

L) QUESTIONS IN MAORI

1. An ordinary statement in Maori can be a question with no change except using a questioning tone of voice, just as we sometimes do in English. But there are a few words that may be added for some emphasis or depending on the nature of the question.

Eg. “**nē**” or “**nē rā**” = “eh?” or “isn’t that so?”, or “isn’t it?”

You are going, eh?	<i>E haere koe, nē?</i>
That is the best thing, isn’t it?	<i>Ko tēnei te me pai rawa, nē?</i>

“**oti**” = “then” or “that being the case” or “being so”

You have not money?	<i>Kāore āu mōni?</i>
You are not going then?	<i>Kāore oti koe e haere?</i>

“**rānei**” = “or” “**rānei.....rānei**” = “either.....or”

Are you going or not?	<i>E haere rānei koe, e kore rānei?</i>
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2. **Where?** - use “**hea**” (pronounced “whea” in some regions).

Where are you going?	To town.	<i>Ki hea koe e haere ana? Ki te tāone.</i>
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Where have you come from?	From town.	<i>I hea koe i haere? I te tāone.</i>
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Where are you?	In the dining room.	<i>Kei hea koe? Kei te rūma kai.</i>
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Where were you?	At the gate.	<i>I hea koe? I te kēti.</i>
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To ask the name of a place, or a natural feature, also use “**hea**”.

What mountain (or town) is that yonder?	<i>Ngongotaha.</i>
<i>Ko hea te maunga (tāone) rā?</i>	<i>Ko Ngongotahā.</i>

3. “**when?**” - for past time use “**nōnāhea.....ai**”. (“**inahea**” is also used).

When did you eat?	At 8 o’clock.	<i>Nōnāhea koe i kai ai? Nō te waru karaka.</i>
When did you arrive?	Yesterday.	<i>Nōnāhea koe i tae mai ai? Nōnānāhi.</i>

- for future time use “**ā hea.....ai**”. (“**awhea**”)

When will you eat?	At 8 o’clock.	<i>Āhea koe kai ai? Ā te waru karaka</i>
When will you arrive?	Tomorrow.	<i>Āhea koe tae mai ai? Āpōpō.</i>

4. “Which?” use “tēhea” (singular) or “ēhea” (plural).

Which day is this?	<i>Ko tēhea rā tēnei?</i>
It is Tuesday.	<i>Ko te Tūrei tēnei.</i>
On which days?	<i>I ēhea rā?</i>
On Sundays and Mondays.	<i>I ngā Rā Tapu me ngā Māne.</i>
On which side of the house is he standing?	<i>Kei tēhea taha o te whare ia e tū ana?</i>
Which is the right road?	<i>Ko tēhea te rōri tika?</i>
Which is the book for me?	<i>Ko tēhea te pukapuka māku?</i>
Which are the books for me?	<i>Ko ēhea ngā pukapuka māku?</i>

For “which?” in order of numbers use “tuahia” – for 1 – 9 only.

Which of the chapters is this?	The fifth.
<i>Ko te tuahia o ngā whāhanga tēnei?</i>	<i>Ko te tūarima.</i>
In which row is Ann sitting?	The seventh.
<i>Kei te kapa tuahia a Ani e noho ana?</i>	<i>Kei te tūawhitu.</i>

5. “Who?” “Whom?” “Whose?” use “wai” (for all three).

What’s (in Maori, who’s) your name? It’s Jack.	<i>Ko wai tōu ingoa?</i>	<i>Ko Tiaki</i>
Who are the people (tribe)? Ngāti Whakaue.	<i>Ko wai te iwi?</i>	<i>Ko Ngāti Whakaue.</i>
I hit Bill. Who? (Whom) Bill.	<i>Ka patu ahau i a Wī.</i>	<i>I a wai? I a Wī.</i>
Give the hat to Rewi.	<i>Hoatu te pōtae ki a Rewi.</i>	
To who?(whom) To Rewi.	<i>Ki a wai?</i>	<i>Ki a Rewi.</i>
Whose is this kit? (Belongs to who?) It’s Hata’s.	<i>Nā wai tēnei kete?</i>	<i>Nā Hata.</i>
For who (whom) is this bag? For Queenie.	<i>Mā wai tēnei peke?</i>	<i>Mā Kuini.</i>
Whose is that house? It’s Peter’s.	<i>Nō wai tērā whare?</i>	<i>Nō Pita.</i>
For who (whom) is that house? For Tom.	<i>Mō wai tērā whare?</i>	<i>Mō Tame.</i>
By who (whom) were you hit? By Bill.	<i>Nā wai koe i patu?</i>	<i>Nā Wī.</i>
By who(whom) will you be taught? By Mr Smith.	<i>Mā wai koe e whakaako?</i>	<i>Mā Te Mita.</i>

6. “What?” use “aha?”

What is that?	A hat.	<i>He aha tēnā?</i>	<i>He pōtae .</i>
What’s that you’ve got? (yours)	A new hat.	<i>He aha tōu?</i>	<i>He pōtae hou.</i>
What did you say? (what, your saying?)		<i>He aha tō kōrero?</i>	<i>(Or often “He aha?”</i>
What is your job?	Building houses.	<i>He aha tau mahi?</i>	<i>He hanga whare.</i>
What did you do?	I ran away.	<i>Ka aha koe?</i>	<i>Ka oma atu ahau.</i>
What are you doing (will you do) tomorrow?		<i>E aha koe āpōpō?</i>	
What should I do?		<i>Me aha ahau?</i>	
(I suggest) you should stay here.		<i>Me noho koe ki konei.</i>	
What are you doing? I’m washing my things.		<i>Kei te aha koe? Kei te horoi i aku</i>	
	<i>hānga.</i>		
What were you doing?	Washing my face.	<i>I te aha koe?</i>	<i>I te horoi i toku kānohi.</i>
What happened to the car?	It rolled over.	<i>I ahatia te motokā?</i>	<i>I tahuri.</i>
What sort of person is he?	A nice person.	<i>He tangata aha a ia?</i>	<i>He tangata pai.</i>
He has died. What of (of what)?	Of the flu.	<i>Kua mate ia. I te aha?</i>	<i>I te whuru.</i>

7. “What for?” (“for what?” “for what purpose?”) - use “hei aha?”

What is that for?		<i>Hei aha tēnā?</i>
For the cat to eat.		<i>Hei kai mā te pōti.</i>
What’s the gun for?		<i>Hei aha te pū?</i>
For me to shoot the pig		<i>Hei puhipuhi māku i te pōaka..</i>
What are those matches for?		<i>Hei aha ngā mati nā?</i>
To light the fire.		<i>Hei taha i te ahi.</i>
What’s the use of that?		<i>Hei aha tēnā? (in a sarcastic tone)</i>
(What for that?) (Never mind that.)		
What’s that to me?		<i>Hei aha māku?</i>

8. “How many?” use “hia”.

How many apples are there?	Six.	<i>E hia ngā āporo?</i>	<i>E ono.</i>
How many cups are there to be?	Make it 8.	<i>Kia hia ngā kapu?</i>	<i>Kia waru.</i>
How old are you? (How many your years?)		<i>Kā hia ōu tau?</i>	

In speaking of numbers of people, use “**tokohia**” for 2 – 9 people.

How many girls were there?	Four.	<i>Tokohia ngā kōtiro?</i>	<i>Tokowhā.</i>
How many of you are going away?		<i>Tokohia koutou e haere atu ana?</i>	
Nine of us.		<i>Tokowaru mātou.</i>	

9. “How?” use “pehea”. (And note the overlap with the English meaning of “what?”)

How long is the street? Very long.	<i>He pēhea te roa o te tiriti? He tino roa.</i>
How far from Rotorua to Taupo?	<i>He pēhea te tāwhiti mai i Rotorua ki Taupō?</i>
80 km	<i>E waru tekau kiromita.</i>
How are you?	<i>Kei te pēhea koe? or E pēhea ana koe?</i>
Good / I’m good.	<i>Kei te pai (ahau) or E pai ana ahau.</i>
How were you? Not very good.	<i>I te pēhea koe? Kāore ahau i te tino pai.</i>
How are your thoughts? (What do you think?)	<i>E pēhea ana ō whakaaro?</i>
What did you do? (How did you act?)	<i>Ka pēhea koe?</i>
What should we do? (How can we act?)	<i>Mē pēhea tātou?</i>
How deep is the hole to be?	<i>Kia pēhea te hohonu o te rua?</i>
Make it 2 metres.	<i>Kia rua mīta.</i>
How about you?	<i>Pēhea koe?</i>
How was the job done?	<i>I pēheatia te mahi?</i>

10. “Why?”

There is no single equivalent word in Maori. The usual full method is to put the question as “He aha te take?” “*What is the reason (cause)?*”

Then the following phrase should contain the particle “ai”. This particle indicates that the circumstance or event is the outcome of, or dependent on, the first circumstance or event being questioned. It can be interpreted as “accordingly” or “wherefore” or a like word in English, though it is not always necessary to try a translation. NB: “He aha te take?” is often abbreviated to “He aha” only – the words “te take” being taken as going without saying.

PAST & PRESENT

He aha (te take) koe i haere ai?	<i>Why did you go?</i>
He aha (te take) koe i noho ai?	<i>Why did you sit down? / Why are you sitting?</i>
He aha (te take) i kore ai koe i haere?	<i>Why did you <u>not</u> go? / Why are you <u>not</u> going?</i>
He aha (te take) i karanga ai ki ahau?	<i>Why did you call me?</i>

FUTURE

He aha (te take) koe e haere ai āpōpō?	<i>Why will you go tomorrow?</i>
He aha (te take) e kore ai koe e haere ai āpōpō?	<i>Why will you <u>not</u> go tomorrow?</i>

In some circumstances the phrase “**nā te aha?**” meaning “*because of what?*”, “*through what?*”, or “*by what?*” is more appropriate. This is a more emphatic version. Again “ai” is used in the following phrases.

Nā te aha koe i hoki ai?	<i>Why did you return</i>
Nā te heke o te ua.	<i> Because of the rain falling.</i>
Nā te aha kore ai koe i hoki?	<i>Why did you not return?</i>
Nā te mea kāore ahau e pai.	<i> Because I didn’t like to.</i>
Nā te aha rātou i wini ai?	<i>Why did they win?</i>
Nā te waimarie!	<i> By luck!</i>
Nā te aha i pakaru ai ngā perēti?	<i>Why were the plates broken?</i>
Nā te koretake o Rewi.	<i> Because of Rewi’s carelessness.</i>