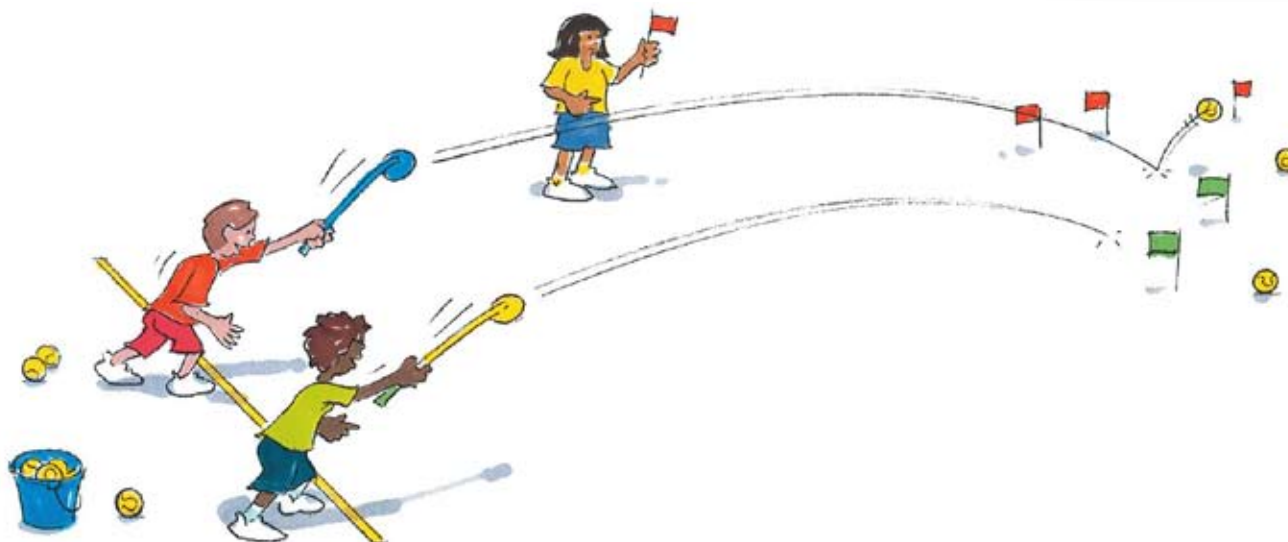




Australian Government  
Australian Sports Commission

# 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.