



Australian Government  
Australian Sports Commission

# 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.