

New Zealand's flag



The New Zealand Flag is the symbol of the realm, government and people of New Zealand. Its royal blue background represents of the blue sea and clear sky surrounding us. The stars emblem pictures a representation of the Southern Cross constellation and emphasises this country's location in the South Pacific Ocean. The Union Jack in the first quarter recognizes New Zealand's historical origins as a British colony and dominion. The flag of New Zealand was introduced in 1869 and adopted as the national flag in 1902

The national Māori flag



The flag is black over white over red, with the thin white stripe being broken by a circular  almost spiral  pattern. It was designed in 1990 by Hiraina Marsden, Jan Smith and Linda Munn, and was the winning design in a national contest to find a  Māori Flag. The symbology of the flag is as follows:

BLACK represents *Te Korekore* (the realm of potential being). It thus symbolizes the long darkness from which the earth emerged, as well as signifying *Rangi* - the heavens, a male, formless, floating, passive force.

RED represents *Te Whei Ao* (coming into being). It symbolizes *Papatuanuku*, the earth-mother, the sustainer of all living things, and thus both the land and active forces.

WHITE represents *Te Ao Marama* (the realm of being and light). It symbolizes the physical world, purity, harmony, enlightenment and balance.

The spiral-like **KORU**, symbolic of a curling fern frond, represents the unfolding of new life, hope for the future and the process of renewal.

As a whole, the design represents the balance of the forces of nature, masculine and feminine, active and passive, potential and physical, air and earth. It can also be interpreted as symbolizing the white cloud rolling across the face of the land, as in the Maori name for New Zealand, *Aotearoa* ("Land of the long white cloud").

