



New Age Kurling (NAK) is a game that is easily adapted to suit the needs of those with physical disabilities and restricted mobility.

It's inspired from the traditional sport of Curling, which is played on ice in the Winter Olympics. As you can imagine, it's not very easy to transport ice, so this version has ball bearing in the NAK stones, and can be played on a hard surface and short-piled carpets.

The aim of the game is to get closest to the middle of the target.

There are two teams. One team has 4 red NAK stones and the other has 4 blue NAK stones. You can play with one or up to 4 players on each side.

Each team alternates a turn until all 8 NAK stones have been used. This is called an 'end'. The winner of an end will be determined by which colour is the nearest to the middle of the target. You score one point for each colour that is nearest to the middle before the closest other colour NAK stone, so you can score up to a maximum of 4 points per end. For example if there are two blue NAK stones nearest to the middle before the nearest red NAK stone, the blue team scores two points. If there are three red NAK stones nearest to the middle before the nearest blue NAK stone, the red team scores three points.

- In this example, one red NAK stone is nearest to the middle before the nearest blue NAK stone, so the red team would score one point.
- Depending on group size, you can play the best of a certain amount of ends (so best of three ends) and not do a cumulative score from each end. This is usually the preferred method if you have several people in a group. An alternative is to do a cumulative score of points over a certain amount of ends – this is also a good way because if one team loses the 1st two ends 1-0 they could score 3 or 4 points in the next end and still win.
- Participants are allowed to knock their opponents' NAK stones out of the way and push their own ones in. This actually makes the game quite exciting and creates some friendly competition.



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- If the facility doesn't have a suitable surface, you can lay down vinyl and it can be played on that



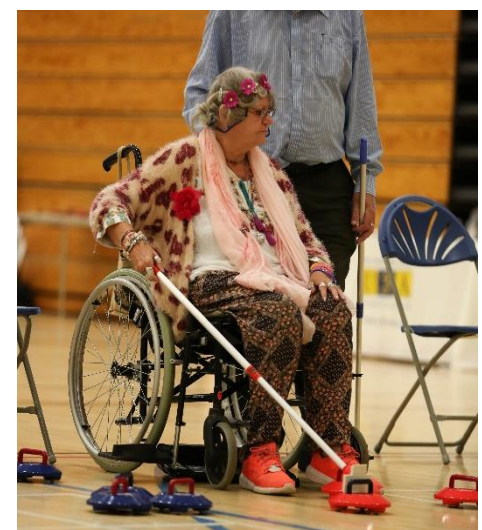
Adaptations

- Standing
- If the participants are mobile and agile, they will be able to bend/kneel down and push the NAK stones using their hands
- This is the most advanced position
- Standing with pusher
- Starting position would be to have the NAK stone fairly close as this allows more force to be generated through the amount of leverage
- If the NAK stone is set up too far in front of the participant it's more difficult to generate power



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- Where balance is more of a prevalent issue the participant can hold on to something for support
- For example, a table, walking stick or the back of a chair (ensure chair is stable)
- NAK can also be played while seated for those who are unable to play whilst standing
- We recommend that participants play standing where possible to get the maximum health benefits but quite often people will begin in a seated position and progress to standing if possible
- The same principles apply – the nearer the NAK stone, the more force can be applied
- Some participants may not have the ability/strength to push the NAK stones
- In this scenario a ramp is used to provide the power for a push, and the instructor can provide the adequate support to the player, for example holding the ramp for them if necessary or placing the stone in the ramp for them
- This is designed to offer maximum opportunity for the group to be as inclusive as possible



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- In general, NAK is played with one arm on the pusher
- You'll find that some participants struggle with this due to shoulder mobility
- Therefore, a 2-handed grip with the pusher being held in front will be more suitable for some participants

- Set the group up in a horse shoe style layout so each participant can see the person who is taking their go. This encourages social interaction with each other amongst those taking part. Those that don't wish to take part but would like to spectate can still sit with the group, and engage with the activity

- When working with people that have visual impairments, you can use your voice as a target and ask the player to aim their throw shot towards you (as seen opposite in a game of Boccia). You can then describe the level of power required, and any adjustments that may need to be made for their next shot. Be sure to try and describe the activity in as much detail as possible, and support people with feeling all of the equipment before the activity starts



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Tips for Sessions with Dementia Support Groups

- You'll need to assess whether you think NAK is appropriate for the session, ideally you'd want a hard floor surface so it won't take much effort to push the NAK stones
- If you have a facility big enough, it would be good to have the group set up in a circle around the outside of the room and the target in the middle. This way participants won't need to keep getting up and down, which may decrease the risk for confusion and disorientation



Some participants will find it hard to understand what you want them to do, i.e. push the NAK stones towards the target. This is where patience is key and you may need to try different methods of communication. Some ideas are:

- Crouch down at the other end of the target, place hands above the middle and ask them to push the NAK stone to you
- Stand beside the participant and demonstrate the action you wish them to undertake (pretend to push)
- Place the ramp next to them and ask them to drop the NAK stone into the ramp – you may need to help with placing the NAK stone above the ramp (make sure you've aimed the ramp towards the target, and asked if the player is happy or if you want to change the aim)

