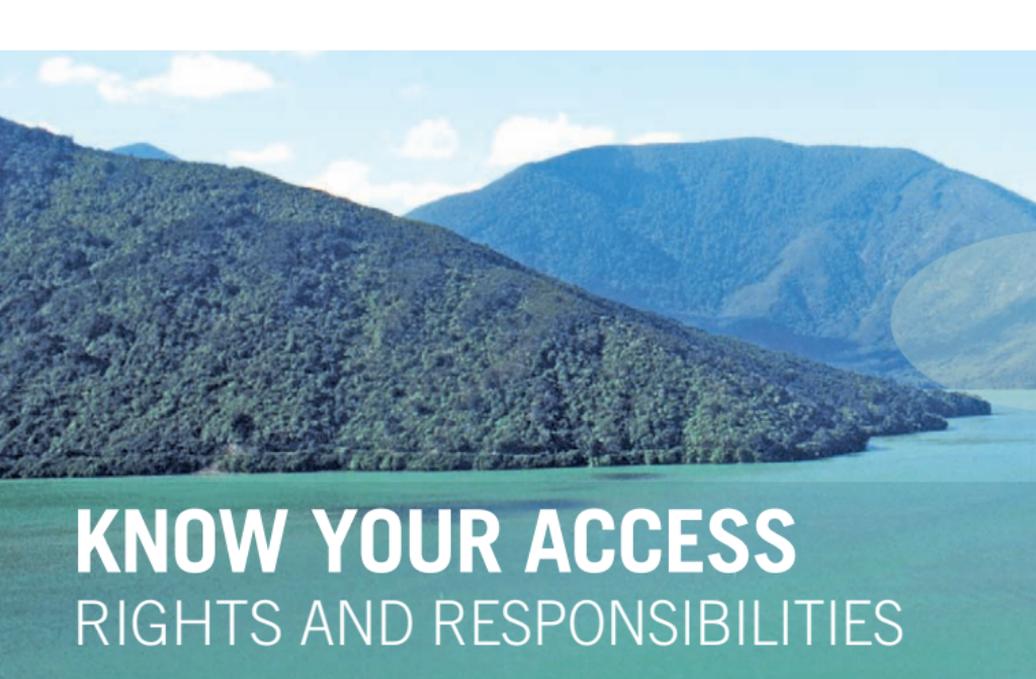


WALKING ACCESS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**NEW ZEALAND
OUTDOOR
ACCESS CODE**



WALKING ACCESS
ARA HĪKOI AOTEAROA



KNOW YOUR ACCESS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Where there is public access to the New Zealand outdoors, it can be one of many types, such as:

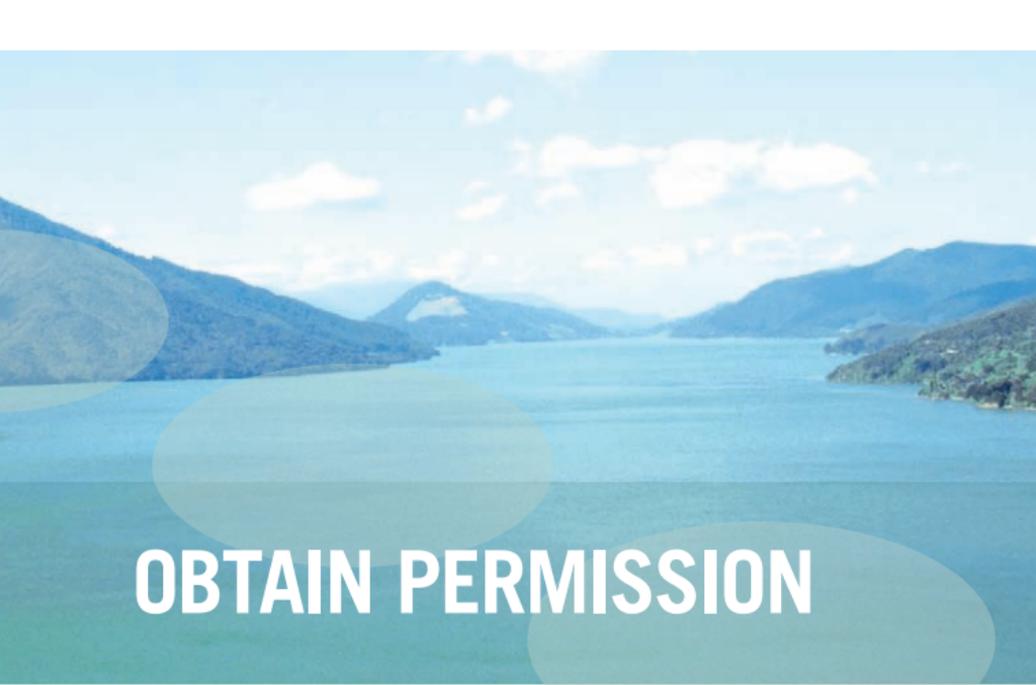
- › most foreshore (beaches), but some foreshore is private;
- › walkways under the Walking Access Act;
- › legal roads (including unformed legal roads);
- › marginal strips along waterways under the Conservation Act;
- › easements across private land; and
- › national parks, reserves and other conservation lands.

Depending on the type of access, a range of different activities may be allowed. For example:

- › picnicking, photography and sightseeing;
- › walking, cycling, horse-riding, fishing, tramping, kayaking, camping, rock climbing, mountaineering;
- › recreational and educational events;
- › crossing land to get from one place to another; and
- › activities involving vehicles, dogs, or guns.

For information on walking access locations see:

- › Department of Conservation www.doc.govt.nz;
- › Fish and Game New Zealand www.fishandgame.org.nz;
- › i-Site Visitor Centres www.newzealand.com; and
- › tramping, walking and other guide books.



OBTAIN PERMISSION

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

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

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

BE RESPONSIBLE

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

- › Take responsibility for your own actions.
- › Follow any reasonable advice offered.
- › Consider and respect the interests of other people.
- › Care for the environment.
- › Seek permission for access to private or Māori land.
- › Learn and respect the tikanga Māori.
- › Know the Outdoor Safety Code (www.outdoorsafetycode.co.nz).
- › Be aware of natural hazards, such as weather.
- › Keep a safe distance from farm or other machinery.
- › Get the correct permits for hunting and fishing.



TAKE CARE

RESPECT OTHER PEOPLE'S PROPERTY

- › Leave gates as you find them – open or closed.
- › Do not climb unsupported fence wires – in the absence of a gate or stile, go through the fence wires or climb over at posts.
- › Do not block or obstruct gateways, tracks or entrances.
- › Walk in single file around farm animals, without driving them.
- › Do not feed farm animals.
- › Walk around, rather than through, crops.
- › Report damage, stock in difficulty, or anything suspicious to the land manager.

LIMIT OUTDOOR FIRE RISK

- › Do not light fires without permission.
- › Ensure fires are fully extinguished.

CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Our environment is an asset. Treat it with care.

- › Do not disturb stock or damage vegetation, wildlife, historic places, pasture or crops.
- › Take your litter home. Bury toilet waste away from waterways.

BE AWARE

- › Make room for others.
- › If biking or horse-riding, control your speed.
- › Let others know you are passing.
- › If farm animals are on the road drive slowly and wait for them to move away.



CONSIDER OTHERS

DOGS

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

- › Do not let your dog frighten other people.
- › Keep your dog on a short lead or under close control around farm animals.
- › Do not let your dog disturb birds or other wildlife, unless it is game that you are permitted to hunt.
- › Pick up and remove your dog's faeces.

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 on any land.
- › Always observe the New Zealand Firearms Safety Code.

MOTOR VEHICLES

Access with motor vehicles can be much more intrusive than access on foot or on bicycle:

- › Ensure that any access right or permission includes use of motor vehicles, if this is your intention.
- › Even where access with vehicles is legally allowed, such as on an unformed legal road, it is a courtesy to inform the adjacent landholder of your intentions, especially where the access crosses unfenced farmland.
- › 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 District Council.



LAND MANAGERS

MANAGING THE OUTDOORS

If you have authority as a landowner or manager to grant access permission then you should:

- › Respond reasonably when people request permission for walking access.
- › Explain the reasons for any conditions that you apply.
- › Advise visitors of out-of-the-ordinary hazards arising from farm activities (e.g. tree felling, blasting).
- › Respect people's rights of public access, such as use of unformed legal roads and marginal strips. The exact locations of these can be hard to determine.
- › Remember that unformed legal roads may be unsurfaced, unfenced and indistinguishable from surrounding land, but have all the legal rights and obligations of formed roads.
- › If these or other public access-ways go through, or are close to, yards or buildings, respect rights of access and work with your local authority and others to help manage access issues.
- › Respect sites of Māori cultural significance such as wāhi tapu and work with iwi (tribe) and hapū (sub-tribe) on providing negotiated access to such taonga (cultural treasures) if they are on private land.
- › Work with recreation groups and local authorities to provide tracks and signs to help integrate access and land management.



MĀORI RELATIONSHIPS WITH LAND

Whaia nga tapuwae o nga tupuna Follow in the ancestors' footprints

Māori land under the Te Ture Whenua Act does not generally have public access rights, so permission must be sought from the owners or those authorised by them, and the relevant tikanga learned and followed. Cultural offence may be caused by haere pokanoa (unauthorised wandering).

Tikanga are the customary values and practices that reflect Māori beliefs and provide the correct procedures to be followed. Tikanga knowledge rests with the respective tribes and must be checked for each place as there could be specific customs or requirements.

Provisions are likely to include:

- › Respect for specific taonga (cultural treasures) including wāhi tapu (sacred places).
- › Compliance with rāhui (restrictions) and other Māori customs and practices.

Seeking permission may not be straightforward.

- › Property boundaries, owners and appropriate contacts may have to be identified with the help of the local Māori Land Court, tribal authorities and Maori Land Information Base (www.tpk.govt.nz/en/services/land).



Outdoor New Zealand is a unique place to enjoy. Our rich recreational heritage – based on access to rivers, lakes, beaches and alpine areas – contributes hugely to our quality of life and our well-being, while enhancing our awareness of the natural environment.

Public rights to access these places are not always certain, and precise locations can be hard to establish. Access across private land relies on landholder goodwill.

This Code has been prepared by the New Zealand Walking Access Commission under the Walking Access Act 2008. The Commission is working to provide practical, free, certain and enduring public access to the outdoors.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR IF YOU ARE HAVING ACCESS ISSUES – EITHER AS A LAND USER OR A LAND MANAGER – CONTACT:

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