

NZSL FACTS



TE REO TURI FACTS



Kōhanga Reo



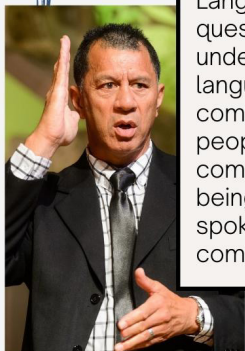
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These resources have been developed by the team at Deaf Aotearoa – a collaborative project led by Māori Deaf along with the advice and guidance from fluent speakers of Te Reo Māori and NZSL.

It is important to remember that there will be regional variations in both Te Reo Māori and NZSL, so it is important that you connect with your local community and use the vocabulary appropriate to your region.



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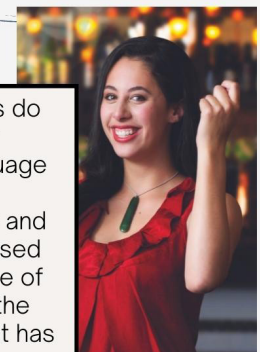
IS THERE A MĀORI SIGN LANGUAGE?

People often wonder, “Is there a Māori Sign Language?” To answer this question, it is important to understand that sign languages develop in communities of Deaf people who share the common experience of being excluded from the spoken language communities around them.



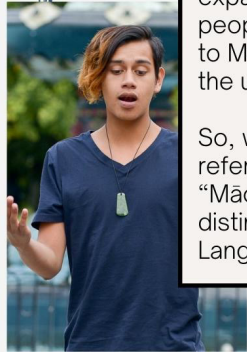
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Natural sign languages do not originate from, nor match, a spoken language – they have an independent structure and system of meaning based in the visual experience of Deaf people. NZSL is the common language that has developed over many generations of Deaf people from Māori, Pākehā and other ethnic backgrounds in New Zealand.



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There are signs in NZSL that express Māori cultural experience and concepts, and this vocabulary is expanding as Māori Deaf people gain more access to Māori contexts through the use of NZSL.

So, while some people refer to these concepts as “Māori signs”, there is no distinct “Māori Sign Language”.



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Te Reo Māori can be interpreted into NZSL (Te Reo Turi), and vice-versa – translating from the sense and structure of one language into the sense and structure of the other.

So, we hope these Learn Sign videos we have developed will support you to use NZSL in your Kōhanga Reo!



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