



## **Mānawatia a Matariki**



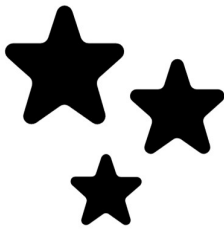
**What is Matariki and why it is  
important in Aotearoa New Zealand**

**Published: June 2025**

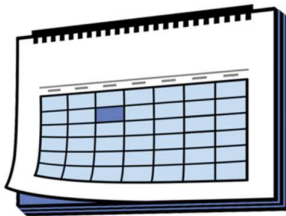
# What is Matariki?



Matariki is a **star cluster** that marks the start of the Māori New Year.



A **star cluster** is a group of stars that are close together in space.



Since 2022 there has been a **public holiday** for Matariki in Aotearoa New Zealand.



**Public holidays** are days when:

- schools are shut
- a lot of workplaces are shut
- some shops may be shut.



Matariki happens every year when the star cluster Matariki is first seen in the sky.

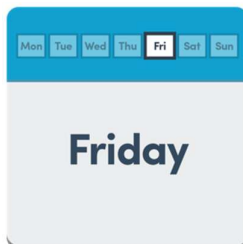


Matariki is usually in:

- June

or

- July.



The Matariki public holiday is always on a Friday.

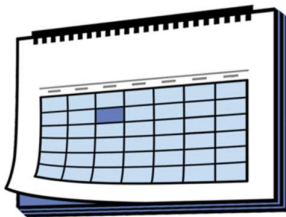


Māori **astronomers** have worked out when Matariki will be for a lot of years ahead.



**Astronomers** are people who know a lot about:

- stars
- space.



The Matariki public holiday will be on:

- 20 June 2025
- 10 July 2026
- 25 June 2027.



You can find more dates for the Matariki public holiday at this **website**:

**<https://tinyurl.com/4x7xdvrd>**



Everyone can celebrate Matariki.

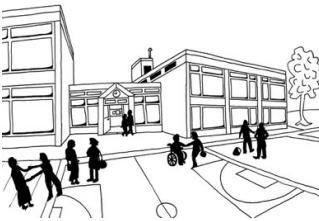


You can celebrate Matariki in many ways.



You may be able to join in Matariki celebrations run by:

- town / city councils
- marae
- your workplace
- the school your children go to.



You can say **Mānawatia a Matariki** to wish someone well at Matariki.



Matariki is hard to see from some parts of Aotearoa New Zealand.

People in those parts of Aotearoa New Zealand celebrate Puanga instead of Matariki.



Puanga is a star that rises about the same time as Matariki.



You can celebrate Puanga in the same ways you celebrate Matariki.

# The stars of Matariki



The Matariki star cluster is important to a lot of **cultures**.



**Culture** is a way of:

- thinking that a group shares
- doing things as a group.



It has lots of different names like:

- the Seven Sisters in English
- Pleiades in Greek
- Makali'i in Hawaiian
- Subaru in Japanese.



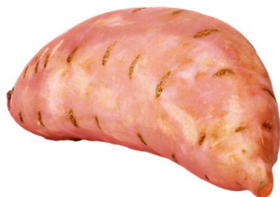


There are 9 stars in the Matariki star cluster.



Each star has a meaning:

- **Matariki** is good health for:
  - ourselves
  - the world around us
- **Tupu-ā-rangi** is food that comes from above like fruit
- **Tupu-ā-nuku** is food that grows in the ground
- **Ururangi** is the winds
- **Waipuna-ā-rangi** is:
  - rain
  - snow.







The meanings of more Matariki stars are:

- **Hiwa-i-te-rangi** is hopes / wishes
- **Waitī** is fresh water like:
  - lakes
  - rivers
- **Waitā** is the sea
- **Pōhutukawa** is people who have died.



The best time to see the Matariki star cluster is just before the sun comes up.

To find Matariki look:



- low in the sky near the horizon
- towards the northeast
- to the left of  
Orion's Belt / the Pot / Tautoru.



You can also look for Puanga.

Puanga is:



- a very bright star
- above Orion's Belt / the Pot /  
Tautora
- also known as Rigel.



This **website** has videos that show you how to find:

- Puanga
- Matariki

<https://tinyurl.com/3m55awbc>



There is a video in:

- Māori
- English.

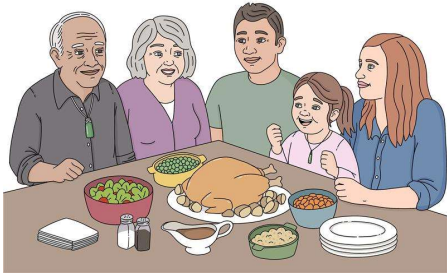


Some people say that the way the stars of Matariki look in the sky can tell us what the coming year will be like.



For example if the stars are bright it will be a good year.

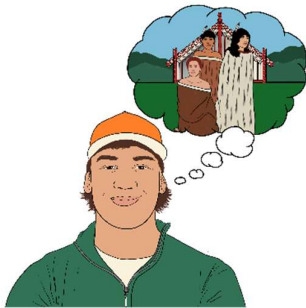
## Ways to celebrate Matariki



A Matariki whakataukī / saying is:

**Matariki kāinga tahi, Matariki kai tahi.**

Matariki brings us together to eat and share as one.



There are 3 important parts to celebrating Matariki:

- remembering the past
- celebrating the present / what is happening now
- planning for the time to come.





To remember the past we think about:

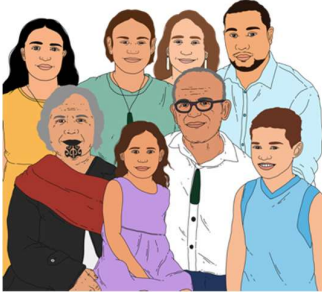
- loved ones who have died
- what has happened in the year that has just been.



You could do things to remember someone who has died like:

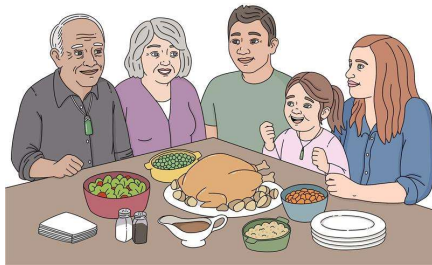
- talk to other people about them
- look at photos of them
- go somewhere that was special to them
- tidy their grave / where they are buried.





To celebrate the present / what is happening now we:

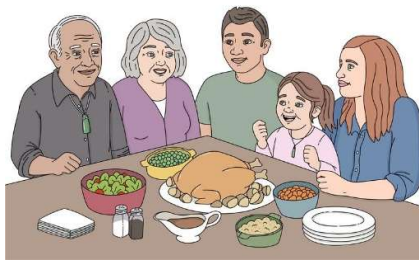
- spend time with:
  - whānau / family
  - friends
- share kai / food.



You could try some Māori kai / food like:

- hangi – food cooked in the ground
- fry bread
- boil-up – a stew with:
  - pork
  - vegetables.





You could have a special meal with people you love.



You could do things with other people like:

- make music
- play games
- tell / read stories.



To plan for the time to come we:

- think about the things we will do in the year that is about to happen
- make wishes.



You could write down your wishes / hopes for the future.



You could plan what you will plant in your garden when spring comes.



You could think about things you can do to take better care of the **environment** like:

- pick up rubbish at the beach
- plant a tree.



The **environment** is everything around us like:

- land
- air
- water
- plants.



## More information



You can find out more information about Matariki at these **websites**:

<https://matariki.co.nz>

<https://www.matariki.com>



<https://tinyurl.com/3kanhnaw>

<https://matariki.twoa.ac.nz>

<https://tinyurl.com/35p6399c>



These websites are **not** in Easy Read.



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