

# A MINI MAORI COURSE



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## Part Three of our special pull-out supplement

This concludes our mini Maori course, which has been designed as a concentrated summary of some of the main features of conversational Maori. The course offers no guidance on pronunciation, dialect variations or vocabulary. But it outlines the basic structures you need to know, and it offers models and examples from which you can form questions and sentences of your own.

For those of us who have learned in the past but need to brush up, or who are familiar with the sound of Maori but are unsure of the way that the language is put together, this course aims to provide a formal structure from which to develop.

But that development depends on commitment, imagination and practice. Once the vital sentence patterns have been mastered, your conversational Maori needs regular application. Practice with your friends, encourage native speakers to talk to you in Maori — you'll soon be making good progress.

If you missed earlier parts, which appeared in issues 4 and 5 of *Te Kaea*, copies are available from the address on page one at \$1.25 each.

The two parts of the course that have already appeared in *Te Kaea* dealt with the basic structure of Maori; the sentence patterns *essential* for expressing most of what we would wish to say.

The questions and answers set out in section 12 enable us to start oral practice with fellow students or any Maori friend who is willing to help.

This final part covers a few additional points, to increase our understanding of practically the whole range of Maori, and our ability to form correct sentences.

In the last sections we have some commonly used words that will give flexibility of expression when we try Maori conversation. Most Maori speakers will be able to make up more examples based on any of the patterns included in this course, and so help you recognise what is said.

13. *Verbs* in Maori are remarkably regular. However, a few common verbs have a double form to indicate an action carried out more than once.

**Ka patupatu ia i te kuri = he (repeatedly) hit the dog**

**Me haereere taua = we had better stroll around**

Where an action is by its very nature repetitive its basic form is double.

**Me tahitahi nga ruma moe e korua = you (two) had better sweep the bed rooms**

This sentence illustrates one of the few other irregularities. Any verb used after the verb sign *me* is not given a passive ending, even if the sentence is in passive form (see 1.6). With any other verb sign *tahia* would be used in this sentence.

14.1 Many verbs start with *whaka* which usually means *cause to be* especially when the basic part of the verb is derived from an adjective.

**E whakatika(tika) ana nga kotiro i nga moenga = the girls are tidying the beds ("causing to be straight" — tika = straight)**

**Ka whakaora ia i a ratou = he will save (heal) them**

14.2 If we consider these English sentences;

I woke/I woke my daughter

I returned (to Taupo)/I returned his book

it will be noted that the same verb form is used whether the action only concerns one person (intransitive) or involves some other person or thing (transitive). This is not the case in Maori and an intransitive verb is *made* into a transitive verb by using the prefix *whaka*. Then the sentence usually requires the transitive preposition *i*.