

# 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.

adjusting appropriate confusing explain quickest willing

## 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

attitude be offered earth oven hospitality host relaxing turn up

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.

culture   expected   give up   increasingly   mind   prohibited   providing   socialising

## 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.



## 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.

