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[thumb|The haka is a traditional genre of Māori dance. This picture dates from c. 1845.](/wiki/Image:MaoriWardanceKahuroa.jpg)

The **haka** (plural *haka*, as in [Māori](/wiki/Māori_language), or *hakas*) is a [traditional](/wiki/Traditional) [war cry](/wiki/Battle_cry), [dance](/wiki/Dance), or challenge from the [Māori people](/wiki/Māori_people) of [New Zealand](/wiki/New_Zealand). It is a posture dance performed by a group, with vigorous movements and stamping of the feet with rhythmically shouted accompaniment.[[1]](#cite_note-1) War haka were originally performed by warriors before a battle, proclaiming their strength and prowess in order to intimidate the opposition, but haka are also performed for various reasons: for welcoming distinguished guests, or to acknowledge great achievements, occasions or funerals, and [kapa haka](/wiki/Kapa_haka) performance groups are very common in schools.

The New Zealand sports teams' practice of performing a haka before their international matches has made the haka more widely known around the world. This tradition began with the [1888–89 New Zealand Native football team](/wiki/1888–89_New_Zealand_Native_football_team) tour and has been carried on by the [New Zealand rugby team](/wiki/New_Zealand_national_rugby_union_team) since 1905.

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## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

[thumb|Haka being performed at the SCC Rugby SevensAlthough](/wiki/File:SCCRugby-Haka.jpg) the use of [haka by the All Blacks](/wiki/Haka_of_the_All_Blacks) rugby union team and the [New Zealand](/wiki/New_Zealand_national_rugby_league_team) rugby league team has made one type of haka familiar, it has led to misconceptions.[[2]](#cite_note-2)Most haka are performed by men, with the female role, if any, limited to providing support by singing in the background. There are however some haka which are performed predominantly by women – one of the most well-known being the [Ngāti Porou](/wiki/Ngāti_Porou) haka "Ka Panapana".[[3]](#cite_note-3)[thumb|A performance by the Kahurangi Maori Dance group](/wiki/Image:Maori_dancers.jpg)

In modern times, various haka have been composed to be performed by women and even children.[[4]](#cite_note-4) Haka are performed for various reasons: for welcoming distinguished guests, or to acknowledge great achievements, occasions or funerals.

War haka (*peruperu*) were originally performed by warriors before a battle, proclaiming their strength and prowess in order to intimidate the opposition. Today, haka constitute an integral part of formal or official welcome ceremonies for distinguished visitors or foreign dignitaries, serving to impart a sense of the importance of the occasion.

Various actions are employed in the course of a performance, including [facial contortions](/wiki/Facial_expression) such as showing the whites of the eyes and poking out the tongue, and a wide variety of vigorous body actions such as slapping the hands against the body and stomping of the feet. As well as [chanted](/wiki/Chant) words, a variety of cries and grunts are used. Haka may be understood as a kind of [symphony](/wiki/Symphony) in which the different parts of the body represent many instruments. The hands, arms, legs, feet, voice, eyes, tongue and the body as a whole combine to express courage, annoyance, joy or other feelings relevant to the purpose of the occasion.

## Types[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[thumb|A group of men and women perform a haka for Lord Ranfurly at Ruatoki, Bay of Plenty, in 1904The](/wiki/File:Haka_for_Lord_Ranfurly_1904.jpg) various types of haka include *whakatu waewae*, *tutu ngarahu* and *peruperu*. The *peruperu* is characterised by leaps during which the legs are pressed under the lower body. In former times, the *peruperu* was performed before a [battle](/wiki/Battle) in order to invoke the god of war and to discourage and frighten the enemy. It involved fierce facial expressions and grimaces, poking out of the tongue, eye bulging, grunts and cries, and the waving of weapons. If the haka was not performed in total unison, this was regarded as a bad omen for the battle. Often, warriors went naked into battle, apart from a plaited flax belt around the waist.

The *tutu ngarahu* also involves jumping, but from side to side, while in the *whakatu waewae* no jumping occurs. Another kind of haka performed without weapons is the *ngeri*, the purpose of which was to motivate the warriors psychologically. The movements are very free, and each performer is expected to be expressive of their feelings. *Manawa wera* haka were generally associated with funerals or other occasions involving death. Like the *ngeri* they were performed without weapons, and there was little or no choreographed movement.

The most well-known haka is "[Ka Mate](/wiki/Ka_Mate)", attributed to [Te Rauparaha](/wiki/Te_Rauparaha), war leader of the [Ngāti Toa](/wiki/Ngāti_Toa) tribe. The "Ka Mate" haka is classified as a *haka taparahi* – a ceremonial haka. "Ka Mate" is about the cunning ruse Te Rauparaha used to outwit his enemies, and may be interpreted as "a celebration of the triumph of life over death" (Pōmare 2006).

## Mythology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

According to [Māori mythology](/wiki/Māori_mythology), the sun god, [Tama-nui-te-rā](/wiki/Tama-nui-te-rā), had two wives, the Summer Maid, [Hine-raumati](/wiki/Hine-raumati), and the Winter Maid, [Hine-takurua](/wiki/Hine-takurua). Haka originated in the coming of Hine-raumati, whose presence on still, hot days was revealed in a quivering appearance in the air. This was the haka of [Tāne-rore](/wiki/Tāne-rore), the son of Hine-raumati and Tama-nui-te-rā.[[5]](#cite_note-5)

## Cultural impact[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

In the lead up to the [Rugby World Cup](/wiki/Rugby_World_Cup) in 2011, [flashmob](/wiki/Flashmob) haka became a popular way of expressing support for the All Blacks. Some Maori leaders thought it was "inappropriate" and a "bastardisation" of the traditional war cry,[[6]](#cite_note-6) despite its popularity. Sizeable flashmob haka were performed in Wellington[[7]](#cite_note-7) and Auckland,[[8]](#cite_note-8) as well as London, which has a large New Zealander expat community.[[9]](#cite_note-9) On August 28, 2012, the New Zealand Herald posted a story of video footage which went viral worldwide of soldiers from the 2nd and 1st Battalion Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment performing a haka for fallen comrades who were recently killed in action in Afghanistan.[[10]](#cite_note-10)[[11]](#cite_note-11) In November 2012, a [Maori](/wiki/Māori_people) [kapa haka](/wiki/Kapa_haka) group from [Rotorua](/wiki/Rotorua) performed a version of the '[Gangnam Style'](/wiki/Gangnam_Style) dance mixed with a traditional Maori haka in Seoul, celebrating 50 years of diplomatic relations between South Korea and New Zealand.[[12]](#cite_note-12) On December 7, 2014, at the Blood And Thunder Roller Derby World Cup in [Dallas](/wiki/Dallas), [Texas](/wiki/Texas), Team New Zealand performed a haka on roller skates to the Australian Roller Derby team before their bout in the quarter finals.[[13]](#cite_note-13) Team New Zealand performed a haka before their debut game against Team USA at the first Blood and Thunder Roller Derby World Cup, on December 1, 2011, however it was unexpected and the arena music was still playing. It has since become an expected tradition.[[14]](#cite_note-14) On July 20, 2015, Dawson Tamatea, a teacher at Palmerston North Boys' High, New Zealand, died.[[15]](#cite_note-15) Hundreds of his students performed a haka at his funeral.[[16]](#cite_note-16) In the first month the posted video had over 6,000,000 views.[[17]](#cite_note-17) A video of a wedding haka in 2016 was watched more than 20 million times. Video of the Maori dance at the wedding of Aaliya and Benjamin Armstrong is being widely shared on social media.[[18]](#cite_note-18) The [University of Hawaii](/wiki/University_of_Hawaii_at_Manoa) [Rainbow Warriors football team](/wiki/Hawaii_Rainbow_Warriors_football) adopted the haka as a pregame ritual [during the 2006 season](/wiki/2006_Hawaii_Warriors_football_team). [[19]](#cite_note-19) Originally, Tala Esera, who played high school football at [Kahuku High School](/wiki/Kahuku_High_&_Intermediate_School), introduced the haka to the team, and during the 2006 season, star quarterback [Colt Brennan](/wiki/Colt_Brennan) led the team in performing the haka. The team's 2007 campaign, which saw Brennan emerge as a [Heisman Trophy](/wiki/Heisman_Trophy) finalist and lead the team to an undefeated regular season, as well as a berth in the [Bowl Championship Series](/wiki/Bowl_Championship_Series) despite the Warriors not playing in a BCS conference, drew American attention to the haka. The Warriors are just one of [numerous American football teams](/wiki/Haka_performed_by_non-New_Zealand_sports_teams) to perform the haka as a pregame ritual.

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[thumb|right|](/wiki/File:E_003261_E_Maoris_in_North_Africa_July_1941.jpg)[Māori Battalion](/wiki/Māori_Battalion) haka in Egypt, 1941|alt=A squad of men kneel in the desert sand while performing a war dance

* [Haka in popular culture](/wiki/Haka_in_popular_culture)
* [Kapa haka](/wiki/Kapa_haka)
* [Kailao](/wiki/Kailao)
* [Māori music](/wiki/Māori_music)
* [Siva tau](/wiki/Siva_tau)
* [Cibi](/wiki/Cibi)
* [Hula](/wiki/Hula)
* [Military music](/wiki/Military_music)
* [War song](/wiki/War_song)

## References and notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

* McLean, Mervyn, 1996. *Maori music*. Auckland: Auckland University Press.
* M. Pōmare, 'Ngāti Toarangatira – Chant composed by Te Rauparaha', *Te Ara – the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, updated 26-Sep-2006, <http://www.teara.govt.nz/NewZealanders/MaoriNewZealanders/NgatiToarangatira/4/ENZ-Resources/Standard/2/en>

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:Commons category](/wiki/Template:Commons_category)

* [Haka – A New Zealand icon](http://www.newzealand.com/travel/app_templates/haka/index_content.html)
* [Photo](http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/media/photo/maori-battalion-haka-in-egypt-1941) of [Maori Battalion](/wiki/Maori_Battalion) soldiers performing a haka in Egypt during the Second World War
* [HAKA](http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/1966/haka) in *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, edited by A. H. McLintock, originally published in 1966.

[Template:Culture of Oceania](/wiki/Template:Culture_of_Oceania)

[Haka](/wiki/Category:Haka) [Category:Māori culture](/wiki/Category:Māori_culture) [Category:Māori words and phrases](/wiki/Category:Māori_words_and_phrases) [Category:Ritual dances](/wiki/Category:Ritual_dances) [Category:War dances](/wiki/Category:War_dances) [Category:Dances of Polynesia](/wiki/Category:Dances_of_Polynesia)