



Tikanga a te  
marae

All marae have their own kawa (protocols) and tikanga (rules). The best advice is to ask the local people what their expectations are.



Before the pōwhiri (welcome)



Arrive early. It is considered impolite to walk onto a marae once a pōwhiri is underway.



Dress formally, particularly for a tangihanga.



Introduce yourself to other groups you don't know.



Give your koha (monetary gift) to the kaumātua with the envelope.



Ensure that your group has a speaker and kaikaranga organised.



Ensure cell phones are switched off throughout the pōwhiri.

# During the pōwhiri

You should not just walk onto a marae; you need to be welcomed on.

Women walk on as a group, while men also group together.

Do not eat or drink during the welcome.

Do not walk in front of a speaker on the marae ātea.

Speak in Māori, not English, if giving a speech.

Males sit at the front on most marae, though some marae allow both women and men to sit on the front seat.

At the conclusion of the welcome you should harirū (shake hands) and hongī (press noses). While on some marae kissing on the cheek is considered appropriate, others prefer that men and women just hongī and harirū.

# After the pōwhiri

- Wash your hands (water will be provided).

# In the wharekai (dining room)

Manuhiri (visitors) will be called in for food. It is polite to let kaumātua (elders) go first. Often the person calling people in for food will say who should come first.

Wait until a karakia has been said before eating.

Do not pass food over a person's head in the wharekai.

Do not sit on tables.

# In the wharenuui or whare Tūpuna (meeting house)

Remove your shoes before going into the wharenuui.

Check before you put your sleeping bag down. Certain parts of the wharenuui are reserved for particular manuhiri and tangata whenua.

Do not eat or drink in the wharenuui.

Do not step over people in the wharenuui.

Do not sit on pillows.

Mattresses and pillows will be provided but you will need to bring your own blankets or sleeping bag.

At a  
tangihanga

Wash your hands after  
greeting the bereaved family  
and farewelling the  
tūpāpaku (dead person).

Wash your hands after  
leaving an urupā (cemetery).

# General marae etiquette

1. Some marae do not allow photographs, filming or tape recording without permission.

# Pōwhiri Process

The pōwhiri is a process whereby the host people welcome visitors on the marae. In recent years the pōwhiri process has also been used in other situations, such as welcoming a new employee to a workplace.

The marae usually consists of a wharenuī/Whare Tūpuna (meeting house) with marae ātea (courtyard) in front, a wharekai (dining hall) and an ablutions block with toilets and showers.

# Tangata Whenua

- The tangata whenua are the local people. When they are welcoming a group they are responsible for them. They begin the welcome when the group of visitors has assembled.

## Manuwhiri (Manuhiri)

The visitors to a marae who have never been there before are known as waewae tapu (sacred feet). Distant visitors are known as manuhiri tūārangi (visitors from afar). When manuhiri have never been to a particular marae before a kaumātua (elder) in the group will often perform a protective karakia or prayer known as a waerea. Usually the group will organise their kaikaranga (caller), their kaikōrero (speakers) and collect koha (the donation) to be given to the tangata whenua. They also usually decide on the order of speakers.

# Karanga

In many cases, there will be no wero and the pōwhiri will begin with the karanga or call. A kaikaranga (caller) from the tangata whenua will begin to call and she will be responded to by a kaikaranga from the manuhiri.

The manuhiri will move onto the marae and the calling will continue.

## Haka pōwhiri

When the manuhiri are being welcomed onto the marae, the host people will sometimes welcome them with a haka pōwhiri (ritual action chant).

# Whaikōrero & Waiata

Whaikōrero (speeches) are given by both hosts and visitors on the marae.

At the conclusion of each speech the speaker and a number of supporters will sing a waiata (song). Often these are traditional waiata but definitely in Māori.

## Koha

The koha is a gift by the manuhiri to the tangata whenua. It is usually placed on the ground by the final speaker from the manuhiri. Once the speaker is seated, someone from the tangata whenua will pick it up.

# Harirū and hongī

At the conclusion of the formal proceedings the manuhiri will be invited to come and hongī (press noses) with the tangata whenua. At Pukekaraka and in Ngāti Raukawa it is two presses of the nose.

Traditionally, whether male or female, participants would hongī. After European settlement, the kiss was introduced, and instead of a hongī men and women would kiss other women. Many marae now insist on a return to the traditional method where only hongī and harirū occurs. Be prepared to hongī first.