

Customs & Communication in NZ

Complete the text with the words given

broadcasting come exactly harder introductory ourselves overview

Understanding local customs is one of the hardest parts of settling into any new country.

Sometimes the more similar your culture seems to the 'Kiwi' culture, the _____ it can be to understand subtle social differences.

We describe _____ as 'friendly but reserved' and 'open but respectful'. It can be hard to know what _____ that means, so expect to feel a bit confused. Give it time and be patient. Eventually you will _____ to understand just how New Zealanders ("Kiwis") work.

To get a feel for who we are as a people, visit 'New Zealand in Brief' - an _____ of life in New Zealand in the Encyclopedia of New Zealand' (Te Ara').

NZ On Air, the government agency that funds our _____ services, has a collection of TV programmes, films, music videos and web series produced in New Zealand. They come with _____ notes that will help you explore our culture.

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Ask and watch

Kiwis are great travellers and we understand that _____ to somewhere new can be difficult.

Watch what people do here and do not be afraid to ask someone to _____ anything you find _____. It is the _____ way to learn. You will find that we are quite approachable and _____ to help.

You can also ask Kiwis to let you know if you are doing something that is not _____.

Food and social occasions

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Sharing food is a common Kiwi way of bringing people together in a _____ atmosphere.

Whether it is a picnic on the beach, a hāngi (traditional Māori method of cooking food in an _____) at your child's school, or a barbecue with neighbours, you will find that food and friendship go together in New Zealand.



It is common to contribute to this _____ by bringing food or wine to share. If the _____ says "don't bring anything", you can still bring a small gift.

New Zealanders have a relaxed _____ to invitations. Sometimes people will say they are coming to a party and not _____. Do not take it personally.

Coffee and tea are an important part of Kiwi socialising. If you visit someone's home you will usually _____ a coffee or tea. "Going out for coffee" (even if you drink tea) is a regular event.

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Alcohol

We have a drinking _____ in New Zealand, but it is fine to have non-alcoholic drinks when you are _____.

The legal age for buying alcohol in New Zealand is 18. There are strict rules against _____ alcohol for people under that age.

Smoking

Smoking is _____ rare in New Zealand and is _____ in public buildings, including bars and restaurants.

Generally, people are _____ to smoke outside. If you want to smoke, it is polite to ask the people around you if they _____, even if you are outside.

There is a programme called Quitline to help people who want to _____ smoking. Call 0800 778 778 for details.

although at their cost colleagues common means raise share special

Socialising at work

Shared morning or afternoon teas are very _____ at work. They are often to celebrate someone's birthday or other events in the team.

Generally, everyone brings some food to _____. When we say 'bring a plate', it _____ please bring some food.

If someone is 'shouting', it means they are providing the food or drink _____ - no one will _____ their voice!

Drinks after work on Friday are quite common in New Zealand too. This is mainly for work _____. Other family members do not normally come, _____ this depends on the workplace. If you are not sure, ask.

At these events, we try to keep talk about work to a minimum.

The 'New Zealand way of working' pages on this site have more information about how Kiwi workplaces work.

avoid bless footpath indoors quite surface too close topics weight

Social customs and manners

On the _____, Kiwis are friendly and outgoing. But we are also _____ private. Although it is easy to start a conversation with us, we do not like sharing a lot of personal information. Topics to _____ include how much people earn, why they do not have any children or are not married, their _____ - anything personal.

It is OK to ask people what they did on the weekend or how their children are. Sport and weather are also safe _____.

We come from a land of wide open spaces so we do not like having people stand _____ to us. We walk on the left side of the _____ and we smile at each other a lot.

Some of the customs in New Zealand come from Māori culture. For example, you are often expected to take your shoes off _____ and it is important not to sit on tables or pillows. Māori people will often say a prayer (karakia) to _____ food before eating it, and they may greet you with a kiss on the cheek.



Some of the 'unwritten rules' in New Zealand come from Māori culture.

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Communicating with Kiwis

Kiwis are _____ kind hearted and want to help, so we do not like saying "no".

Sometimes we will say "no" in an _____ way, which can be confusing to newcomers.

We may say "not sure" or "not really". We may _____ say "yeah nah", which means "probably not". "Yeah right", especially when it is said in a sarcastic way, means "definitely not"!

There is a great Immigration NZ tool called WorkTalk that _____ how we communicate in New Zealand workplaces.

Kiwi slang and accent

Kiwis speak very quickly and use a lot of slang. Even if English is your native language, this can be confusing. Do not be afraid to ask people to _____, or to repeat or explain what they said.

To _____ to the Kiwi accent, we suggest that you listen to some radio _____. You could also watch some New Zealand films and television programmes online.

Write questions to go with these answers based on the text.

1. _____ ?
They're friendly but reserved, and open but respectful.
2. _____ ?
NZ On Air.
3. _____ ?
Just do not be afraid to ask for help.
4. _____ ?
You can ask Kiwis to let you know in that case.
5. _____ ?
Well, they may have a picnic on the beach, a hangi at their child's school or a barbecue with neighbours.
6. _____ ?
Yes, it would be a good idea if you took something to share.
7. _____ ?
Oh, yes, and you will usually be offered a cup when visiting someone's home.
8. _____ ?
It's 18.
9. _____ ?
No, you're not allowed to.
10. _____ ?
It means they are providing the food or drink at their cost.
11. _____ ?
On Fridays after work.
12. _____ ?
No, only workmates.
13. _____ ?
Well You can ask about their children or what they did at the weekend – but avoid asking personal questions.
14. _____ ?
With a kiss on the cheek.
15. _____ ?
You might listen to the radio or watch films or TV online.

