

AKTIVE

HE ORANGA  
POUTAMA

# TAONGA TĀKARO

Traditional Māori Games

He Oranga Poutama  
ki Tāmaki Makaurau  
present this resource to  
provide insight into the  
increasingly popular  
traditional Māori games



# Rārangi Upoko

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This resource is based on Māori Games delivered by He Oranga Poutama ki Tāmaki Makaurau throughout the Auckland region. Please note that every Rohe/Iwi (region/tribe) have their own versions of the games; inclusive of slight variations rules.

# Karakia

## Tīmatanga ~ Opening

The following **opening** karakia (prayer) acknowledges the environment in which we live in, the mauri (life-force) of the individuals, the universe as a whole and the connection between all things.

This karakia is used by He Oranga Poutama ki Tāmaki Makaurau as a means of starting Kī o Rahi games, wānanga or similar events. Please feel free to use it, or use a karakia that is significant to you.

**Tūtawa mai runga  
Tūtawa mai raro  
Tūtawa mai roto  
Tūtawa mai waho  
Kia tau ai te mauri tū,  
te mauri ora ki te katoa  
Hāumi e, hui e, tāiki e**

*I summon from above,  
I summon from below,  
I summon from within,  
and I summon from the surrounding environment  
The universal vitality and energy to infuse,  
and enrich all present  
Unified, connected and blessed*





# Karakia

## Whakakapi ~ Closing

This karakia is used by He Oranga Poutama ki Tāmaki Makaurau as a mean of **closing** games wānanga or similar events. Please feel free to use it, or use a karakia that is significant to you.

**Kia hora te marino  
Kia whakapapa pounamu te moana  
Hei huarahi mā tātou i te rangi nei  
Aroha atu, aroha mai  
Tātou ia a tātou katoa  
Hui e! Tāiki e!**

*May peace be widespread  
May the sea be like greenstone  
A pathway for us all this day  
Let us show respect for each other  
For one another  
Bind us all*

# TĀKARO-A-RINGA

## Hand Games

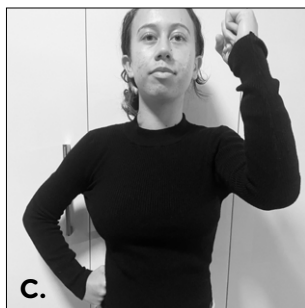
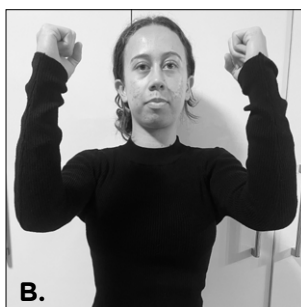
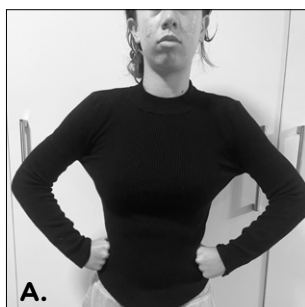
Like many early games, tākaro-a-ringā or hand games were designed to encourage mental dexterity. Even though the winning was important, it was the way in which competitors won, that was the focus. The cheeky cajoling, the smile and grimace to put your opponent off were all part of the game. The pedagogy is ako, in which games are always supportive. These games are played using the upper body, arms, and hands, ensuring a balanced position.



# Hei Tama Tū Tama

There are 4 positions in this game and is played in partners

- A. Both hands on hips
- B. Both forearms raised, fists clenched, and elbows to the side
- C. Raise right forearm with clenched fist, left hand on hip
- D. Raise left forearm with clenched fist, right hand on hip.



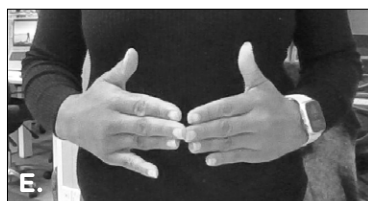
- Players will start standing opposite each other
- The defender begins the game by calling “Hei tama tū tama!” and places their hands in one of the four positions
- The challenger replies by calling “Hei tama tū tama!” and both players choose one of the four positions
- Play continues back and forward until one player catches the other doing the same position, that player calls out “Tū tama rā!”

# Whakaropiropi

There are 5 positions in this game and can be played with 2+ players

- A.** Both fists parallel and clenched
- B.** Both hands open parallel, fingers extended and pointing away from the body
- C.** Both hands open with fingertips touching
- D.** Both hands open with the heels of the hands touching and fingers pointing away forming a 'V' shape
- E.** Fingers on both hands extended, pointing diagonally across the body, the right hand on top of the left with the left thumb in the right palm.

- There is one defender, and you can have more than one challenger
- All players begin by beating their thighs with their thighs
- The defender begins the game by calling out "Whakaropiropi ai". The challengers reply with "Ai!". The defender then calls out "Ko tahi ko te homai"
- Play continues with a rhythmic beat. On each beat all players call "homai" while selecting a new hand position
- Play continues until one player catches the other doing the same position, that player calls out "homai rā!" and is the new defender.





# Hipitoitoi

There are 4 positions in this game and can be played in partners

- A.** Both Thumbs down
- B.** Both thumbs upright
- C.** Right thumb upright and left thumb down
- D.** Left thumb upright and right thumb down.

**A.**



**B.**



**C.**



**D.**



- There is one defender, and you can have more than one challenger
- The defender begins the game by calling out “E Hipitoitoi” and selects one of the four positions
- The challenger replies by calling “Hipitoitoi” and both players select another one of the four positions
- Play continues back and forward until one player catches the other doing the same position, that player calls out “Hipitoitoi rā!”
- That player is awarded a point and play can continue until one person reaches a certain amount of points.

# NGĀ KĒMU RITE

Other Games/Similar Games



# Taha Mauī/Taha Matau

## Aronga ~ Purpose

Such games using rākau were in essence, warrior-training games. They kept reflexes sharp and promoted quick thinking which are important attributes in hand-to-hand combat. All manner of sticks and branches were used in rākau games. He Oranga Poutama ki Tāmaki Makaurau have used 'kōrari' found in our harakeke (flax). These do not carry the tikanga of a taiaha.

## Rauemi ~ Resources

- Rākau 20mm thick, between 90 - 100cm tall for each player

## Te Kēmu ~ The game

- All players to stand in a circle with an arm's length in between each other
- Each player must stand their rākau up in front of them and place one finger on top of the stick
- There is one kaikaranga (caller) who will call out commands
- When a command is given, players must take their finger off the stick, complete the command and catch the rākau.
- Once they have completed the command, they reset the rākau with their finger on the top and wait for the next command
- If your rākau falls to the ground, you step out of the circle (but encourage another practice game at the same time).



**Taha Mauī** - Move left

**Taha Matau** - Move right

**Peke** - Jump

**Heke** - Touch ground

**Pakipaki** - Clap

**Pakē** - Click fingers

**Huri** - Turn around

**Kanikani** - Dance

# Mū torere

## Aronga ~ Purpose

Mū Torere was one of the several traditional types of 'board games' that used stones as pieces. It is believed Mū Torere may have evolved out of the ancient game Mengamenga.

This game requires wit and intelligence to manage, strategise and manoeuvre the pieces to win. To add a fitness or physical activity element to the game either make the pieces heavier (rocks, weight plates etc.) or have the markers further apart (to encourage running between kawai or points). Mū Torere is also becoming increasingly utilised in school pangarau (mathematics).

## Rauemi ~ Resources

- 1 x Mū Torere papa tākaro (game board – see next page)
- 8 x perepere (stones/markers) in two colours (4 per player)

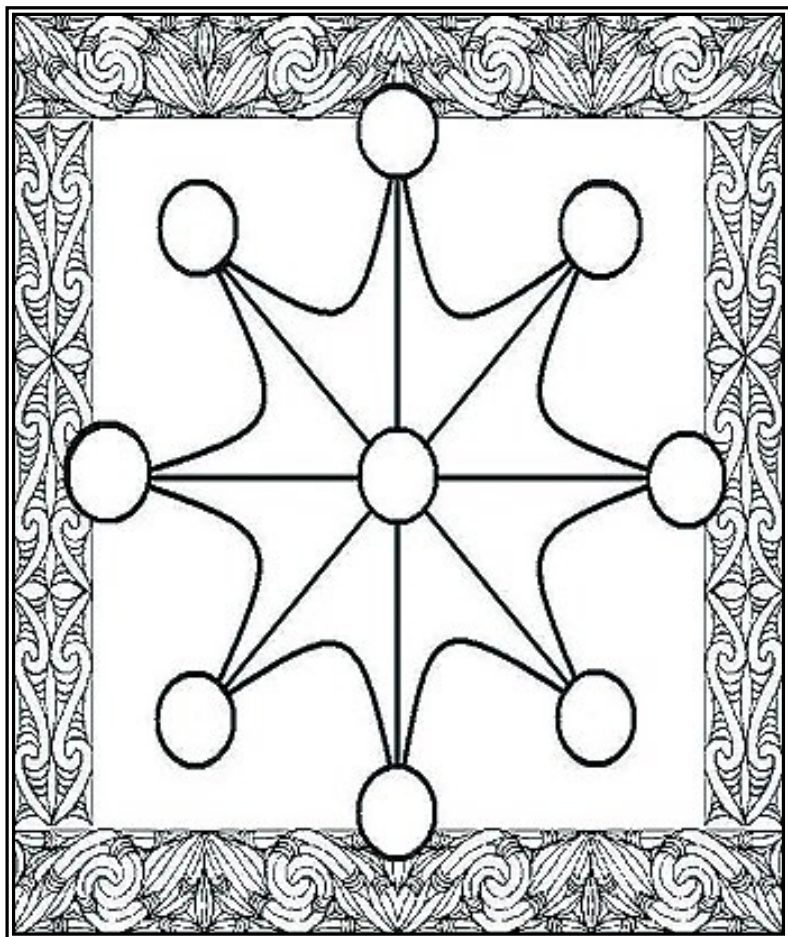
## Te Kēmu ~ The game

- On a standard board there are 8 kawai (points) and 1 pūtahi (centre) which makes 9 placement positions
- Each player starts with all their perepere on one half of the board - placed on the four adjacent kawai
- Each player then moves one perepere at a time, alternately, either into the central pūtahi or onto one of the two bordering kawai
- Neither player can jump over another piece, nor have more than one piece on a "kawai" or in the "pūtahi" at the same time
- Players must move both of their outer perepere before they can move their middle two perepere
- The object of the game is for a player to trap their opponents' pieces so they are unable to move.





# Mū torere Pāpa



# Pōtaka Tā

## Aronga ~ Purpose

Pōtaka tā (whip tops) are spinning tops with a whip alongside it made of harakeke (flax) fibre. The pōtaka (spinning tops) are whipped with the tā (whip) and were often raced over karangi (small mounds/hurdles).

Sports and games were closely associated with social gatherings and the traditional new year festival for the rise of Matariki or the star Puanga (Rigel) around winter solstice.

## Rauemi ~ Resources

- 1 x pōtaka (these were usually made from a hard wood such as mataī)
- 1 x 1m string
- 1 x whip (these are made from harakeke)



## Te Kēmu ~ The game

- Wrap your string around the top of the pōtaka and leave a little space at the end to hold
- Hold the pōtaka in your preferred hand with your forefinger and thumb
- Hold the end of the string with your pinky finger
- Once your fingers are comfortably in place, throw the pōtaka, whip your wrist and pull the string (like whipping a tea towel)
- Once spinning, use the tā (whip) to whip the bottom of the pōtaka to keep it spinning.





# Whai

## Aronga ~ Purpose

Whai is a game using a length of string, the end tied into a knot to form a circle. In full it is termed, 'Te Whai wawewawe a Maui or Huhi (according to others).

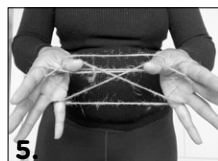
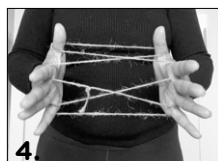
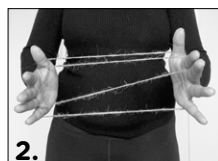
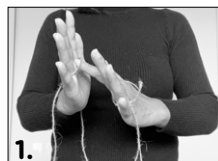
The cord would be manipulated into outlines of specific shapes of objects, a star path or figures that represented pūrākau (legends), whakapapa (genealogy) and mātauranga (knowledge). It provided amusement throughout long winter nights.

## Rauemi ~ Resources

- 1 x knotted string (1m-2m)

## Te Kapu me te Hoeha ~ Cup & Saucer

1. Hold the string hooked over the thumb and the little finger on both hands, with the hands up, and from each thumb, number the fingers - from one (closest to the thumb) to four (the little finger)
2. With finger 1 on the right hand, go across to the left hand, tuck finger 1 under the string of the left hand, and drag the string back until it is taught again
3. With finger 1 from the left hand, do the same on the right
4. Keep the fingers all pointing upwards to prevent the strings dropping off - there will be six crossed strings forming a pattern at this stage
5. Take both thumbs and pass them over strings two to five and drag string six back towards the body
6. Use your teeth to pass string one (the string closest to the body) over the thumbs without dropping any other strings
7. Release the strings from fingers 4 of both hands.



# Raupuhi Rautaka

## Aronga ~ Purpose

This is one of the many games that was used by Māori to develop mental dexterity, reaction, stability, hand-eye coordination, and many other skills.

There are a lot of variations and progressions that can be used to level up the game, pending the imagination of oneself.

## Rauemi ~ Resources

- 1 x feather per player
- 1 x headband per player

## Te Kēmu ~ The game

- Each player places one feather on their forehead, held by the headband
- Players to stand approximately and arms-length away from each other
- The objective of the game is to try and grab the feather from your opponent's head without moving your feet.

## Taumata Ake ~ Level up

- Allow players to move feet, increasing endurance
- Bring in more players
- Decrease the space they're allowed to move in.





# Ngā mahi a te rēhia



Poi Toa

Pukenga Rakau (Rakau Skills)



Hakariki



Hei tama Tū Tama

The background is a solid teal color with several large, overlapping geometric shapes in lighter shades of teal. These shapes include rectangles and trapezoids. Overlaid on these are stylized white lines that form abstract, angular patterns, some resembling architectural details or calligraphic flourishes. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

# POI TOA & BALL GAMES



# Horohopu

## Aronga ~ Purpose

Warriors in extremely physical training regimes originally used the poi toa. The “kī” or round head, was often weighted with a rock, which improved its velocity and impact. Long ropes were sometimes attached so that warriors could practice flick and pull exercises on each other. The various exercises would improve reaction times and keep their wrists supple and strong.

The tikanga associated with dance poi does not apply to poi toa.

## Rauemi ~ Resources

- 1 x poi toa (rope, duct tape, stuffing and fabric)
- 8 x cones

## Te Kēmu ~ The game

- Mark out a playing zone (e.g. size of indoor court) with 2 x scoring zones
- Split players into 2 teams
- Each team line up along their defending zone
- The poi toa is placed into the centre and on ‘go’ players run in to retrieve the poi toa
- The objective is to pass the poi toa to a member of your team who is standing inside the scoring zone, and they successfully catch the taura (rope) of the poi toa
- You must swing the poi toa before releasing it
- You are not to move your feet when holding the poi toa
- If the poi toa drops to the ground, possession is handed to the opposing team
- If the poi toa is caught by the ‘kī’, possession is handed over.

# Hakariki

## Aronga ~ Purpose

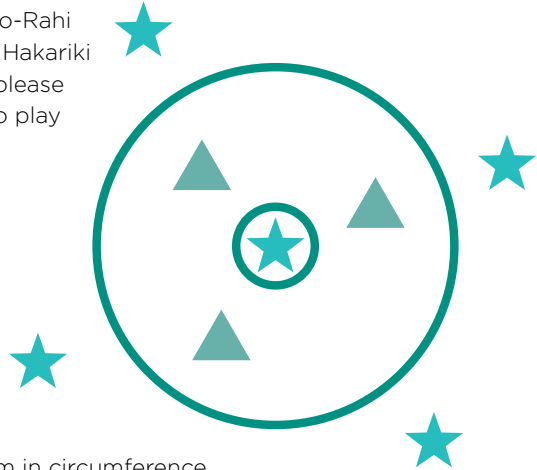
Hakariki has a whakapapa to Kī-o-Rahi and Tapu Ae. You can start with Hakariki as an introduction to Kī-o-rahi (please see separate resource for how to play Kī-o-Rahi).

## Rauemi ~ Resources

- 1 x kī (medium sized ball)
- 1 x hula hoop
- Cones

## Te Kēmu ~ The game

- Mark a circle approximately 6m in circumference
- Place the hula hoop at the centre of the marked circle
- The pou tangata stands inside the hula hoop with the kī/ball and isn't allowed to step outside the hula hoop area
- 3-4 defenders stand inside the large marked circle
- The remaining 3-4 attackers stand outside the marked circle
- Play starts with the pou tangata passing the kī to an attacker
- The objective is for the attackers to get the ball to the pou tangata
- Points are rewarded if the pou tangata catches the ball
- If the defending team intercept it, points are awarded to the defending team
- After each point play resets to the pou tangata
- Points can be added for more difficult catches e.g.:
  - Above head = 1 pt
  - Chest area = 2 pts
  - Near feet = 3 pts





# Tī uru

## Aronga ~ Purpose

Traditionally played with a piece of 'Tī Kōuka' (cabbage tree) or block of wood. Tī Uru is a tākaro that encouraged and celebrates close connections and ties between Whānau, Hapu, and Iwi.

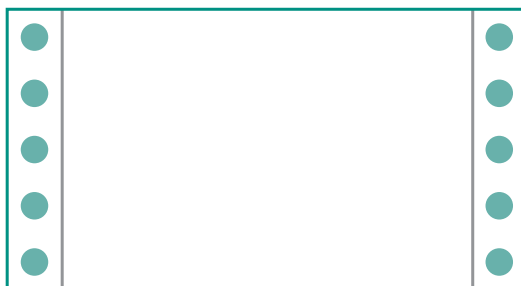
This tākaro is played with a light piece of Tī Kōuka (cabbage tree) once dried out the branch has a hollow centre. This makes it perfect for the way you pass, catch and score in the game. A flat open palm must be always used when carrying the "Tī or Kī".

## Rauemi ~ Resources

- 1 x kī (medium sized ball)
- 10 x spots/mats
- Cones
- Bibs/bands for teams

## Te Kēmu ~ The game

- Players are divided into 2 teams
- The ball must be carried on a flat hand and not held
- To get rid of a mat you must catch the ball while standing on a mat. However, the ball must be thrown to you behind the 5- metre line to count
- If you catch the ball while on the mat but your teammate threw you the ball from behind the line it is a handover
- Once you have scored a point that mat is removed, and you are left with four (and so on)
- Defenders can push you off the mats (keep the pushing civil!)
- or knock the ball out of your hands
- You cannot run with the ball inside the 5-metre zone.



| = 5 metre line ● = mats