



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Numbers

Introduction

This Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language resource guide highlights numbers recorded from over seventy (70) Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages or dialects!

Queries regarding Indigenous numbers are a common request at the State Library of Queensland. These queries are from a number of sources, but especially schools and kindergartens wanting to add Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages into their curriculum programs. With the advent of the Australian Curriculum and the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, teachers are seeking advice on counting systems and use of 'mathematical concepts in Australian Indigenous societies'.

This content description applies to Foundation through to Year 7 in the Australian Curriculum and encourages students to research and explore traditional Indigenous knowledges around number, space, measurement and time. Number and counting systems are often seen as a good starting point as it can lead to counting rhymes, number games and other learning activities in the early years.

It is envisaged that this compilation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander words for numbers can be used in schools and communities as a tool to raise awareness and learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Pronunciation

In pronouncing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander words, there are some sounds which are quite different to English and require practice. The following list is a brief guide to some of the sounds.

Aboriginal sounds	
dh	Pronounced like an English 'd' with the tongue at back of the teeth; can also sound like 'th'.
ng	Single sound closest to 'ng' sound found in singer.
ny	Single sound closest to 'n' sound found at end of onion.
rr	Rolled 'r' sound, similar to a Scottish 'r'; may also sound like a 'd'.
Torres Strait Islander sounds	
dh	Pronounced like an English 'd' with the tongue at back of the teeth; can also sound like 'th'.
dz	Single sound similar to 'dj'.
ng	Single sound closest to 'ng' sound found in singer.
oi	Prolonged sound that can be between 'oi' and 'ai'.
p, s and z	Sound similar to English.

Note: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages were oral-based; there may be several variations in spelling and pronunciation. The following list should be seen as a guide – check with local language speakers as to the local preference for spelling and pronunciation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Numbers

The following list identifies words from historical sources for a selection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages across Queensland.

Language and Location	1 (one)	2 (two)	3 (three)	4 (four)	5 (five/hand)	Many
Angkamuthi (Cape York)	<i>Nhipima</i>	<i>Udhima</i>	<i>Wuchama</i>	-	<i>Mata</i>	<i>Makyan</i>
Badjirri (Tinnenburra)	<i>Garritja</i>	<i>Bulanha</i>	<i>Bulanha-garritja</i>	<i>Bulanha-bulanha</i>	<i>Marra</i>	<i>Kalkara</i>
Baradha (Nebo)	<i>Warba</i>	<i>Bularu</i>	<i>Bularu-Warba</i>	<i>Bularu-bularu</i>	<i>Mala</i>	<i>Dalmarri</i>
Barrungam (Dalby)	<i>Wengge or Pia</i>	<i>Coloomboola</i>	<i>Coloomboola-pia</i>	<i>Kangooi</i>	<i>Maa</i>	<i>Toogool-gurra</i>
Bayali (Keppel Bay)	<i>Webben</i>	<i>Booli</i>	<i>Koorel</i>	<i>Booli-booli</i>	<i>Moolloom</i>	-
Bidjara (Charleville)	<i>Wangarra</i>	<i>Bularu</i>	<i>Bularu Wangarra</i>	<i>Bularu-bularu</i>	<i>Mara</i>	<i>Banya Banya</i>
Bigambul (South-West Queensland)	<i>Bardja</i>	<i>Boolul</i>	<i>Boolul-bardja</i>	<i>Goonimbilla</i>	<i>Marr</i>	<i>Mayburra</i>
Biri (Bowen River)	<i>Warba</i>	<i>Bularu</i>	<i>Gudbaru</i>	<i>Bularu Bularu</i>	<i>Bularu Gudbaru</i>	<i>Dalgay</i>
Biri (Burdekin River)	<i>Warba</i>	<i>Bularu</i>	<i>Gulbara</i>	<i>Bularu Bularu</i>	<i>Bularu Gulbara</i>	<i>Moorgi</i>
Biyay (Herbert River)	<i>Yunegal</i>	<i>Yugga</i>	<i>Karbo</i>	<i>Yugga-Yugga</i>	<i>Mundi</i>	<i>Kundil</i>

Language and Location	1 (one)	2 (two)	3 (three)	4 (four)	5 (five/hand)	Many
Biyay (Hinchinbrook Island)	<i>Yoongool</i>	<i>Yekka</i>	<i>Kurrboo</i>	<i>Tukkin</i>	<i>Munndai</i>	<i>Duckin</i>
Butchulla (Fraser Coast)	<i>Garalin</i>	<i>Bula</i>	<i>Bula-galin</i>	<i>Bula-bula</i>	<i>Bi</i>	<i>Banggan</i>
Darumbal (Rockhampton)	<i>Werpa</i>	<i>Bullari</i>	<i>Bullari-werpa</i>	<i>Kangoondie</i>	<i>Illy</i>	<i>Woorrain</i>
Duungidjawu (Kilcoy)	<i>Garu</i>	<i>Biyaiyu</i>	<i>Goromda</i>	-	<i>Ma</i>	<i>Yoiran</i>
Gamilaraay (South-West Queensland)	<i>Maal</i>	<i>Bulaarr</i>	<i>Gulibaa</i>	<i>Buligaa</i>	<i>Maa</i>	<i>Burrulaa</i>
Ganggalida (Gulf)	<i>Jathara</i>	<i>Giyarrngga</i>	<i>Burldamurra</i>	<i>Wawurlda (few, not many)</i>	<i>Marlda</i>	<i>Jardi</i>
Gangulu (Dawson River)	<i>Warbur</i>	<i>Bularu</i>	<i>Bularu Warbur</i>	<i>Bularu Bularu</i>	<i>Gagun</i>	<i>Dalgay</i>
Garrwa (Gulf)	<i>Yingamali</i>	<i>Kujarra</i>	<i>Yingamali- Kujarra</i>	<i>Murrku (a few, not many – can refer to 3, 4 or 5)</i>	<i>Mani</i>	<i>Kaja</i>
Gayiri (Emerald)	<i>Wungara</i>	<i>Boolaroo</i>	<i>Boolaroo-wungara</i>	<i>Boolaroo-boolaroo</i>	<i>Marra</i>	<i>Yangier</i>
Giabal (Toowoomba)	<i>Yabul</i>	<i>Bula</i>	<i>Bula-yabul</i>	<i>Bula-bula</i>	<i>Maa</i>	<i>Tugulumba</i>

Language and Location	1 (one)	2 (two)	3 (three)	4 (four)	5 (five/hand)	Many
Gidhabal (Warwick)	<i>Yabur</i>	<i>Bulah</i>	<i>Bulah-yabur</i>	<i>Bulah-bulah</i>	<i>Danggan</i>	<i>Gumbi</i>
Goa (Diamantina River)	<i>Koornbo</i>	<i>Orra</i>	<i>Koorborra</i>	<i>Nadera</i>	<i>Murra</i>	<i>Toona</i>
Goreng Goreng (Baffle Creek)	<i>Neula</i>	<i>Boola</i>	<i>Boola-neula</i>	<i>Bomboin</i>	<i>Birroo</i>	<i>Yingatho</i>
Goreng Goreng (Bundaberg)	<i>Neular</i>	<i>Boolar</i>	<i>Neularboolar</i>	<i>Boolar-boolar</i>	<i>Boolar Boolar Neular</i>	<i>Yingarloo</i>
Gudang (Tip of Cape York)	<i>Pirman</i>	<i>Ilabiu</i>	<i>Dhama</i>	<i>Ilabiu-ilabiu</i>	<i>Ata</i>	<i>Buta</i>
Gudjal (Charters Towers)	<i>Nyunkal</i>	<i>Bulari</i>	<i>Gudbara</i>	<i>Marrgabala</i>	<i>Mara</i>	<i>Guybaguyba</i>
Gungadidji (Diamantina River)	<i>Matina</i>	<i>Barcoola</i>	<i>Barcoola matina</i>	<i>Barcoola barcoola</i>	<i>Murra</i>	<i>Mirty</i>
Gunggari (Mitchell)	<i>Wongarra</i>	<i>Bularu</i>	<i>Bularu-wongarra</i>	<i>Bularu-bularu</i>	<i>Marda</i>	<i>Yangarra- yangarra</i>
Gunya (Warrego River)	<i>Wanggara</i>	<i>Bulardi</i>	<i>Bulardi-wanggara</i>	<i>Bulardi-Bulardi</i>	<i>Marda</i>	<i>Mulla-mulla</i>

Language and Location	1 (one)	2 (two)	3 (three)	4 (four)	5 (five/hand)	Many
Guwamu (Cunnamulla-Bollon)	<i>Wanggara</i>	<i>Balardii</i>	<i>Balardii-wanggara</i>	<i>Balardii-Balardii</i>	<i>Marda</i>	<i>Mulla-mulla</i>
Guyambul (Stanthorpe)	<i>Tonway</i>	<i>Boobia</i>	<i>Boobiatha</i>	<i>Boobia-boobia</i>	<i>Yambia</i>	<i>Wolligooki</i>
Jandai (North Stradbroke Island)	<i>Kunara</i>	<i>Boodla</i>	<i>Boodla kunara</i>	<i>Boodla Boodla</i>	<i>Murra</i>	<i>Munyal</i>
Jarowair (Toowoomba)	<i>Wombarah</i>	<i>Bular</i>	<i>Bular-wombarah</i>	<i>Bular-bular</i>	<i>Maa</i>	<i>Murung</i>
Kabi Kabi / Gubbi Gubbi (Sunshine Coast)	<i>Kalim</i>	<i>Bulla</i>	<i>Bulla-kalim</i>	<i>Bulla-bulla</i>	<i>Pirri</i>	<i>Gurwinda</i>
Kala Lagaw Ya (Western Torres Strait)	<i>Urapon</i>	<i>Ukusal</i>	<i>Ukasar-urapon</i>	<i>Ukusal-ukusal</i>	<i>Ukusal-ukusal-urapon or nabi-get</i>	<i>Gorsar</i>
Kalali (Thargomindah)	<i>Tharranya</i>	<i>Barcoola</i>	<i>Barcoola gowarra</i>	<i>Barcoola-barcoola</i>	<i>Mara</i>	<i>Warno</i>
Kalkadoon (Mt Isa)	<i>Ayat</i>	<i>Lyuati</i>	<i>Kurtpai</i>	<i>Lyuati-lyuati</i>	<i>Makathi</i>	<i>Maltha</i>
Koa (Winton)	<i>Kurunyu</i>	<i>Wurra</i>	<i>Kurtpara</i>	<i>Wurrapanta</i>	<i>Marapithuru</i>	<i>Thunga</i>
Kukatj (Gulf)	<i>Wongarri</i>	<i>Kurbayia</i>	<i>Matta</i>	<i>Murgoo</i>	<i>Malla</i>	<i>Wanapurra</i>

Language and Location	1 (one)	2 (two)	3 (three)	4 (four)	5 (five/hand)	Many
Kuku Yalanji (Weary Bay)	<i>Nobin</i>	<i>Jambul</i>	<i>Kollur</i>	<i>Jambul-jambul</i>	<i>Murra</i>	<i>Kokara</i>
Kuku Yalanji (Wujal Wujal)	<i>Nyubin</i>	<i>Jambul</i>	<i>Kulur</i>	<i>Jambul-Jambul</i>	<i>Murra</i>	<i>Wubul</i>
Kungkari (Barcoo River)	<i>Wongara</i>	<i>Muta</i>	<i>Our</i>	<i>Adava</i>	<i>Murra</i>	<i>Mooral</i>
Kungulburra (Port Mackay)	<i>Warpur</i>	<i>Boolera</i>	<i>Boolera-warpur</i>	<i>Boolera-boolera</i>	<i>Mulla</i>	<i>Lumburra</i>
Kuuk Thaayorre (Pormpuraaw)	<i>Thono</i>	<i>Kuthirr</i>	<i>Pinalam</i>	<i>Mong yuur kolele</i>	<i>Yuur</i>	<i>Mong</i>
Lardil (Mornington Island)	<i>Warnge</i>	<i>Kiyan</i>	<i>Mungkalan</i>	<i>Kiyan Bana Kiyan</i>	<i>Marlda</i>	<i>Jika</i>
Mandandanji (Roma)	<i>Wongara</i>	<i>Bullardoo</i>	<i>Bullardoo-wongara</i>	<i>Bullardoo-bullardoo</i>	<i>Marda</i>	<i>Bunyarie</i>
Mananjahli (Beaudesert)	<i>Yabar</i>	<i>Bula</i>	<i>Bulayabar</i>	<i>Bulabula</i>	<i>Dungunn</i>	<i>Wallul</i>
Mayi-Thakurti (Cloncurry)	<i>Ingomar</i>	<i>Blagura</i>	<i>Muda Nuda</i>	<i>Cudgello</i>	<i>Mullero</i>	<i>Cudgello</i>

Language and Location	1 (one)	2 (two)	3 (three)	4 (four)	5 (five/hand)	Many
Meriam (Eastern Torres Strait Islands)	<i>Netat</i>	<i>Neis</i>	<i>Neis-netat</i>	<i>Neis-neis</i>	<i>Neis-neis-netat</i>	<i>Gaire</i>
Mingin (Gulf)	<i>Tualna</i>	<i>Digana</i>	<i>Tangilla</i>	<i>Ticantallio duallio</i>	<i>Nungurra</i>	<i>Yonkoona</i>
Miyan (Belyando River)	<i>Whychen</i>	<i>Bullaroo</i>	<i>Bullaroo-whychen</i>	<i>Bullaroo-bullaroo</i>	<i>Malla</i>	<i>Talgai</i>
Nyawaygi (Halifax Bay, North Queensland)	<i>Yunggul</i>	<i>Yaga</i>	<i>Gaabu</i>	<i>Gaabugaabu (few can refer to four or five)</i>	<i>Gaabugaabu (few can refer to four or five)</i>	<i>Balar</i>
Pitta Pitta (Bouliá-Bedourie)	<i>Ngururu</i>	<i>Parrhkula</i>	<i>Parrhkulanguru</i>	<i>Parrhkulaparrkhula</i>	<i>Mara</i>	<i>Punhi</i>
Thaynakwith (Weipa)	<i>Pim</i>	<i>Udhwith</i>	<i>Udhwith-pim</i>	<i>Udhwith-udwith</i>	<i>'a</i>	<i>Urri</i>
Torres Strait Creole (Torres Strait Islands, Mainland)	<i>Wan</i>	<i>Tu</i>	<i>Tri</i>	<i>Po</i>	<i>Paib</i>	<i>Plenti</i>
Turrubul (Brisbane Area)	<i>Ganar</i>	<i>Burla</i>	<i>Burla Ganar</i>	<i>Burla Burla</i>	<i>Marra</i>	<i>Korumba</i>
Uradhi (Cape York)	<i>Ngipima</i>	<i>Udhyama</i>	<i>Wuchama</i>	-	<i>Putjiki</i>	<i>Makyan</i>

Language and Location	1 (one)	2 (two)	3 (three)	4 (four)	5 (five/hand)	Many
Wakka Wakka (South Burnett)	<i>Kumbe</i>	<i>Booa</i>	<i>Kuram</i>	<i>Bogo</i>	<i>Na</i>	<i>Bogo</i>
Waluwarra (Georgina River)	<i>Ooroo</i>	<i>Barkoola</i>	<i>Barkooleroo</i>	<i>Barkoola-Barkoola</i>	<i>Marrkana</i>	<i>Murrtoo</i>
Wangkumarra (Nockatunga)	<i>Watjuwarli</i>	<i>Parrkulu</i>	<i>Parrkuwatju</i>	<i>Parrkuluparrkulu</i>	<i>Mara</i>	<i>Warndru</i>
Wik Mungkan (Western Cape York)	<i>Thonam</i>	<i>Kucham</i>	<i>Ko'alam</i>	<i>Kuchamkucham</i>	<i>Ma'</i>	<i>Yot</i>
Wirri (Mackay)	<i>Wadyin</i>	<i>Bularu</i>	<i>Bularu-wadyin</i>	<i>Bularu-bularu</i>	<i>Mara</i>	<i>Dalgay</i>
Yambina (Peak Downs)	<i>Warba</i>	<i>Bularu</i>	<i>Gargun</i>	<i>Gungu</i>	<i>Mala</i>	<i>Mulea</i>
Yandruwandha (Innamincka, Cameron Corner)	<i>Kurnu</i>	<i>Parrku</i>	<i>Parrku-kurnu</i>	<i>Parrku-Parrku</i>	<i>Mara</i>	<i>Nunka</i>
Yanyula (Borrooloola)	<i>Aalkula</i>	<i>Kanmada</i>	<i>Liikanmarra-alkula</i>	<i>Leekanmaraalkula</i>	<i>Lijakara</i>	<i>Liikanmaraalkula</i>
Yetimarala (Broadsound, Central Queensland)	<i>Warba</i>	<i>Bularu</i>	<i>Bulara-Warba</i>	<i>Bularu-Bularu</i>	<i>Mara</i>	<i>Mandya (also used for five or few)</i>

Language and Location	1 (one)	2 (two)	3 (three)	4 (four)	5 (five/hand)	Many
Yidinj (Cairns)	<i>Guman</i>	<i>Jamula</i>	<i>Dagul</i>	<i>Yunggan-gunyjii</i>	<i>Mala</i>	<i>Ngabi</i>
Yilba (Cape River, Pentland)	<i>Wadyin</i>	<i>Bularu</i>	<i>Bularu-wadyin</i>	<i>Bularu-bularu</i>	<i>Mala</i>	<i>Murga</i>
Yir-Yiront (Kowanyama)	<i>Yirr</i>	<i>Koyrr</i>	<i>Wapayrr</i>	<i>Morr-maq</i>	<i>Yorthelemrr</i>	<i>Yamar</i>
Yugambah (Logan River)	<i>Yabru</i>	<i>Bula</i>	<i>Bulayabru</i>	<i>Bulabula</i>	<i>Dunngunn</i>	<i>Wallul</i>
Yugarabul (Ipswich-West Moreton)	<i>Kunnar</i>	<i>Budela</i>	<i>Mudden</i>	<i>Budela-budela</i>	<i>Mudden-budela</i>	<i>Millen</i>
Yuggera (Brisbane Area)	<i>Kunnar</i>	<i>Budela</i>	<i>Mudden</i>	<i>Budela-budela</i>	<i>Mudden-budela</i>	<i>Millen</i>
Yulluna (Dajarra)	<i>Ngururu</i>	<i>Palaru</i>	<i>Kulpai</i>	<i>Katjimba</i>	<i>Mampunu</i>	<i>Yikarra</i>
Yuwaalaraay (South-West Queensland)	<i>Milan</i>	<i>Bulaarr</i>	<i>Gulibaa</i>	<i>Buligaa</i>	<i>Maa</i>	<i>Burrulaa</i>
Yuwibara (Mackay)	<i>Warpur</i>	<i>Boolera</i>	<i>Boolera-warpur</i>	<i>Boolera-Boolera</i>	<i>Mulla</i>	<i>Lumburra</i>

Sources and Further Reading

Words listed above were sourced from several historical texts and other references within the State Library Collections, including the following items. There may be variations in spelling and/or pronunciation across the region due to dialectical differences.

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Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages

State Library of Queensland's Indigenous Languages project is based on networks with communities, IKCs, Indigenous Language Centres and other groups working with language revival.

For more information on **Indigenous Knowledge Centres (IKCs)** and the work they are doing in communities to support language and cultural heritage: <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/about-us/indigenous-knowledge-centres>

For more information on **Brisbane** and **South-East Queensland** languages: [Yugambah Museum, Language and Heritage Research Centre](#) serves as the Indigenous Language Centre for Southern Queensland.

For more information on **Central Queensland** languages: [Central Queensland Language Centre](#) serves as the Indigenous Language Centre for Central and Central-Western Queensland.

For more information on **North Queensland** languages: [North Queensland Regional Aboriginal Corporation Language Centre](#) serves as the Indigenous Language Centre for North Queensland.

For more information on **Cape York** languages: [Pama Language Centre](#) serves as the Indigenous Language Centre for Cape York.

For more information on **Torres Strait Islander** languages: [Torres Strait Traditional Languages Centre](#) has been established on Thursday Island.

State Library of Queensland

For further information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages at the State Library of Queensland, please contact:

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State Library Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Webpages: www.slq.qld.gov.au/resources/atsi/languages

State Library Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Blog: <http://blogs.slq.qld.gov.au/ilq/>

Further Links

[Spoken Virtual Tour](#)

[Jarjum Stories exhibition](#)

[Old Words, New Ways upcoming exhibition](#)

[Minya Birran: What next for Indigenous Languages?](#)

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