracks on paper or cardboard and players (individually or as a group) attempt to name as many tracks as they can. As a relay game players run out 10 metres from their group and attempt to match six cards (or more) with pictures of the correct animal.
- When they are correct the cards are jumbled and the player returns to the group so the next player can have a turn. The cards could be changed after each player's turn or kept the same by the teacher.
- A picture of a track is shown and photos of animals are provided for players to guess the animal.
- A photo of an animal is shown and players attempt to make what they think its track might be.
- Players could research various animals and tracks they make, and compile a resource to be used.
- Players make or obtain plaster casts of various animal tracks. Stamp these on damp sand and have the players attempt to name and/or copy them.

# bondi

'bon-di'



All school-age groups (K–12)

## Background

The Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had many water and diving games, which were often indulged in at any convenient creek, waterhole or at the beach. In various parts of Australia, contests in diving, floating, remaining beneath the water, and many other aquatic activities, were undertaken.

They also used recognisable swimming strokes, such as single overarm sidestroke, which was first observed in a lagoon at Bondi in the Sydney area in the 1800s and developed into an international stroke that was popular up to and including the 1896 Olympic Games.

## Language

The activity is named after the Bondi area in Sydney, where Aboriginal children were observed swimming. *Bondi* means 'water breaking over rocks' in the language of the Eora people.

*Thurakami* is the word for swimming used in the Dieyerie (Diyari) language of South Australia.

## Short description

This activity is related to swimming single overarm sidestroke.

## Game play and basic rules

- Competitors swim on their side with a sidestroke or other type of kicking action. Only one shoulder may be in the water while performing the stroke and the other shoulder is clear of the water.
- The head should not be fully underwater. One arm is underwater at all times and the swimmer uses an underwater sidestroke-type arm action but the other arm comes out of the water in a crawl-stroke action (pull and push). The arm that is underwater may be changed at the end of each lap of the pool.

- Races can be held over 25, 50 or 100 metres, individually or as a relay. The stroke could also be used as part of a medley race or a training drill/activity.

### **Variation**

- Long-distance race: Conduct a 1000 to 3000-metre swim race in a pool or other suitable location.

### **Suggestion**

As part of a recognition of swimming activities undertaken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, single overarm sidestroke could be included as part of physical education lessons and swimming carnivals.

### **Teaching points**

- You know the rules. Change sides at the other end if you wish.
- Ready. Go.
- One arm over, other arm under. Kick.
- Ear in water and top shoulder out [of water].

# bubu sagul

'bu-bu sag-ul'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
K-3

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

## Background

One of the many water games observed being played at Mabuig Island in the Torres Strait.

## Language

*Bubu sagul* means 'tide play'. Players sing a song as they are circling in the water.

### **Bubu nuri (repeated)**

*Tide is going round.*

## Short description

A group of players run in a circle to form a whirlpool and then lie down and float.

## Players

- Groups of about ten to 14 players work best

## Playing area

- A swimming pool with water about waist to chest deep for the players

## Game play and basic rules

- To begin the game, players stand in a circle and splash the water as much as they can. When the splashing has reached a peak they lie on top or dive under the water.
- After this the players then either hold hands in a circle or line up behind each other.
- They begin to run in a circle as fast as they can to form a 'whirlpool' with the water.
- On a signal players stop running and lie down on their backs and float as they are carried around in the water.



### Variations

- Players run in one direction and then float. On another signal they stand up and start running against the flow of the water and make a whirlpool going in the other direction. Repeat.
- Players attempt to hold onto each other by the leg as they float around.

### Comment

This is a fun activity that needs careful supervision. Care needs to be taken that players are not 'spun' out of the whirlpool into deeper water or into the side of the pool.

### Teaching points

- In a circle. Ready.
- Splash, splash.
- Stop. Floating.
- Start running this way. Faster, faster.
- Keep going.
- Stop. Float. Lie down.
- Up. Back the other way. Run. Faster.
- Keep going. Float.
- Stop and splash.

# Gapala

'gap-a-la'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

Playing in small dug-out canoes, bark boats or rafts was (and still is) a popular water activity.

A favourite game of the Tiwi children of Bathurst Island (northern Australia) in the wet season was pushing a tin, box or other flat-bottomed object along the water.

Children's rafts were observed in parts of Northern Australia both as a toy and a means of transporting children.

## Language

The activity is named after a small bark canoe called a *bilem* or *gapala*. These were used in the Arnhem Land area of the Northern Territory.

## Short description

Small inflatable rafts or canoes are used to play a variety of games.

## Players

- Groups of two to four players

## Playing area

- A swimming pool or suitable water area

## Equipment

- Small canoes or rubber mats, tubes or rafts as the *gapala*

## Game play and basic rules

- Use the boats with one or two (or more) players on each one to play a variety of games. These might include:
  - paddling races
  - water fights
  - splashing ('fights')
  - jousting on water
  - attempts to knock other boats over
  - swimmers attempt to overturn boats or take them over
  - standing up
  - diving from them
  - players on the land use a rope to pull the boat along.

# Jagera

'jag-er-a'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

A diving and underwater-swimming activity was played by the Jagera (or Jagara) people in the Brisbane area. The people would dive for white stones or bones that were thrown into the water.

Children who played this game would also have contests of staying underwater and underwater swimming races.

## Language

There was no name identified for this game so it is named after the Jagera people who were observed playing it.

## Short description

A game of diving and retrieving objects that are thrown into the water, such as into a swimming pool.

## Players

- Up to 30 players in two even teams

## Playing area

- A swimming pool

## Equipment

- A number of golf balls and/or weighted balls
- Two coloured plastic buckets in which to place balls

## Game play and basic rules

- Golf balls or other objects are thrown into the water. The players start in the water with one hand on the edge of the pool. On a signal to start they dive after the balls or objects.
- Players who find the balls or objects bring them to the surface and place them in a team goal (coloured bucket) on the edge of the pool. Team goals are 5 metres apart.
- No interference is allowed by players of the opposing team when a player collects balls and places them in the team goal. A player may collect more than one ball or object at a time.

- At the end of the time the players leave the water and the number of balls for each team is counted. Selected players then throw the balls into the water for the next turn.

### Scoring

The winner of the game is the team who can collect the most golf balls and place them in the team goal (bucket) in the time allowed (three minutes). Have a number of contests to decide on the winner.

### Variations

- Cooperative *jagera*: Throw a large number of golf balls (50 or more) into the pool. On a signal to start, all players retrieve the balls as quickly as possible — time the attempt. As the balls are placed into a team goal (bucket), players acting as ‘counters’ call out the number and when the last one is placed in the bucket the time is recorded. Have several attempts to set a class or ‘world’ record.

### Safety

For safety reasons players should be competent swimmers quite capable of undertaking the activity.

### Comment

In the Walmatjari language spoken in north-western Australia, *pulukwanti* means ‘to dive into water’.

### Teaching points

- Take some balls. Lob them in the water. Spread them out.
- Hang onto the edge of the pool.
- Slide in and start when told.
- Remember, surface dives, or feet first.
- Ready. Go.
- No interference. Watch out for other players.
- Breaststroke action. Balls in the bucket.
- Stop. Let’s count them.
- Ready to go again.

# kaidu babu

'kai-du ba-bu'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

This is a popular water game that was observed being played at Mabuiag Island in the Torres Strait region, by Margaret Lawrie in the 1960s.

## Language

*Kaidu baba* is the name given by the rest of the group to the player while he or she is swimming underwater. *Waru* means 'turtle', *Kubinu* means 'crowd among', *Kubini* means crowd, *Puzika* means 'is going along with' and *Dangalau* means 'dugong'.

## Short description

This is an underwater swimming game. The object of the game is to see who can swim the longest distance underwater.

## Players

- Groups of six to 12 players

## Playing area

- A swimming pool or other safe water venue

## Game play and basic rules

- Players stand in at one end of the pool.
- Players go as far as they can underwater and then stand up where they finish until all the players have had a turn.
- The player who swims the longest distance underwater is considered the winner, or players try for a personal best effort.

## Variations

- Players in a group all swim underwater at the same time and judge the swimmer who goes the longest, or swim together in a line and all attempt to surface together at a distance that is set.
- Players dive under water with some objects such as weighted bricks or underwater hockey pucks and build up a pile.

- Players then dive down to collect the objects one at a time or in turns with other members of the group as part of a continuous activity/relay.
- Underwater hockey practice. Have players in groups push an underwater hockey puck as far as they can before surfacing. Allow two to three attempts to push the puck as far as they can.

### Comment

This activity can be played using the traditional chant. When each player starts the swim the other players may chant:

**Kaidu baba Kaidu baba Waru kubinu puzika  
Dangalau kubinu puzika**

When the player stands up, the chant, which has been repeated throughout the swim, ceases.

### Safety

Players must be warned about hyperventilation and the activity should be strictly supervised. Only those players who are capable and confident in water should attempt the activity.

### Teaching points

- Spread out in a line. Good.
- Take a breath.
- Ready. Go.
- Good work.
- Take a rest.



# kwatye

'k-wat-ye'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

Water games and contests were played in all areas of Australia. In some parts of central Australia a frequent expression of 'opposition' between the generation groupings in a camp takes the form of light-hearted abuse and spectacular water-throwing battles.

The aim of the activity was to saturate certain kin in the opposite group.

## Language

Kwatye means 'water' in the Eastern Arrernte language of central Australia.

## Short description

This is a water-fighting game.

## Players

- Two teams of four to ten players

## Playing area

- A suitable outdoor area such as a beach

## Equipment

- A supply of water and a number of buckets or bins and small paper cups or paper bags

## Game play and basic rules

- Players are organised into two teams. A large bin or bucket is placed in the centre of a 3-metre circle. One team is armed with small buckets or cups (or water bombs — balloons filled with water) and attempt to put as much water in the bin as they can without going inside the marked area.
- The defending team stands inside the 3-metre circle and attempts to stop them. The defenders must be outside a 1-metre circle around the centre bin/bucket. The attacking players obtain water from a couple of large bins of water placed outside the playing area or from any nearby sea or lake.

## Variations

- An empty bucket is placed inside a 2-metre circle. The attackers have a small paper cup each. They take water from a large water container located 10 metres away and attempt to put as much water as they can in the bucket in a set time (three minutes).
- The defenders are only allowed to knock the water out of the hands of the attacking players. (This game could be conducted with the two teams attacking opposing buckets.)
- The players of both groups attempt to throw water on the players of the other group.  
Modifications: 1. One group throws water and the other attempts to avoid being hit. 2. Players are allocated an opponent on whom to throw water.

## Safety

Safety aspects must be considered at all times. Players should under no circumstances be forced or pressured to participate, and the activity must be stopped immediately if the intention of the game is not adhered to.

## Teaching points

- Teams ready. Go.
- Fill the bin. Underarm throws only.
- No contact please.
- Keep going. Fill the bin with water.
- Good. Stop there. Good work. Change over.



# makar

'ma-kar'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

Various types of toy boats and canoes are found in parts of Australia and the Torres Strait Islands. On Sunday Island in northern Australia, small models of the raft (*kaloa*) were made for children to play with. In other areas of Australia small replicas of dugout canoes were fashioned.

In parts of the Torres Strait simple boats were made of half a coconut husk. An upright stick with a leaf to represent a sail was attached. Miriam children in the Torres Strait played in the sea with the spathes of the leaves of coconut palms, pretending they were small canoes.

Toy sailing boats are still raced on various islands in the Torres Strait. These move along at great pace. They are usually only sailed parallel with the shore and quite close to it. The canoes vary according to location and are often rigged in the same manner as their own canoes. In some places this included mainsail, foresail and jib.

## Language

In Torres Strait Creole a toy racing boat was called a *makar* or *wagwag* in pidgin.

## Canoe belong play

*Toy canoe*

## Short description

Players make and then play with toy boats.

## Equipment

- One or more toy canoes or boats

## Game play and basic rules

- Either conduct a series of sailing races or play with the boats in the water. The players can decide on any special conditions to be associated with any races.

## Comment

The special day for sailing in the Torres Strait is the first of July (the Coming of the Light) or other ceremonies such as tombstone openings.

## Suggestion

Attempt to obtain or make a racing canoe like those of the Torres Strait Islands.

A piece of wood is shaped like a canoe and planed on the side and the top. Two holes are drilled for a mast. The sails are attached and the outrigger is added with weights attached to it. The boat is painted in individual colours such as red and white on the side and green and white on the top. The best time for sailing is in a moderate to strong wind.

# marutchi

'mar-ut-chi'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

Marutchi or black swan was a water game played by the Jagara (or Jagera) people in the Brisbane area. It was often played among inhabitants from different areas. Some of the players were very clever and could avoid being caught. If a player became tired he or she could be replaced by another player. Spectators were not allowed to help the catchers in any way.

## Language

One source of information refers to *maroochying* as a swimming game played in the Sunshine Coast area of Queensland, in mimicry of the *moroochidore*, or black swan.

## Short description

This is a swimming-and-catching game in which a player swims around and avoids being caught by other players.

## Players

- A group of six to 20 players

## Playing area

- A 25-metre pool, waterhole or beach area of similar size

## Game play and basic rules

- One player (the *marutchi*) starts on the opposite side of the pool to the other players (the catchers).
- On a signal to start both the *marutchi* (black swan) and the catchers (between three and five at a time) jump feet-first into the water.
- The *marutchi* attempts to avoid being caught for as long as he or she can. No players may leave the water during the game.
- The *marutchi* is caught when he or she is tapped lightly on the head while on the surface of the water. No other physical contact is allowed.

After being caught the *marutchi* plays 'dead' and is taken ashore by the catchers — a lifesaving tow may be used.

- Although the catchers and the *marutchi* may not wrestle with each other, the *marutchi* can do anything else to avoid capture. This usually involves swimming underwater — care should be taken to avoid too much of this (restrict to three times and only 10 metres at any time).
- While the *marutchi* is able to avoid capture he or she attempts to amuse the catchers and spectators with some antics. He or she calls out like a *marutchi* and flaps the wings (arms) up and down.

### Variations

- Play in teams with one player at a time as the *marutchi*. Catchers touch the *marutchi* on the head while the player's head is above the water. No players can touch the sides of the pool during the game.
- Time how long it takes to catch each *marutchi*.
- Have a number of *marutchis* at a time.
- Allow one *marutchi* and only two catchers at a time.
- The *marutchi* starts in the middle of the pool.
- Have players represent different waterbirds (such as a duck or a crane).
- The catchers have to wear a shirt and the *marutchi* wears a bathing cap.
- Allow the *marutchi* to use a boogie (or body) board, or swim fins.
- Play with two teams. Time how long it takes for one team to tag all the players (*marutchis*) of the other team.

### Suggestion

This could be used as a fun activity or a swimming fitness game.

### Comment

In a similar game played in the northwest central districts of Queensland, a group of people would swim together in the river and while some would imitate the action and 'calls' of various waterbirds, others would hunt for and try to catch them.

### Teaching points

- Players ready. Go.
- Swim around. Keep chasing. Catch them.
- Be careful. Work together.
- Well done.

# murrumbidgee

'mur-rum-bid-gee'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

In 1834, boys on the banks of the Murrumbidgee were observed amusing themselves by throwing stones into the deep part of the stream and diving in order to catch them before they reached the bottom — usually successfully.

There was much amusement associated with their competition.

## Language

This activity has been named for the Murrumbidgee River in which the boys were observed playing the game.

## Short description

This is a swimming-and-diving game where objects are retrieved.

## Equipment

- Four diving rings, golf balls or weighted balls that sink at different speeds

## Players

- Separate small groups of two to four players

## Playing area

- The deep end of a swimming pool — at least 2 metres deep

## Game play and basic rules

- One player stands on the edge of the pool and another player throws an object in the water for the first player to dive or jump into the water and retrieve.

- Players can vary the time between throwing the object and then retrieving it. It could be a test of skill to see how close to the bottom of the pool the object can be retrieved without touching the bottom.

### **Variations**

- Players attempt to catch more than one diving ring or ball at a time or are timed to see how fast they can do this.
- Have a team competition and see which team is the most successful at retrieving the objects.
- Two or more players attempt to gather the same object. Care needs to be taken to avoid contact (no diving).
- Players go underwater and attempt to catch several objects that are thrown into the water at once.

### **Safety**

For safety reasons players should be competent swimmers quite capable of undertaking the activity. Players should be aware of the risks associated with hyperventilation and swimming underwater.

### **Teaching points**

- Balls ready. Diver ready. Thrower ready.
- Try to catch before it hits the bottom. If you can, try to go a little later.
- Off you go.
- Keep going. Be careful of other groups. Watch where you throw the balls. Out in front only.
- Stop. Change over.

# ngarinbarm

'na-rin-barm'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

The swimming game of *ngarinbarm* (turtle) was played by the Jagara (Jagera) people in lagoons around the Brisbane area.

## Language

The name *ngarinbarm* (turtle) is taken from the language used by the Jagara (Jagera) people of south Queensland.

## Short description

Players in a canoe chase and attempt to catch a *ngarinbarm*. The players who are the turtles swim underwater to avoid capture. The players in the canoe may enter the water to touch the turtles if they are within 2 metres of them.

## Players

- A group of four to ten or more players

## Playing area

- A swimming pool or suitable water area

## Equipment

- An inflatable rubber mat or small canoe capable of holding two to four players

## Game play and basic rules

- The players in the canoe start in the middle of the pool. Players (the turtles) slide into the pool and surface about 5 metres from the canoe, blowing air like a *ngarinbarm*. A signal for the game to commence is then given and the turtles immediately go underwater again.
- Each *ngarinbarm* may only move around by swimming underwater. Turtles may surface to rest and take a breath but cannot swim on the surface of the water or hold onto the sides of the pool. For safety reasons underwater swimming is restricted to 10 metres.

- The players in the canoe chase the turtles and at any opportunity when a *ngarinbarm* surfaces one of the players may slide underwater or dive/jump into the water to 'grab' (touch) the turtle and 'capture' him or her. The player entering the water must not jump on the turtle but can slide underwater or dive/jump after the turtle when he or she is within 2 metres.
- If the player misses the *ngarinbarm* and it moves more than 5 metres away, the player climbs back into the canoe. The catchers from the canoe may swim no more than 5 metres underwater. Players on the canoe take turns in attempting to catch the *ngarinbarm*.
- When a *ngarinbarm* has been touched (caught) another player in the canoe may enter the water and help to put the *ngarinbarm* in the canoe. The turtle is then returned to the start area or a designated area on the side of the pool.
- The players in the canoe catch a designated number of turtles (one to three) before a new group is selected to start a new game. When more than one turtle is caught in a game the player caught rejoins the game. He or she is returned to the start — no elimination from the game.

### Suggestion

To make it harder on the turtles the game may be played so that players are not allowed to touch the side of the pool and to rest they may only surface and float. To move about they have to be underwater (10 metres at a time only).

This activity might be useful as part of training or lessons in underwater hockey or water polo, or a fun activity as part of water games in physical education.

### Comment

When a turtle is caught it is usually taken to the shore amid much joking and laughing and comments from the other turtles and any spectators.

### Variations

- Players may only rest on the sides of the pool for 10 seconds.
- Have several turtles and boats and conduct a team competition.
- The *ngarinbarm* is allowed to either swim on the surface or underwater. A set stroke might be designated. (Recommended for physical education classes.)
- Only touches on the head when a player has surfaced count.
- Use a boogie (or body) board, or a rubber surf mat. The player (hunter) on the mat/board attempts to touch a turtle on the head (catch) as he or she surfaces.

### Safety

For safety reasons and to monitor the activity closely, only one to three turtles at a time might be allowed. Players involved should all be capable of undertaking the activity safely.

### Teaching points

- Canoe in the middle. Rest, spread out.
- Only underwater swimming for the turtles.
- No diving from the canoe. 5 metres only.
- Caught. Take them to the side. Let them go.
- Dive and swim.
- Keep moving.

# pulukwanti

'pulu-kwan-ti'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

The Aboriginal people played a variety of water games and a common activity was to dive into the water.

## Short description

These are activities associated with diving into the water.

## Players

- Groups of four to six players

## Playing area

- A swimming pool area or a water area with sufficient depth for safety. A diving board or tower may be used.

## Language

The activity is named *pulukwanti*, which means 'to dive into water'. This word was used in the Walmatjari language spoken in northwest Australia and has been selected to represent all the diving games played around Australia.

From the Bandjalang language spoken in northern New South Wales:

**ma:n da:dam na:ri-ni nabay-da**

*The children were playing in the water.*

*Thurakami* was the word for swimming used in the Dieyerie (Diyari) language of South Australia.

## Game play and basic rules

- The Aboriginal people of the Bloomfield area in north Queensland would often see who could jump into the water feet first from a great height. They did this singly, or in twos and threes. On the way down they called out loudly and when they surfaced they would say: '*Tummel artaro puddy karent!*' (My feet stuck in the mud).



- Jagara (Jagera) women of the Brisbane area were observed by Tom Petrie in the early 1900s engaging in bomb diving. They would bend both legs up and hold their ankles with their hands before they hit the water. (This is commonly called a 'cannon ball' dive.)

### **Variation**

- Players spread out along the edge of a pool about 1 to 2 metres apart. On a signal they all jump into the pool together. (As an alternative the players jump in one at a time in quick succession.)

### **Safety**

Care must be taken to observe all safety regulations. Players must be aware of the risk involved in diving activities and should not be forced or pressured to participate.

# Sanbaing

'san-ba-ing'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

In parts of Papua New Guinea and the Torres Strait Islands players of both genders were observed playing a game of sand-ball throwing. It required a deal of expertise to perform successfully and was often played all day.

## Language

This activity has been named *sanbaing*, which means 'sandbank' in Torres Strait Creole.

## Short description

Players make 'bombs' out of sand and throw (lob) them into the water.

## Players

- A group of players of a manageable size

## Playing area

- A sandy beach area

## Equipment

- A ready supply of suitable sand near water

## Game play and basic rules

- The players make little oval balls of sand in their hands and throw them up into the air to fall into the water. Players take turns.
- The object of the game is to count how many sand balls in a row can be thrown into the water without them breaking apart. If the balls fall whole into the water they do so with a hollow sound. The higher the balls are thrown — a high underarm lob works well — the greater the measure of success.

## Scoring

As each sand ball drops into the water as a whole, the thrower makes a mark on the sand with his or her feet, to remember how many successful throws in a row he or she makes. If one of the balls breaks up in the air or in contacting the water a player has to rub out the marks and start again. The player with the most successful throws in a row is the winner.

## Suggestion

To make the sand 'bombs,' start with a handful of wet sand and add progressively less wet layers and smooth over with dry sand. It is recommended that fist-sized or slightly larger 'bombs' only are made for safety reasons.

## Variation

As a recommended pool-based alternative to the outlined activity it is possible to use very large rubber medicine balls or balls filled with water — these can either float or sink. Players line up on the side of the pool and throw the balls high into the air to make the biggest splash, individually or all together. After all players have thrown the ball a signal is given and players dive in and retrieve the ball for the next group. For the balls that float the players can attempt to 'catch' them underwater before they return to the surface.

## Teaching points

For rubber medicine balls into the pool:

- Line up with a ball each. Remember to throw it high.
- Up and away.
- Big splashes. Ready. Go.
- Wait. Retrieve.



# udai

'u-dai'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

Children in parts of the Torres Strait were observed in the 1890s playing a ball-catching game in the water called *udai* (*wadai*) or *doamadiai*.

## Language

A *wadai* is a red bean of the *Mucuna* and a *doamadiai* is a hard fruit.

## Short description

This is a throwing-and-catching game in water, where two players compete for possession of a ball.

## Players

- Boys and girls play this game in pairs. Groups have a boy and a girl against each with the girls on one team and the boys on the other.

## Playing area

- A swimming pool, lake or the ocean

## Equipment

- A tennis ball (as the *udai* or *damadiai*)

## Game play and basic rules

- The players stand in waist-deep or slightly deeper water (pool or ocean). Each group is 10–15 metres apart. A boy throws the *udai* (ball) to another boy, while the girl near him attempts to intercept it. If the girl catches the ball she throws it to the girl being guarded by the other boy.
- The boy tries to intercept this pass. Play continues in this manner.
- Physical contact is restricted.

### Variations

- Have a girl and boy as partners. The girl is guarded by a girl, and the boy by another boy.
- Play with same gender in groups of two to four in each team.

### Suggestion

Although this game is particularly suitable for younger students it can be successfully played by most age groups.

### Teaching points

- Next to each other. Groups facing.
- Go. Throw and catch.
- Watch the contact.
- Time your throw. Move to catch.

# yiri

'yir-i'



All school-age groups (K–12)

## Background

A spear game was recorded being played by the boys at Ulladulla in New South Wales. Small spears were thrown at pieces of wood, which were placed into running water.

On Dunk Island in Queensland the boys used wood chips and pieces of bark floating on the water, or threw at small fish.

## Language

The activity is called *yiri* ('to throw') from the language that was spoken in the Sydney area of New South Wales.

## Short description

This is a throwing-practice game played near water.

## Players

- A group of players between six and 15, or more

## Playing area

- A swimming pool, lake or flowing water

## Equipment

- Several small rubber balls as the spears
- Larger balls, kick boards, rubber quoits, and pieces of wood as targets

## Game play and basic rules

- This is a throwing game for accuracy. As a basic activity the players stand along the edge of the pool and throw balls at pieces of wood or other floating targets placed at different places in the pool. When the players have no balls left the game is stopped while the balls are retrieved.

- As part of practice on a moving target, a player tows a target (such as a rescue tube at the end of a 5–7-metre rope) across the pool. Throwers have two balls each and attempt to hit the towed rescue tube — with a 7-metre rope attached for safety. A team contest could be held with a swimmer from each team towing the tube across the pool and 5–7 metres in front of the line of players. Count the number of hits made and try to beat this in the next turn. The players stop throwing at the target when the swimmer touches the side of the pool. The rescue tube at the end of the towing rope is then pulled in.
- The activity can be done with the swimmer underwater. Safety needs to be considered with regard to underwater swimming. When the swimmer touches the end or side of the pool the activity immediately stops.

### Variations

- Small plastic or dowel spears could be used.
- Have a variety of objects for the players to throw at. These may include hoops, rubber quoits, floating toys, kickboards, fins, balls and so on.
- Vary the distance of the throws and the size of the targets.
- Mark the targets with a point value and arrange a competition. Players have a set number of turns.
- Use stones to hit pieces of wood or bark thrown into flowing water.

### Comment

This activity provides for variety in throwing-skills practices or as a swimming pool game.

### Safety

Safety considerations for all forms of this activity need to be observed. This is particularly the case for underwater swimming and for a player towing a target. The activity is stopped immediately if players are not following the correct guidelines.

### Teaching points

- Collect two balls each.
- Spread out along the edge. Ready.
- Swimmers go.
- Aim for the target only. Go.
- Stop throwing when they touch the end.
- Sit on the edge. Slide in and retrieve the balls.

# boojur kombang

'boo-jur kom-bang'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

A wrestling game of the Noongar people of the south-west of Western Australia was called *meetcha kambong* ('nut game') or *boojur kombang* ('ground game'). In the Swan district it was called *boojoor-el-eeja*. A team beaten at this game might resume the contest in a month or so.

## Language

The winners shout:

**Kaia, kaia, yaang, yaang, yaang doojara**

*Beat them!*

**ngai jinnong, jinnong**

*See, see, I've got it.*

## Short description

A 'wrestling' game where attaching players attempt to uncover an object and opposing players attempt to stop them. (This version is a limited physical contact version suitable for younger players.)

## Players

- A team of four to six (or more) players against a defending team of two to three players

## Playing area

- A designated area such as a large sandpit, beach volleyball court or sandy beach area

## Equipment

- A rounded stone or tennis ball can be used as the *meetcha* nut.
- Players on the attacking team wear Oztag or similar 'tags' hanging from their waists.



### Game play and basic rules

- All players turn their back while the *meetcha* (tennis ball) is buried about 10–20 centimetres deep in a designated part of a sandpit or beach. The players on the attacking team attempt to find and uncover the *meetcha*.
- The defending player's actions are restricted to removing a tag from the attacking players as they attempt to find the *meetcha*. When a player has a tag removed he or she must go back to a starting area 15 metres away and replace the tag to continue in the game. The attacking players may not protect the tags in any way as they dig.
- If a player who is digging in the sand is about to be tagged he or she may run around the playing area to allow other players a chance to dig in the sand.

### Scoring

The game continues for five minutes or until the *meetcha* is secured. Teams could be timed to see how long it takes to find the *meetcha*. Swap around players and continue.

### Comment

The uncertainty for both teams about where the *meetcha* is buried adds an exciting element as the defenders attempt to remove a tag from attacking players who are digging in different parts of the area. An element of strategy can be used by both teams to achieve their purposes.

### Suggestion

This would be a good game to play on the sand at the beach or in a sand pit. If players are not digging in the correct area prompts such as 'hot' and 'cold' can help direct the efforts of players.

### Teaching points

- All look the other way.
- Ready and go.
- No contact, take a tag and drop it on the ground.
- Be careful with the sand.
- Dig it out. Keep going
- Got it. Well done.

# epoo korio

'e-poo ko-rio'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

## Background

*Epoo korio* was a wrestling game of the Kiwai people of Papua and some people in the northern parts of the Torres Strait Island region.

## Language

An *epoo* was a mound of earth built by a bird named *kamuka* — generally known as a brush turkey or scrub hen — which was about the size of a common fowl.

## Short description

This is a team game in which attackers attempt to knock over a mound of sand and defenders try to stop them. The level of physical contact is controlled.

## Players

- A group of six or more players in two teams. The player's roles are either as guards or attackers.

## Playing area

- A suitable outdoor area. In this game two mounds of earth or sand are built about 10–15 metres apart.
- If indoors, a large medicine ball on a mat can be used for the mound and attackers need to take it off the mat and place it on the ground next to the mat.

## Game play and basic rules

- Half the players in each team are the attackers and the other half are appointed as defenders of the mounds of sand.
- The attackers attempt to get past the defenders of the other team and destroy the mounds (if played indoors they attempt to take the medicine ball off a mat and place it on the floor next to the mat).

- The attack on the two mounds is made by the opposing sides simultaneously. The guards may use their hands to push back the attacking players but the attackers cannot use their hands to push the guards.

### Scoring

The first team to overtake the mound of the opposition is the winner. Players may change around roles during the game.

### Variations

- Individual challenge. One player builds a mound and challenges one to three other players to push them off.
- Place a very large medicine ball at one end of the playing area and the other team attempts to reach the ball, lift it in the air and call out, 'Epo korio'.

### Safety

Safety procedures should be strictly adhered to and players should not be forced to participate or feel obliged to do so.

For safety reasons it is also recommended that players stay on their knees at all times.

### Comment

This game is included to represent the close association of the people of Papua and New Guinea and Torres Strait Island region.

### Teaching points

- Team ready.
- Pushing only. Be careful.
- No hands attackers.

# Garumba

'ga-rum-ba'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

## Background

Teams from far and wide gathered at a 'place of wrestling' (at Dingulami) in Kabi Kabi territory in south Queensland each year at the time when the bunya nuts were ready. Tingalpa near Brisbane was also a wrestling place. Only one team represented each group attending.

Two players came from each totem of a group. Each pair in the competition wrestled in a 'rough and tumble' manner.

A spear was used as a prize, the shaft painted with coloured earths and decorated at the top with feathers of various birds. This was stuck in the ground and given as a trophy to the winning team.

The winners put the trophy away carefully until the next contest. If the local Jagara (or Jagera) team won the trophy they kept it in a cave until the next contest. Much practice was indulged in before the competition, and the teams were carefully picked.

## Language

*Gurumba* means 'wrestlers' in the Kabi Kabi language used in the area where the game was played.

## Short description

In this wrestling game players attempt to push an opposing player out of a circle or past a line.

## Players

- Individual contests or teams of four to six players

## Playing area

- A designated area marked with three parallel lines about 1.5 metres apart. Each line is 3 metres long.
- The two players face each other along the outside lines (3 metres apart) before moving to the middle to wrestle. An alternative is to mark circles based on a diameter of 3–5 metres.

- The activity can be undertaken on gymnastic mats in an indoor facility.

### Scoring

One point is scored each time a player pushes the opponent completely back over an end line (or out of a circle).

### Game play and basic rules

- *Gurumba* (wrestlers) in each team compete one at a time against their opponents. Players should compete against an opposing player of the same age, weight, height and ability.
- To start the contest players face each other in the middle of the area and place their hands on the shoulders and upper arms of their opponent. Players attempt to push their opponent back over their own end line.
- Players must keep even contact on both shoulders and upper arms of their opponent. No tripping or pulling is allowed. If one or both players lose their grip the contest is not re-started and players must quickly make correct contact.
- If the wrestlers fall to the ground the bout is re-started. A player is disqualified if he or she deliberately takes the opponent to the ground.

### Variations

- Have individual contests (either elimination or round-robin) with the best out of three contests.
- Conduct a round-robin team competition with teams of four to six players. Record a win, loss or draw to decide the winner, or use the total of all bouts won to decide on the winning team.
- Organise a competition based on height, weight, age and ability divisions. Wrestlers compete against all the wrestlers in the same division, with the winner remaining in the middle if he or she wins. Rotate through the group two to three times.

- Players of each team (four to six players) meet at the same time against another team. Judges decide on the winners and each team is given one point for each success. Teams carry the points through the competition against other teams.

### Safety

It is important to note that no person should be 'forced' to engage in activities involving physical contact. Students should be advised of their right not to participate before the activity begins.

### Teaching points

- Face each other. Ready.
- Hands on shoulders.
- Hang on tight.
- Push. No pulling or tripping.



# Kal boming

'kal-bom-ing'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4-6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

## Background

The *Kal boming* (fire-hitting) game was played by the Noongar people in the southern districts of Western Australia and called for both agility and strength. A fire was lit either on the ground or the top of a *Balgā* or *Xanthorrhoea* ('grass tree').

The players divided themselves into two teams. One side tried to put the fire out completely with short branches of trees, while the other side defended it. The fire either burned to ashes, or the attacking players smothered it, which brought the game to an end.

When the attacking players had been successful in putting the fire out they took their turn in guarding a fire. The game continued until both sides were tired or until night fell. The game was very energetic.

## Short description

This is a vigorous team-wrestling activity where players attempt to climb onto mats while defenders push them off.

## Players

- Two teams of four to ten players

## Playing area

- A designated indoor or outdoor area suitable for the activity

## Equipment

- Two to three high-jump or large gym mats placed on top of or next to each other. A number of smaller gym mats are placed around these mats for safety.

## Game play and basic rules

- Players on the attacking team attempt to climb on top of the mats and stay there while the defending players attempt to pull and push the attacking players off the mats.

- The attackers may not hold onto the mats, and may not wrestle with the defenders. No kicking or unnecessary physical contact is allowed.
- Play is continuous and roles change after a period of time. It is strongly recommended that players remain on their knees at all times.

### Safety

Safety aspects must be considered at all times. Players should under no circumstances be forced or pressured to participate, and the activity must be stopped immediately if the intention of the game is not adhered to.

### Variation

- Players all start on two to three large gym mats and the defenders attempt to push them completely off the mat. Players who are pushed off are eliminated from the game. Players remain on their knees at all times.

### Comment

*Kal boming* time was often an opportunity for people from different areas to make friends (*babbín, koobong*).

This modified game attempts to capture some of the originally described game. If conducted in the right spirit it can be an enjoyable activity for the players. Separate gender groups should be used for this activity, which is one that is often enjoyed most by boys of 10–13 years of age.

### Teaching points

- Teams ready.
- Pull and push only. Be careful.
- Stay on your knees. Pull and push only.



# kari-woppa

'kari-wop-pa'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Background

A wrestling game was played by the people in the Torrens area of South Australia. The contests were generally held on the meeting of groups from different areas. Players wrestled for a tuft of emu feathers called a *kari-woppa*.

*Komba burrong* or *kambong burrong* (the game of 'catching hold') was the name of a similar game played by the Noongar people of the south-west of Western Australia. Emu feathers were tied onto one end of a stick and the other end was stuck into the ground. One player 'defended' the stick while the other players in the group attempted to take the emu feathers off the stick.

## Language

The name of this game is from the language of a group of Noongar people of the south-west of Western Australia. It is an active game.

### Banya goongar

*Perspiration (is) rolling off him.*

## Short description

This is a wrestling game where a player attempts to take a ball from another player.

## Players

- A group of four to six players

## Playing area

- A designated area with a circle marked 5–7 metres in diameter, or play indoors on mats

## Equipment

- A football or medicine ball to represent a bundle of feathers attached to a stick. Gymnastic mats may be used for an indoor area.



### Game play and basic rules

- Players work in a small group of four to six, or with a partner about their own size. Both players are on their knees.
- One player holds onto the ball while his or her partner and/or two to three or more other players attempt to take the ball away within a 30-second time limit.
- If the ball cannot be taken away then it is a draw. Repeat as the best of three. Players change around or choose another partner/group.
- If working in a small group continue play until everyone has had a turn holding the ball.

### Variations

- Players may either be standing or kneeling on a mat.
- Both players hold onto the ball and attempt to take it away from his or her partner. There is a 30-second time limit.
- The player with the ball is only allowed to hold it under one arm. Players may not use the other arm to fend off the other player.
- Place players in groups according to size and conduct a round-robin competition for each group.
- Conduct a double-elimination tournament where they play until they have lost twice. Winners play winners and losers play losers after the first round. This continues until there is only one person left.
- One player holds a short piece of hose (for the bundle of feathers). The other players (two to four) attempt to take the hose but are not allowed to interfere with the defender in any other way. The defender protects the hose by pushing the other players away. No kicking is allowed. (This is the traditional form.)

### Safety

Ensure that safety aspects are closely observed to avoid injury. Participation in this activity should be voluntary.

### Comment

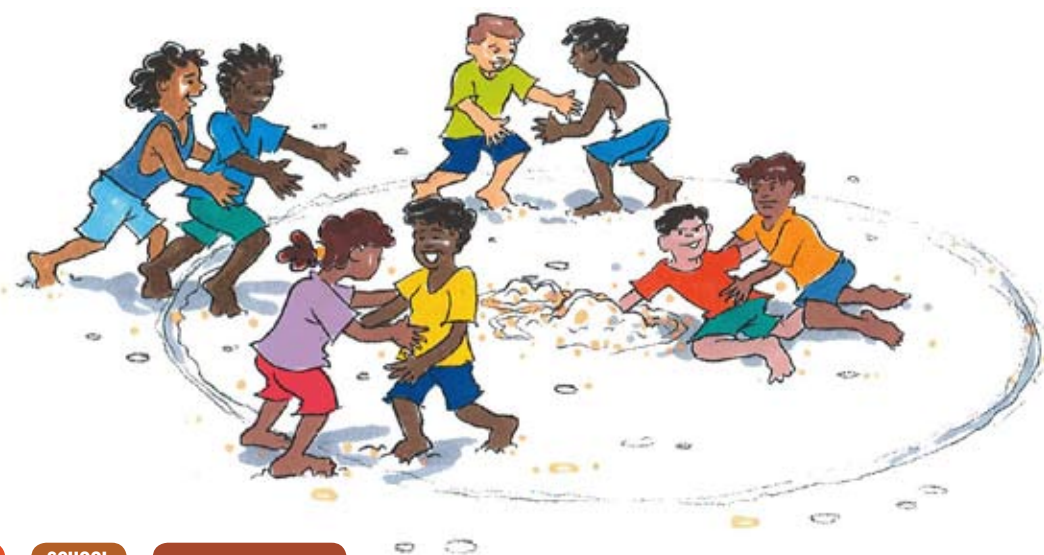
This activity could be very useful as a practice activity for the skill of mauling in rugby union.

### Teaching points

- On your knees. Hold onto the ball.
- Watch the contact. Be careful. Go for the ball only. Leave them alone otherwise.
- Ready. Go.

# meetcha kambong

'meet-cha kam-bong'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

A wrestling game of the Noongar people of the southwest of Western Australia was called *meetcha kambong* ('nut game') or *boojur kombang* ('ground game'). In the Swan district it was called *boojoor-el-eeja*. A team beaten at this game might resume the contest in a month or so.

## Language

The winners shout:

**Kaia, kaia, yaang, yaang, yaang doojara**  
*Beat them!*

**ngai jinnong, jinnong**  
*See, see, I've got it.*

## Short description

A 'wrestling' game where attacking players attempt to uncover a buried object and defending players attempt to stop them.

## Players

- Two teams with four to five players in each

## Playing area

- A suitable sand area but the activity is best suited to a sandy beach

## Equipment

- A rounded stone or tennis ball can be used as the *meetcha* nut. Hide the *meetcha* in a designated place near the middle of the playing area.

### Game play and basic rules

- The attacking team players turn their back while a player of the defending team hides a *meetcha* (tennis ball) about 20 centimetres in the ground. Four or five defending players guard it while an equal number of attacking players attempt to break through and 'capture' the *meetcha*.
- No kicking is allowed and all players are restricted to pushing and pulling. Players are not allowed to throw sand around.

### Scoring

The game continues until one team becomes tired (allow three minutes) or until the *meetcha* is secured.

### Suggestion

This would be a good outdoor game, rugby or Australian rules football training activity to play on the sand at the beach or in a sand pit. Take care to avoid sand getting into the players' eyes.

### Teaching points

- Bury the ball and smooth out the area. Attackers look the other way.
- Ready and go.
- Pushing and pulling only.
- Watch out for the contact. Be careful with the sand.
- Dig it out. Keep going.

# tingalpa

'tin-gal-pa'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

## Background

Teams from far and wide gathered at a 'place of wrestling' (at Dingulami) in Kabi Kabi territory in south Queensland each year at the time when the bunya nuts were ready. Tingalpa near Brisbane was also a wrestling place. Only one team represented each group attending. Two players came from each part (totem) of a group. Each pair in the competition wrestled in a 'rough and tumble' manner.

## Language

*Gurumba* means 'wrestlers' in the Kabi Kabi language. The name of this version of a wrestling game (*garumba*) played by the people in south Queensland is taken from a place where wrestling contests were held.

## Short description

This type of wrestling involves players attempting to push or pull an opposing player out of a circle or past a line. (This game version is suitable for younger players.)

## Players

- Individual contests for a group of players

## Playing area

- Mark circles with a diameter of 3–5 metres, or use the circles on a basketball court.
- The activity can be undertaken on gymnastic mats in an indoor facility.

## Scoring

One point is scored each time a player pushes his or her opponent completely back over an end line (or out of a circle).

### Game play and basic rules

- *Gurumba* (wrestlers) compete one at a time against their opponents. Players should compete against an opposing player of the same age, weight, height and ability.
- To start the contest players face each other in the middle of the area and place their hands on the shoulders and upper arms of their opponent. Players then attempt to push or pull their opponent completely out of the circle.
- No hitting, 'throwing' or tripping is allowed.

### Variations

- Have individual contests (either elimination or round-robin) with the best out of three contests.
- Conduct a round-robin team competition with teams of four to six players. Record a win, loss or draw to decide the winner, or use the total of all bouts won to decide on the winning team.
- Play for fun or as a warm-up, partner or other activity.

### Safety

It is important to note that no person should be 'forced' to engage in activities involving physical contact. Students should be advised of their right not to participate before the activity begins.

### Teaching points

- Face each other. Hands on shoulders.
- Hang on tight.
- Push. No pulling or tripping.

# Tur-dur-er-rin

'tur-dur-er-rin'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
4–6

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7–9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10–12

Post-school age

## Background

The lessons learned around the camp fire were often required for survival. *Tur-dur-er-rin*, *war-rok-min-der-neit*, or *work-ern-der-eit*, was a wrestling game from Victoria in which the most skilful, or perhaps the strongest, proved to be the winner. The old men and women and the children acted as spectators and sat down around a smooth area of grass. After sitting down for a time one of the wrestlers stood up, grasped a handful of dust or ashes and threw it towards a wrestler in the opposite team as a challenge to wrestle. They then sat down.

The wrestler who was challenged rose and threw dust towards the wrestler who made the challenge. When this was done all the men of both the groups rose and threw dust (or the ashes of the dead fires) into the air around them.

The two wrestlers who competed rubbed their hands with ashes or dust and then rushed towards each other. The contests continued until all the wrestlers were tired.

## Short description

This is a pushing-and-pulling contest where players attempt to put each other on the ground.

## Players

- The wrestlers divide into two teams of two to six players (or more) on opposite sides of the playing area. Participation should be voluntary within guidelines.

## Playing area

- The wrestling area is about 5 to 7 metres across, with a larger area around this for safety. For outdoors a sandy surface is recommended.

## Equipment

- Players wear short pants or a swimming costume. Players may wear a football jersey if they wish.
- Gym mats can be used indoors.

### Game play and basic rules

- The wrestlers face each other a few metres apart and on a signal to begin they move towards each other. They place their hands on each other's upper arms near the shoulders and, holding on tight, move around, pushing and pulling in an attempt to put the other player on the ground.
- If a grip is broken the wrestlers stop. They continue after they hold each other again.
- Fair play is a feature of the contests. No kicking, tripping or other unfair actions are allowed.

### Comment

The young boys were taught all the skills for this type of wrestling. It was necessary for their safety in later life, when they may have been required to test their strength and skill in single-handed encounters with members from other areas.

### Scoring

Skill in the activity involves not falling to the ground when knocking — by pushing and pulling — an opponent down.

After the contest the successful wrestler returns to his place amid shouts of praise. If both wrestlers fall to the ground this is a draw or 'no contest' (and in the traditional game was considered to be worse than losing).

### Variation

- Team *tur-dur-er-rin*: Have teams of four players (similar age and weight) organised in an elimination or round-robin contest with another team. There is a time limit of 90 seconds for each round — best two out of three rounds in a bout. A player who touches the ground with any part of the body other than the feet loses the round.

### Safety

Safety procedures should be strictly adhered to and players should not be forced to participate or feel obliged to do so. Participation should be voluntary within guidelines.

### Suggestion

This activity could be used in judo, wrestling and as a rugby or Australian rules football training activity.

### Teaching points

- Players ready. Wrestle.
- Push and pull. Hang on tight. Push and pull.
- Be careful. Put them on the ground.
- Stop, next group.

# bari barlam bembinge

'bar-i bar-lam bem-bing-e'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Short description

This is a suggested outline of a traditional games event.

## Language

*Bari barlam bembinge* means 'the children are playing' in the Barunggam language of the Darling Downs area of Queensland.

## Explanation

The games and activities outlined have been modified for use with co-educational classes and groups of different age and/or abilities, as a workshop or traditional games activity over a time period of one hour to one and a half hours. Groups of six to 12 may be used. The games represent a mix of activities (cooperative and competitive) and allow for a high level of player participation.

The use of coloured circles/dome markers works very well. Each team may be assigned a colour (and a team name) and the gear for that colour is in one place — players take their own gear. The coloured circle/marker for a team may be taken to the playing area to be used and this makes it easy to identify teams.

The usual procedure in a workshop format (often for groups that come together at a camp, conference or sports session) would be to call groups in and explain the activity, with one group demonstrating the game/activity. Groups go to their designated playing area. Use a whistle to control the activity and explain any progressions.

In a traditional games event format it may be possible to arrange for people at each group to learn and conduct the activity — give the name, a brief explanation and demonstration followed by a short practice and question-and-answer session, then play. All groups could do the same activity at the same time or groups could rotate around six to eight activities, with about eight to ten minutes each.





### Short outline of activities

1 *Cross boomerangs*: Use a number of foam boomerangs (sold as Roomarangs). These can be used by groups as a warm-up/introductory activity.

2 *Gorri* (this is a good ‘ice-breaker’): Players spread out behind a line. Each player has a tennis ball and each group uses a large ball. As the large ball is rolled across in front of the group (8–10 metres in front) players attempt to hit it. Gather the balls and repeat the turns. Variations of this activity include:

- varying the speed
- bouncing the ball
- using two balls at once
- using a *woomera* (thrower) and ball
- using balls of different sizes.

3 *Kai*: Use a light ball, such as a medium-sized gator skin ball. Use the palm of the hand to hit upward above head height.

Progressions:

- Players hit the ball around in a circle (either direction).
- Players hit it to other players who call out their name — attempt to work through the whole team.
- Players work as a team to hit the ball in the air and go through the letters of the alphabet. No player is allowed to touch it twice in succession or receive it straight back from another player.
- Give each player a number and work through the numbers in a set order.

- One player stands in the middle of the circle and the ball is deflected to the other players, who in turn hit it back to the middle player. Change the middle player each time any player makes an error — the aim is to keep the centre player in as long as possible.

4 *Kalq*: Players in a group of four to six stand in a circle 2–4 metres apart. Players have a paddle bat (plastic play bat) each and each group uses a unihoc ball. One player without a paddle bat starts with the ball and lobs it underarm to the next player, who may use one or two hits to hit the ball — preferably underarm — to the next player, in an attempt to make the ball go around the circle and back to the thrower to catch. Change every couple of turns. Either score a point for every successful circuit or give one point for every player who hits the ball (use this for younger players).

5 *Wuljini*: Use a light ball, such as a sponge ball or a medium-sized gator skin ball. Divide the group of players into two teams, with players next to each other and facing the other team 3–5 metres away. Players use an underhand hit with the flat of the hand only.

Progressions:

- Allow each player two contacts and each team at least one and up to three player contacts before the ball is hit over to the other team.
- Aim to keep the rally going as long as possible.
- Hit the ball higher and try to make only one contact per player, and at least one and no more than three contacts for each group.

6 *Wana*: Use a large hoop and place a wooden skittle or plastic bowling pin in the centre. Players stand around the outside of circle (radius of 5–7 metres). The player in the middle has a Kanga cricket bat. Start with one softball-sized unihoc ball (in the team colour, if possible). The players around the circle throw the ball underarm so that it bounces off the ground outside the hoop in an attempt to knock the skittle over. The player in the centre with the bat may only tap the ball away and is ‘out’ if the ball is caught, the ball goes out of the playing area on the full, the ball is hit too hard, the batter steps inside the hoop, or the batter knocks the skittle over. Players may throw the ball to another player in an effort to hit the skittle.

Progression:

- Start the game using one ball and then add another.

7 *Boogalah*: Use a gator skin ball or slightly deflated size two soccer ball or similar. Divide the group in half. A player from one group throws the ball high up in the air and all the players in the other group attempt to catch it. The successful player scores one point. Play until the first player gains five points, or compile a 'record team score' after a set time. Physical contact is limited.

8 *Kolap*: Players line up behind each other. Each player in turn attempts to throw a beanbag (or fleece/koosh ball) into a small hoop 3–5 metres away. The thrower retrieves the beanbag each time. Count the number of throws that land inside the hoop. Allow 3–4 minutes.



9 *Kee'an*: Players line up behind each other and take turns to throw a foxtail ball (hold in the middle of the tail) over a set of cricket stumps and into a storage bin. Count one for each successful throw. Retrieve the ball for the next player. Allow 3–4 minutes.

10 *Turlurlu*: Play between two teams of one to five players. To start play, each team lines up facing each other 12–14 metres apart. The length of the line they stand behind varies according to the number of players — for five players the line is 5 metres long. Each player has a unihoc stick and one ball is used. A player from one team attempts to hit or underarm roll the ball along the ground towards or at the opposing team and within the reach of at least one player of that team, in such a manner that the opposing team cannot hit it or stop it before it crosses the line they are standing on. Scoring depends on the success or failure of the

hitting team. A good hit, without being hit/stopped before crossing the line, scores a point for the hitting team and a bad hit (off the ground/in the air, mis-hit, or misdirected) results in one point for the receiving team. Teams attempt to score 11 points to win the game.

11 *Taktyerra*: Two teams of four to eight players. Use a volleyball court. Players have a number of balls (paper, fleece balls or socks). They stay in their own half of the court and behind the spiking line of the volleyball court. On a start signal players throw the balls and attempt to hit the players of the opposing team. Any balls in the middle area of the court (between the spiking lines) are retrieved when there is a stoppage in play.

12 *Koolchee*: Players form two teams behind the base line, at opposite ends of a tennis or badminton court. Each team has a supply of tennis balls. Players roll one tennis ball at a time underarm towards the other end of the court. A player must have one foot behind the base line before rolling a ball. Balls that stop on the court may be retrieved but care must be taken to avoid any interference.

Progressions:

- Teams roll the tennis balls towards each other — no scoring.
- Each player has a tennis ball. Place a set number of pins in the centre of the area and both teams attempt to knock them over in a cooperative activity — perhaps timed with several attempts to set the best time.
- Place five pins about 3 metres in front of each group and the teams attempt to hit the pins in front of the team at the other end of the area. A class competition with four to six players in each team on a badminton court works well for younger players — matches are the best of three games. (Competition matches on a tennis court to the best of 11 or the first to 11 games work well with older players. Change ends every five games.)

13 *Keentan*: Form two teams of four to six players in an area about the size of half a tennis court. Use a size 2 soccer ball. The ball is thrown from one player to another player of the same team — to pass the ball a player must jump into the air and

pass. The players of the opposing team attempt to intercept the ball while they are off the ground. The ball is only gained if it is caught while the catcher is in the air. If the ball is dropped or knocked to the ground by a player attempting to catch it the other team gains possession.

A change of possession also occurs when a thrown ball falls to the ground untouched or is dropped by the receiver. No physical contact is allowed. Players cannot stop opposing players from moving around the area — no interference is allowed. Passes must be a minimum of 2–3 metres.

The player in possession of the ball may run around the playing area for up to 10 metres. The player with the ball cannot be guarded or obstructed while he or she is attempting to pass the ball — the defender must be at least 1 metre away. A player may not hold the ball for longer than three seconds. The ball must remain inside the playing area.

### Practice

Before playing, both teams practise running around the area, jumping to pass the ball and jumping to catch it. Feet must be off the ground by at least 20 centimetres.



# riawena

'ri-a-we-na'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Language

*Riawena* means 'fun (sport)' in the language used by the Aboriginal people of the Oyster Bay area of Tasmania.

## Description of activities

A number of the games and activities can be conducted as athletic events. Examples include:

- 1 Spear throw for accuracy: Use a 'ball thrower' and a tennis ball with a large wheelie bin as the target (10–20 metres away). Each player has five to ten attempts. Conduct two rounds and add the scores of both rounds for a total.
- 2 Spear throw for distance: Use a 'ball thrower' and a tennis ball. Players get three attempts to throw as far as they can.
- 3 *Tarnambai*: Players line up behind a starting line, with a tennis ball in one hand. On the signal to start players roll their ball past a line 20 metres away and run out to retrieve it. The first player to cross the starting line is the winner.

4 Boomerang-return contest: Players stand in a circle with a 1-metre diameter and throw a boomerang at least 20 metres away (mark a circle). They see how close it lands to the centre circle. Players get five attempts each.

5 *Weet weet* throwing: Use a gymnastic club or small skittle as a *weet weet*. Players attempt to throw as far as possible — they get three attempts. Mark where the *weet weet* lands.

6 *Koolchee*: Players stand next to each other behind a line. Place five wooden skittles 1 metre apart, along a line about 10 metres away. Players roll five tennis balls to attempt to knock over the skittles. Play three rounds in a competition for a total out of 15.

7 Possum pushing: Mark a circle with a 3–5-metre diameter, or use a centre circle on a basketball court. Players start in the centre of the circle and attempt to push/pull their opponent completely outside the circle.

Players must place their arms on the upper arm and shoulder of their opponent and hold on while they push — no hitting, throwing or tripping is allowed. Conduct a round-robin or elimination tournament. The best of three turns is played.

8 *Jillora*: Use upturned discs and billiard balls. The game may be played by several players at once. On the signal to start all players start their balls spinning with their thumb and first two fingers. The last ball left spinning is the winner.



# Yulunga

'yu-lun-ga'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Language

*Yulunga* means 'playing' in the language of the Kamilaroi (Gamori) people from the northwest of New South Wales.

## Explanation

The following games and activities may be organised as part of a display of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander games. People come and try some of the activities and move on. Select around eight to ten activities.

It may be useful to have a person stationed at each activity to explain and control it. In some cases it may be possible to have an explanation (diagram or information sheet) for people to follow. (Refer to the respective outline of games for more detail.)

It may be useful for students to learn and practise the games, and perform them as a display for other groups.

- 1 *Weme*: Use two markers 5–10 metres apart and two to four bocce balls. Roll to hit a ball out of a centre circle.
- 2 *Kolap*: Two small hoops or large carpet squares 4–6 metres apart and four wooden blocks or beanbags. Throw into the hoop.
- 3 *Koolchee*: Use two to four wooden skittles 5–10 metres apart. Have a supply of tennis balls. Attempt to knock the skittles over.
- 4 *Gorri*: Use sponge or tennis balls and a large ball. Throw the smaller balls at the large balls (either stationary or rolled).
- 5 *Woomera*: Use a 'ball thrower' and tennis balls. Throw at a target such as a large gym ball or other target.
- 6 *Jillora*: Use a number of billiard balls and discs. Spin the balls as long as possible.
- 7 *Kalq*: Players with a paddle bat each stand 2–3 metres apart in a circle. Attempt to hit the ball around the circle or as a group (keep it in the air as long as possible).

8 *Kee'an*: Use three foxtail balls (or a tennis ball in a stocking), a set of cricket stumps and a storage bin. Throw over the stumps and into the bin.

9 *Taktyerrain*: Place large carpet tiles 5 metres apart. Use sponge or fleece balls. Players stand on the carpet tiles and attempt to hit their opponent.

10 *Kai*: Use a medium-sized gator skin ball. Players use the palm of their hands to hit the ball around in a circle, in the air, or back and forth to each other as many times as possible.

11 *Wana*: Use a large hoop, Kanga cricket bat, cone marker, unihoc balls and a marked 5-metre radius circle. Players attempt to hit the cone marker being protected by a batter as in French cricket.

12 Cross boomerangs: Use a number of foam boomerangs (sold as Roomarangs).

# gugiyñ nahri

'gu-gi-yn nah-ri'



All school-age groups (K–12)

Post-school age

## Explanation

The activities outlined are examples of how the games can be modified to be used in a tabloid event. Groups of four to six players over a two to three-minute time period are recommended.

Groups are taken around each activity and the rules are explained. Groups are then assigned an activity to start with and the rules are quickly revised. After each rotation, and while the scores are being recorded, one player from each group stays behind to explain the activity to the next group before rejoining his or her own group. Allow a short practice time.

Student leaders may be used where mixed age/ability groups are involved — these leaders remain at each activity and explain the activity to each group and are responsible for scoring.

## Language

*Gugiyñ* means 'fast' and *nahri* means 'play' in the Bundjalung language of northeast New South Wales and southeast Queensland.

## Tabloid activities

1 *Kalq*: Players with a paddle bat each stand in a circle 2–3 metres apart. Players hit (underhand) a unihoc ball around the circle. Count one for a hit by each player.

Number of hits:

2 *Koolchee*: Players divide into two groups, 10 metres apart. Arrange marker cones 1 metre apart in the middle. Players in each group take turns to attempt to roll a tennis ball between the markers.

Number of good rolls:

3 *Gorri*: Players line up behind each other. A hoop-sized target is marked against a fence or wall 5–7 metres in front of the group. Players take turns to attempt to throw a ball 'through' the hoop. Balls must hit inside the circle to count.

Number of good throws:

4 *Boogalah*: Players are in two groups either side of a goal post crossbar or volleyball net. A ball is thrown back and forth over the bar/net. Count the number of successful catches.

Number of catches:

5 *Kee'an*: Players line up behind each other and take turns to throw a foxtail ball — held in the middle of the tail — over a set of cricket stumps and into a storage bin. Count one for each successful throw. Retrieve the ball for the next player.

Number of good throws:

6 *Tarnambai*: Players line up behind each other. Each player in turn rolls a tennis ball out past a line 5–7 metres away and runs out to retrieve it. Count one for each time the ball is returned.

Number of returns:

7 *Kolap*: Players line up behind each other. Each player in turn attempts to throw a beanbag or small soft ball into a small hoop 3–5 metres away. The thrower retrieves the beanbag each time. Count the number of successful throws that land inside the hoop.

Number of good throws:

8 *Kai*: Players stand in a circle about 2 metres apart. Use a light ball such as a medium-sized gator skin ball. Use the palm of the hand to hit the ball upward towards the next player. Players hit the ball around in a circle (either way). Count the number of players that hit the ball.

Number of hits:



# Sports Ability

Sports Ability is an exciting initiative from the Australian Sports Commission, designed to encourage people with disabilities to get involved and participate in sport and physical activity across Australia.

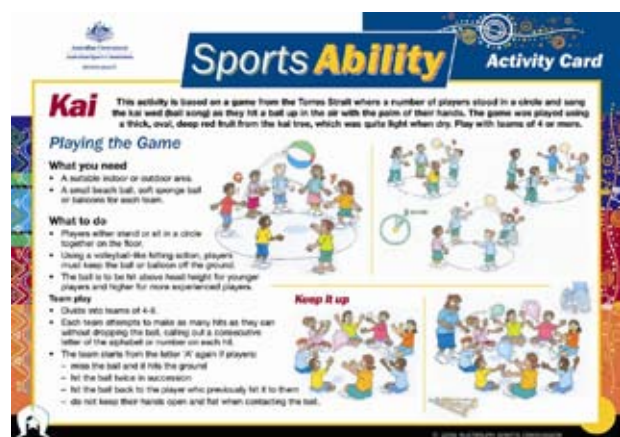
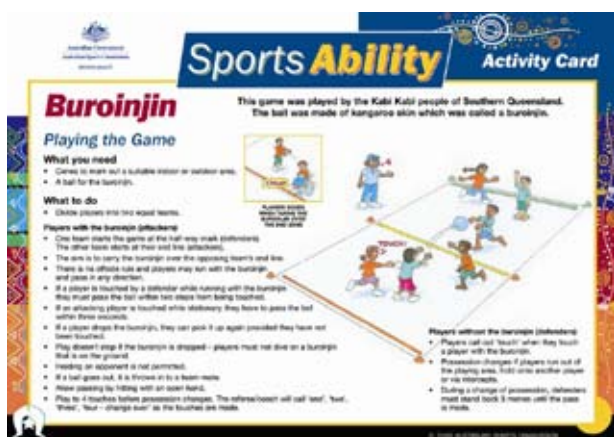
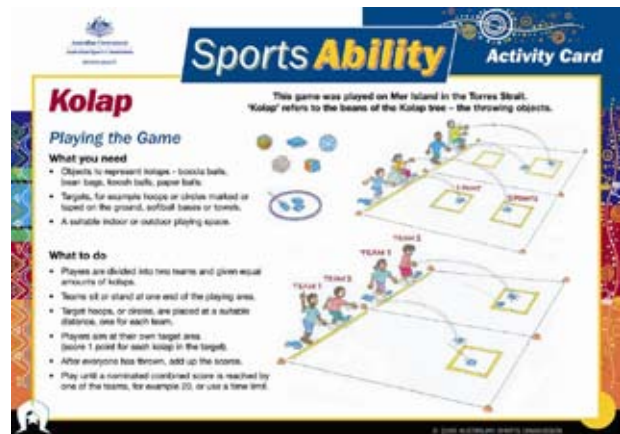
## Sports Ability activities

The Sports Ability program is based around five activities: boccia, goalball, sitting volleyball, polybat and table cricket.

## Additional resource

Traditional Indigenous Games: five traditional games have been included and can be adapted and modified to suit all abilities. These games have their origins in the Torres Strait, central Australia, northern New South Wales and southeast Queensland. The games are outlined on specially designed activity cards and an instructional DVD.

The traditional Indigenous games included in the Sports Ability program are an extension of activities outlined in *Yulunga: Indigenous Traditional Games*.



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**Tinderbeek tillutkerrin**

*All done (with) play.*

(from a language spoken in Victoria)

