kamai (string games)

weitj djen (emu foot)
Noongar language from Balardung Country, Western Australia

Many Aboriginal groups traditionally made patterns or designs on the hands with a loop of string. ‘kamai’ was among the names applied to string figures in north Queensland, ‘meeroo-meeroo’ in one area of Western Australia and ‘wame’ is the word used for string figures in the Torres Strait.

The basics:

Step 1:
Hook thumbs into string loop - extend

Step 2:
Hook pinky fingers into string loop - extend

Step 2b:
You should now have the basic starting position

Lets play!
Step 3: Slide your right pointer finger under left palm string

Step 4: Extend

Step 5a: Duck your right pointer under both middle strings, creating a loop around the pointer finger

Step 5b: Extend

Step 6: Insert your left pointer finger through the loop around your right pointer finger, and then under the right palm string

Step 7: Extend

Step 8: Release or drop right thumb string

Step 9: Release right pinky finger string

Step 10: Extend

Step 11: Rotate hands 90 degrees so your three emu toes point towards the ground

Congratulations! You made an emu foot!