



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

**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.