

Nau mai, Haere mai 'Kōrero mai'

A beginner's kete to learning basic Māori language

Aotearoa New Zealand is the only place in the world where te Reo Māori is spoken as an indigenous language. This makes it a taonga/ treasure unique to this country and deserves our protection and nourishment. Christchurch City Libraries/Ngā Kete Wānanga o Ōtautahi values the role it has in supporting this important kaupapa (topic). We encourage you to learn to speak te Reo Māori and have created this basic kete to get you started.

The Māori alphabet

The Māori alphabet is made up of ten consonants and five vowels.



What are the lines above the letters?

The lines are called macrons, they indicate the a vowel is pronounced: short or long.

Short



Long



Consonants

Most consonants sound similar to the English sound but there are several that need special attention and practice.

r is very short and slightly rolled

wh is pronounced as 'f'

ng is pronounced as the 'ng' in the word sing

Kōrero Māori give it a go

Greetings/Ngā Mihi

Kia ora	Hello/Thank you
Tēnā koe	Formal greeting to one person
Tēnā kōrua	Formal greeting to two people
Tēnā koutou	Formal greeting to many people
E noho rā	Goodbye (from a person leaving)
Haere rā	Goodbye (from a person staying)
Hei konei rā	Goodbye (less formal)
Ka kite anō	See you again (informal goodbye)
Mōrena	Good morning
Ata Mārie	Good morning
Pō Mārie	Good night
Haere mai	Welcome, come in, enter
Nau mai	Welcome
Ngā mihi nui	With best wishes

Other useful Kupu (words)

Āe	Yes
Kāo	No
Aua	Not sure / I don't know
Rā	Day / Sun
Pō	Night / Darkness
Whānau	Extended family
Hapū	Group of whānau descended from the same ancestor
Iwi	Tribe, nation
Kaumātua	Male or female elder(s)
Whakapapa	Genealogy
E tū	Stand up
E moe	Go to sleep
E kai	Eat up
Whakarongo	Listen
Titiro	Look
Turituri	Be quiet
Kāti	Stop
Taihoa	Wait
Kia tūpato	Be careful
Kia kaha	Be strong

Correct pronunciation indicates bicultural awareness and respect for Māori culture.

Log onto our bilingual signs website to listen to some pronunciation examples.

my.christchurchcitylibraries.com/bilingual-signage

