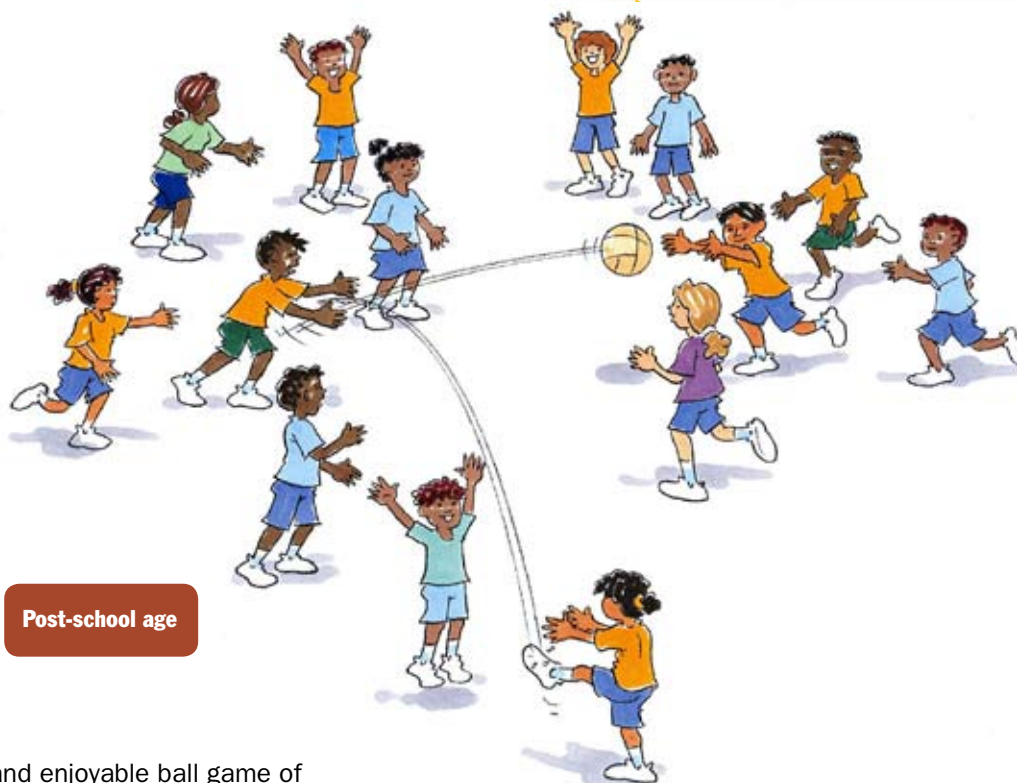




Australian Government  
Australian Sports Commission

**purlja**  
'purl-ja'



SCHOOL  
YEARS  
7-9

SCHOOL  
YEARS  
10-12

Post-school age

### Background

This was a popular and enjoyable ball game of the Walbiri people of central Australia and was usually played in spring. A *purlja* (ball) was made of hair-string with the inside containing crumbled pith — the stems and leaves of small soft plants and shrubs.

The game was played by males who had reached puberty. Two teams from different generation moieties played — these were the *Wanta* (light) team and the *Munga* (dark) team.

### Short description

The aim of this ball game is for one team to keep the *purlja* (ball) away from the other team by kicking or throwing it through the air from player to player.

### Players

- Two teams of 20 players or more. The teams are the *Wanta* (light) and the *Munga* (dark).

### Playing area

- A designated area on a rugby or Australian rules football field

### Equipment

- A size 3 soccer ball or gator skin ball as the *purlja*

### Game play and basic rules

- A team in possession of the *purlja* attempts to kick (at least 10 metres) or throw (at least 5 metres) to other players on the same team.
- The opposing team attempts to intercept any passes (kicks or throw) to gain possession of the *purlja*. No running with the ball or physical contact is allowed.

- After catching the ball a player is allowed to throw or kick the ball without interference. A player may move up to 5 metres for this to occur, but play should not be delayed.
- If the ball contacts the ground play can continue. The ball may not be kicked off the ground but must be picked up and thrown or kicked.
- Players may not interfere with players of the other team. Marking an opposing player from 1 metre away is allowed.

### Scoring

The winner is the team that is able to retain possession of the ball the longest in the game.

### Variations

- Players run and handball, hit or kick the ball to other players as in Australian rules football.
- Count the number of passes a team makes. Every ten passes scores one point.

### Teaching points

- Pass and move.
- Call for the ball.
- Move to open spaces. Keep moving.
- No contacts. Mark a player.
- Quick passes. Call for the ball.
- Find a player. Good play.