

New Zealand



Capital:	Wellington
Population:	4.1 million (approx)
Religion:	80% of the population is Christian with nearly 500,000 Roman Catholics and 900,000 Anglicans. Other denominations include Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian. Maori churches have a combined membership of about 30,000. Almost 20% of New Zealanders describe themselves as nonreligious.
Government:	The head of state is the British sovereign (Queen of New Zealand) represented by a governor general. The head of government is the prime minister, who is responsible to the legislature and appointed by the governor general acting upon its advice.
Ethnic Groups:	Ethnic composition: European 69.8%, Maori 7.9%, Pacific Island Polynesian 4.4%, Asian 5.7%, other 0.6%, mixed 7.8% and unspecified 3.8%.
Language:	English is the official language, but the indigenous Maoris have their own official language.
Currency:	The New Zealand dollar (NZD)

- New Zealand is located in the South Pacific Ocean, comprising two main islands (North and South, divided by the Cook Strait), Steward Island and a number of much smaller islands.
- The bulk of the population lives on North Island, with over 30% of the total concentrated around Central Auckland and the Bay of Plenty. The North Island has fertile agricultural land with forests, a dairy region, and a volcanic plateau. The South Island contains a mountainous strip with glaciers, surrounded by plains, fjords, a heavily forested strip, and beaches. Steward Island is a small island to the south with fewer than 600 inhabitants.
- The earliest known inhabitants of New Zealand were the Maori tribes people, who came across the sea from eastern Polynesia around 900 AD. The basis of the early Maori economy was horticulture, fishing and hunting.
- Abel Tasman, leading a Dutch East India Company expedition, was probably the first European to sight New Zealand. He reached South Island in 1642, naming it Staaten Landt. It was soon renamed Nieuw Zeeland. In 1769 James Cook became the first European to land. From the 1790s onwards European sealers, whalers and traders landed in New Zealand.

- The Maoris accepted English sovereignty in 1840 in return for legal protection and land ownership, although much of this land was taken away after the Anglo-Maori wars of the 1860s.
- The Maori in New Zealand have not been as marginalised as indigenous peoples in other countries. The Maori have influenced New Zealand's culture. Maori tradition places great value on humility and truth; Maori society is very communal.
- New Zealand was initially administered by the British as part of the Australian colony of New South Wales. Even after New Zealand became a separate nation, most of its contact with Europe was secondhand, through Australia. New Zealanders came to resent this domination. Today, although New Zealand and Australia are military allies and trade partners, a considerable rivalry exists between the two countries. Never mistake a New Zealander for an Australian.
- New Zealanders refer to themselves as 'Kiwis'.

Business and Social Etiquette

- Always be on time or a little early for appointments. Tardiness is seen as a bad business practice.
- Men shake hands upon introductions and when preparing to leave. The handshake should be firm and accompanied by eye contact. New Zealand men usually wait for a woman to extend her hand. Women generally shake hands with other women. The traditional greeting among the indigenous Maori was to rub noses.
- New Zealanders value their egalitarian society and are very empathic about equality among people. They respect people for who they are, and have little regard for wealth and social status. Therefore, emphasise honesty and forthrightness in negotiations. Avoid hype and ostentation.
- New Zealanders are very friendly and polite but tend to be reserved and formal. They may wait to be approached but are warm when they are.
- Business dress is formal and conservative, similar to North American styles.
- New Zealanders usually keep their speech soft and find loud voices annoying. They do not open their mouths wide when they speak; indeed, they often seem to be speaking through clenched teeth.
- Anxiety occurs over deadlines and performance, but emotions are not shown in public. One's great reward is to be recognised for one's accomplishments.
- Initial meetings often take place in an office setting. After that, you may suggest meeting over lunch at a restaurant or hotel.
- Lunch appointments are for conducting business. If you receive an invitation for dinner, this will be a more relaxed social evening with spouses. This is not the time to discuss business.
- Expansive behaviour of any sort is looked down upon.
- Chewing gum or using a toothpick in public is considered rude.

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