

Our recreational heritage – access to rivers, beaches, forests and mountains – contributes to our quality of life, wellbeing, and environment.

## Know before you go

Not all rivers, lakes, beaches, forests and mountains have public access to, along or around them.

### Places with outdoor access

Most beaches (foreshore) are public, but some foreshore is private

Legal roads (including unformed legal roads)

National parks, reserves and other conservation lands

Public access easements across private land

Legal walkways

Marginal strips along waterways under the Conservation Act

### Activities you can do

Depending on the type of access, activities you can do include:

Walking, cycling, horse-riding, fishing, tramping, kayaking, camping, rock climbing, mountaineering

Crossing land to get from one place to another

Activities involving cars, dogs, or guns

Picnicking, photos and sightseeing

## Outdoor Access Code

This leaflet is a shortened version of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa Outdoor Access Code. Herenga ā Nuku works to provide free, certain, enduring and practical public access to the outdoors.

For more information, or if you are having access issues – either as a land user or a land manager:

### Visit our website

[herengaānuku.govt.nz](http://herengaānuku.govt.nz)

### Email us

[info@herengaānuku.govt.nz](mailto:info@herengaānuku.govt.nz)

### Phone us

(04) 815 8502

## Outdoor access rights and responsibilities



# Aotearoa is full of unique and incredible places.

## Be responsible

Outdoor access to both public and private land comes with obligations:

### Your obligations

- ✓ Take responsibility for your actions
- ✓ Follow any reasonable advice offered
- ✓ Consider and respect other people
- ✓ Care for the environment
- ✓ Seek permission for access to private or Māori land
- ✓ Learn and respect tikanga Māori
- ✓ Know how to plan a safe trip – on the Mountain Safety Council website
- ✓ Be aware of natural hazards and weather
- ✓ Keep a safe distance from farm or other machinery
- ✓ Get permits for hunting and fishing

## Māori relationships with land

### Whaia nga tapuwae o ngā tūpuna

Māori land does not generally have public access rights, so you need to seek permission from the owners or those authorised by them. Learn and follow the relevant tikanga (protocol). Cultural offence may be caused by haere pokanoa (unauthorised wandering).

- ✓ Respect taonga, including wāhi tapu (sacred places)
- ✓ Comply with rāhui (restrictions) and practices

Seeking permission may not be straightforward. You may need the help of the local Māori Land Court, tribal authorities and Maori Land Online to identify property boundaries, owners and appropriate contacts.

## Take care

### Respect other people's property

- ✓ Leave gates as you find them – open or closed
- ✓ Walk around, rather than through, crops
- ✓ Report damage, stock in difficulty, or anything suspicious to the land manager
- ✗ Do not disturb stock. Walk in single file
- ✗ Do not climb unsupported fence wires – in the absence of a gate or stile, climb over at posts
- ✗ Do not block or obstruct gateways, tracks or entrances
- ✗ Do not feed farm animals

### Limit outdoor fire risk

- ✓ Make sure you fully extinguish fires
- ✓ Be aware of closed fire seasons
- ✗ Do not light fires without permission

### Care for the environment

- ✓ Take your litter home. Bury toilet waste away from waterways or carry it out in a compostable bag
- ✗ Do not disturb stock or damage vegetation, wildlife, historic places, pasture or crops

### Be aware

- ✓ Make room for others
- ✓ If biking or horse-riding, control your speed
- ✓ If farm animals are on the road, drive slowly, keep left and wait for them to move away

## Consider others

### Motor vehicles

Motor vehicles can be much more intrusive than walking or cycling:

- ✓ Make sure you say you will use a motor vehicle when you seek permission
- ✓ Even where access with vehicles is legally allowed, such as on an unformed legal road, it is polite to inform the adjacent landholder
- ✓ Keep strictly to formed tracks and do not cause damage
- ✓ If a legal road is blocked, for example, by a locked gate, report this to the council

### Dogs

If you have permission to take your dog with you, keep it under control:

- ✓ Keep your dog on a short lead or under close control around farm animals
- ✓ Pick up and remove your dog's faeces
- ✓ If you take your dog onto sheep farms, you should get it dosed for sheep measles
- ✗ Do not let your dog frighten other people
- ✗ Do not let your dog disturb birds or wildlife

### Firearms

Even though you may have a legal right to carry a firearm in a particular place, recognise how others may feel:

- ✓ Get permission before shooting
- ✓ Always observe the Firearms Safety Code

### Land managers

If you have authority as a landowner or manager to grant access to land:

- ✓ Respond reasonably when people ask permission for access. Explain the reasons for any conditions
- ✓ Respect people's rights to public access, such as the use of unformed legal roads and marginal strips
- ✓ Unformed legal roads may be unsurfaced, unfenced and indistinguishable from surrounding land, but they still have the legal rights and obligations of formed roads
- ✓ Advise visitors of out-of-the-ordinary hazards from farm activities, such as tree felling or blasting
- ✓ Work with your local council and others to help manage access issues and safety
- ✓ Respect sites of Māori cultural significance such as wāhi tapu. Work with iwi and hapū
- ✓ Work with recreation groups and local authorities to help everyone behave with care

## Get permission

If land is fenced off or appears to be private and there are no signs indicating access, then ask for permission. There may be valid reasons for land managers to deny access, such as lambing or mustering. Accept refusals with good grace.

If you want to use a vehicle, or take a dog or firearm, make this clear when seeking permission.

You can view many areas of legal public access via online maps at [herengaanuku.govt.nz/maps](https://herengaanuku.govt.nz/maps)

Tracks on maps (including the NZ Topographic map 1:50,000 series) are not necessarily public.