

## How to Make Pala'ie



See this cool video on how to make Pala'ie by Kysha Kawano:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBNUZjbMuW0&feature=youtu.be>

It's harder than it looks. Pala'ie (loop and ball game) can be played just about anywhere if you have some space to swing it around. The implement is made of the coconut leaf midribs (handle), a braided rope and the coconut tree palm cloth (*a'a*) (found at the base of the coconut leaves) formed into a ball slightly larger than the loop.

Players set the ball in motion at the command of a referee. The swinging continues until all have missed except one.

The object of this game is not merely to catch the ball in the loop, although this may provide enjoyment for younger children. The real challenge comes from holding the handle horizontally and swinging the ball from the bottom of the loop to the top so as to make a complete circle with the ball. With practice this may be done 50 or 100 times without missing.

### **To make the game implement:**

Select 12 mature, firm, freshly cut niu or coconut leaf midribs from leaflets 28 inches or longer if possible. If niu are slender and pliable, use 15 or more to make the implement firm.

Gather these into a tight bundle, and wind a strong cord firmly around the base at least 12 times and knot it securely.

Braid the niu from the base to the tip in a 3-ply braid which will produce a flat, firm handle for the *pala'ie*.

Make a loop from the braided tip, using the portion far enough from the tip to form a firm loop which will not bend under the weight of the ball. The loop will be oval, some 3 by 4

inches. Tie the tip to the handle with a dozen or more turns of cord and trim off the free ends of niu.

Make a ball of palm cloth, called *a'a*. This forms at the base of the coconut leaf (*a'a niu*). A superior cloth comes from the *loulou* or fan palm (*a'a loulou*). To make the ball, take a sheet of *a'a* of at least a square foot, place a few fragments of the same material in the center as stuffing, then lift up the edges to form a ball about 3 or 4 inches in diameter. It must be slightly larger than the loop of the *pala'ie* and light in weight.

Close the ball by tying it with one end of a cord about a yard long. Use a heavy needle to draw the free end of the cord through the center of the ball and out the side opposite the tie. This allows the ball to swing with proper balance. Make a needle from a sliver of bamboo, or use an upholsterer's needle.

Attach the free end of the cord to the handle of the *pala'ie*. Note that the loop of the *pala'ie* is not centered but curves to one side. A right-handed player holds the handle so that the loop is toward the left. The string which carries the ball should be secured that it comes from the left side of the handle and is just long enough to allow the ball to reach the center of the loop.

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