

M) MO TE WHĀNAU

ABOUT THE FAMILY

A Maori family is usually a very large group of closely related people – the “extended family” in contrast to the usual pakeha “nuclear family” of Mum, Dad, grandparents perhaps, and a few sons and daughters.

This Maori concept of family is reflected in the vocabulary concerning relations. For instance, “parents” used to include uncles and aunts as well as fathers and mothers, and the words for brothers and sisters included cousins as well.

The following is not an absolutely complete vocabulary but should be very sufficient for most speakers of the Maori language.

the extended family

te whānau

These are all close relations, (close as in the Maori reckoning) – all descendants for 3-4 generations down from a common ancestral pair (man and/or wife even from re-[marriages), plus in-laws which nowadays includes “taiwi” (*non Maoris*).

a blood relation

he whanaunga

a relation by marriage

he huanga

an ancestor

he tupuna (tipuna)

ancestors

he tūpuna (tīpuna)

oldsters / elders

he kaumātua

a grandfather

he koroua

address grandfather/s & great uncles as:

e koro / e koro mā (if > one)

a grandmother/great grandmother/great aunts

he kuia

address the above as:

e kui / e kuia mā (if > one)

the parent generation

ngā mātua

the adults / grown ups

ngā pakeke

a husband

he tāne / he hoa tāne

a wife

he wahine / he hoa wahine

wives

he wāhine

father

matua tāne / pāpā

when addressing a father

e pā

mother

matua wahine / whaea / mama

when addressing a mother

e whae / e mā

Uncles / aunts may be distinguished from fathers and mothers by adding “**kē**” or “**kēke**”
eg.

my uncle	<i>toku papa kē</i>
a child	<i>he tamaiti</i>
children	<i>he tamariki</i>
a son	<i>he tama</i>
a daughter	<i>he tamāhine</i>
when addressing a daughter	<i>e hine</i>

Nephews and nieces may be distinguished from sons and daughters by adding **kē** or **kēkē**
eg. my nephew *tāku tama kē*

However, there is one blanket word for nephews or nieces – *irāmutu*

teenaged boy	<i>taitema</i>
teenaged girl	<i>taitemāhine</i>
teenagers (both sexes included)	<i>he taitamariki</i>
a boy when addressing a boy	<i>he tamaiti tāne</i> <i>e tama</i>
a girl <i>usual</i>) when addressing a girl	<i>he tamaiti wahine (or he kōtiro – more</i> <i>e kō</i>
a grandchild when addressing a grandchild	<i>he mokopuna</i> <i>e moko</i>
a great grandchild	<i>he mokopuna rua</i>
a male’s sister (or female cousin)	<i>he tuahine (plural – tuāhine)</i>
a female’s brother (or male cousin)	<i>he tungāne (same for the plural)</i>

Foster parents and fostered children were always common in the Maori extended family, barren wives particularly caring for other women’s children and grandparents taking grandchildren to bring up. Still quite common today.

To distinguish if necessary –

a foster parent	<i>he matua whāngai</i>
a foster child	<i>he tamaiti whāngai (or just “he whāngai”)</i>

Now in the old Maori times it was vitally important to distinguish seniority among relations of the same sex in the same or different generations, and in some circumstances this is considered just as important today. This is especially so for men eg. it can decide speaking rights, etc. Also seniority is distinguished among family descent lines too. So –

A male calls his older brother(s), or male cousin(s)

in a senior family line his _____ → *tuakana* (plural *tūakana*)
 NB: my tuakana → *tōku tuakana*

A male calls his younger brother(s) or male cousin(s)

in a junior family line his _____ → *teina* (or *taina*) (plural *he tēina*)
 NB: my teina → *tāku teina*

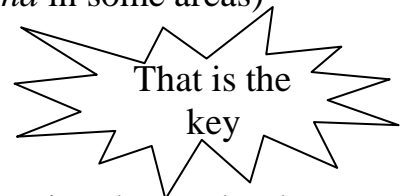
A female calls her older sister(s) or female cousin(s)

in a senior family line her _____ → *tuakana*

A female calls her younger sister(s) or female cousin(s)

in a junior family line her _____ → *teina* (*taina* in some areas)

In short: *tuakana* = senior
teina (*taina*) = junior



Recapitulating the words above that change somewhat from singular to plural:

<u>SINGULAR</u>	<u>PLURAL</u>	<u>SINGULAR</u>	<u>PLURAL</u>
tupuna	tūpuna	tipuna	tīpuna
wahine	wāhine	tamaiti	tamariki
taitema	taitemariki	tuahine	tuāhine
tuakana	tuākana	teina	tēina
taina	tāina		

Add to these the general word for person (includes male or female)

tangata tāngata

These ten words listed above are the only nouns in Maori that are changed from singular to plural.

No problem of course, the qualifying words normally change.

Hei taurira:

the apple	-	<i>te āporo</i>	the apples	-	<i>ngā āporo</i>
this river	-	<i>tēnei awa</i>	these rivers	-	<i>ēnei awa</i>
my hat	-	<i>tōku pōtae</i>	my hats	-	<i>ōku pōtae</i>

and so on.....