



This activity is based on a game from the Torres Strait where a number of players stood in a circle and sang the *kai wed* (ball song) as they hit a ball up in the air with the palm of their hands. The game was played using a thick, oval, deep red fruit from the kai tree, which is quite light when dry. (Play with teams of 4 or more.)



**What you need**

- > Inside or outside playing area free of obstructions
- > A small beach ball or soft sponge ball for each team

**What to do**

**SETTING UP**

- > Distribute groups a safe distance apart over the available area.
- > Players stand about 1m apart.

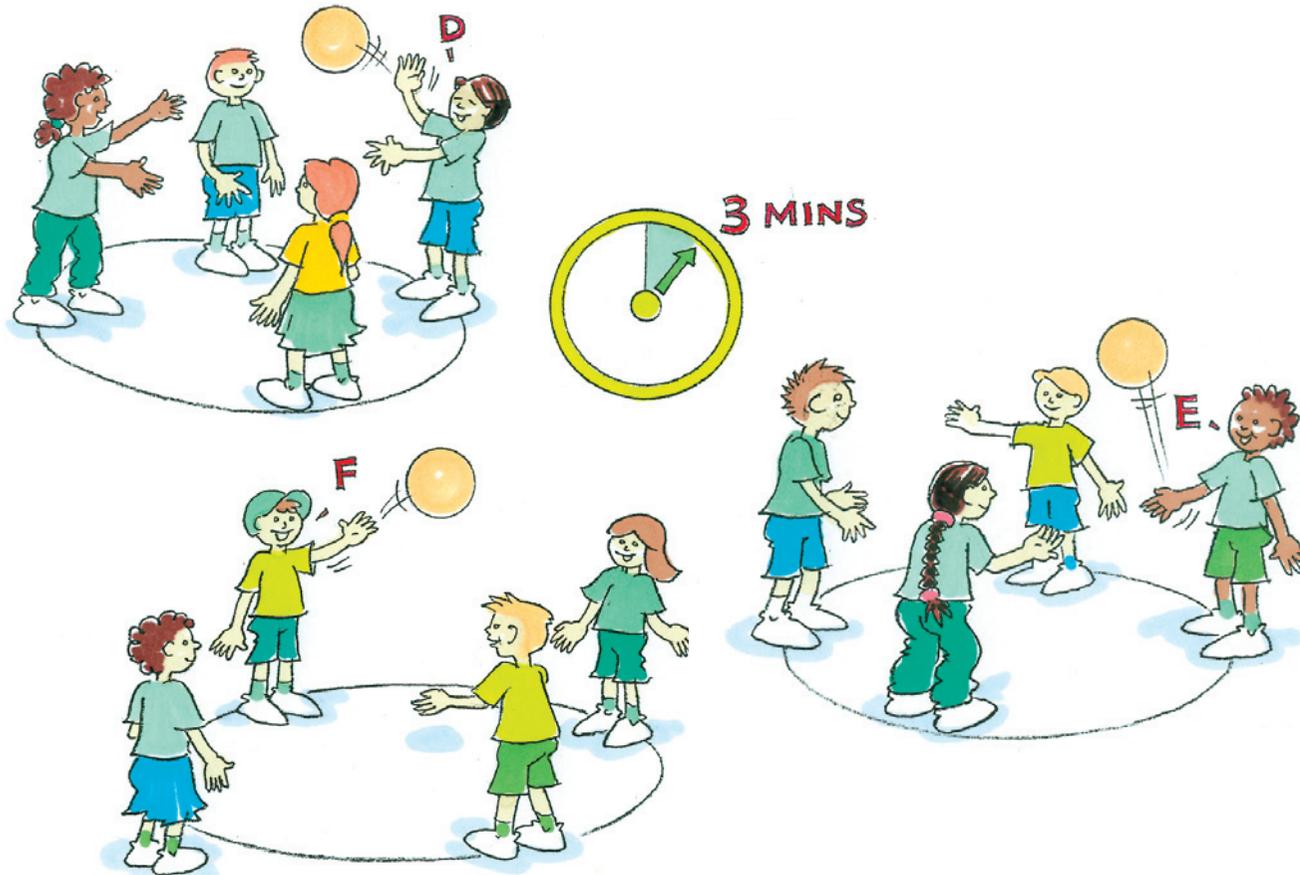
**PLAYING**

The activities below are described using a volleyball-like hitting action. An alternative for beginners is to allow passing and catching, with players attempting to return the ball as quickly as possible.

**Cooperative variation**

- > **Letters of the alphabet** – each team attempts to make as many hits as they can without dropping the ball, calling out a consecutive letter of the alphabet or number on each hit. An alternative is for players to call out their name on each hit – a good ice-breaker where players are unfamiliar with each other.

- > **Hitting the ball** – players hit the ball with the palm of either hand or both hands in an underarm action. Alternatively, with beginners, allow players to pass and catch, reducing the time the ball is held ('hot potato' action).
- > **Rules** – the team starts from the letter 'A' again if players:
  - miss the ball and it hits the ground
  - hit the ball twice in succession
  - hit the ball back to the player who previously hit it to them
  - do not keep their hands open and flat when contacting the ball.
- > **More on rules** – if the rules are not working, change them! For example, with beginners allow players to start again at the last letter of the alphabet they reached rather than returning to 'A'. If 2 hits per player is appropriate (one to check the ball and the next to pass it), then use 2 hits. Use the rules to change the game to suit the players. That makes game sense!



### Competitive variation

- > Play for 2–3 minutes. The winning team is the one that has worked furthest through the alphabet.
- > Alternatively, teams start at the same time and work for a set period of time noting the highest letter they reached without dropping the ball.

### Change it

- > Vary the distance between players.
- > Vary the size and type of ball.
- > A buddy system with two players working in tandem will ensure everyone is included.

### Safety

- > Choose an area away from walls and other obstructions.
- > Ensure players have completed other space awareness activities, e.g. Start out WC 03a,b.
- > Enforce a 'lost ball' strategy. Players signal their intent to enter another playing area.
- > Use **Change it** to accommodate different player abilities.



### LESSON LINK

Use *Kai* as an ice-breaker or warm-up with cards such as Get into it NC 02 or 05.