

## **Mu Torere**

### **New Zealand**

Mu Torere (Moo Toh-RERE-uh) is played on a game board ("*papa takaro*"), or scribed into clay or sand.

#### **You will need:**

8 counters—four similar counters for each player  
Two players

#### **How you play:**

1. On the eight point boards, each player has four pieces - usually distinctly colored stones.
2. Each player starts with all their pieces on one half of the board - placed on the four adjacent "kewai".
3. Each player then moves one piece at a time, alternately, either into the central "putahi" or onto one of the two flanking "kewai".
4. Neither player must jump over another piece, nor have more than one piece on a "kewai" or in the "putahi" at the same time.

The object of the game is for each player to move his pieces into such positions as to prevent the opponent from being able to move.

Expert players were known to be able to "see" over forty moves ahead on the eight "kewai" boards.

The game seems very simple to play - this was a common misconception of early settlers. Many have recorded in their journals of being repeatedly beaten when gambling against Māori players. Sometimes up to ten settlers would simultaneously play a single Māori player, and still lose the game.

The first win by a settler against a Māori player was recorded in the 1850s, when the average Māori playing ability had decreased significantly and there was little interest in the game.

