

# New Zealand

**SPECIFIC ACTIVITY: STUDY ABROAD**

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**This information is taken from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website**

**<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/new-zealand/>**

**Terrorism** Although there's no recent history of terrorism in New Zealand, attacks can't be ruled out. You should be aware of the global risk of indiscriminate terrorist attacks, which could be in public places including those visited by foreigners. There's a heightened threat of terrorist attack globally against UK interests and British nationals, from groups or individuals motivated by the conflict in Iraq and Syria. You should be vigilant at this time.

**Crime** **Make two copies of your passport's personal details page and leave one with friends at home. Take one copy with you, or upload it onto a secure online data storage site; this will help a speedier turnaround if your passport is lost or stolen.**

Crime levels are generally low, but street crime occurs in major towns and cities. Thefts from unattended vehicles, especially hire cars and camper vans in major tourist areas (the Coromandel Peninsula, Rotorua and Queenstown) have increased. There has also been an increase in the number of thefts from hotel rooms in some tourist areas. Don't leave possessions in unattended vehicles even if out of sight in a locked boot. Don't leave valuables in hotel rooms. Use the hotel safe if possible. Keep passports, travellers' cheques, credit cards, etc separate.

**Local travel and Extreme Sports** There have been a number of tragic accidents involving British visitors, including during extreme sports activities. If you are taking part in extreme sports check that the company is well established in the industry and that your insurance covers you. If you are visiting remote areas, check with local tourist authorities for advice before setting out. Make sure you register your details with a visitor information centre or leave details with family or friends. Weather conditions can quickly become treacherous in some areas. Keep yourself informed of regional weather forecasts.

**Road travel** You can use a UK driving licence to drive in New Zealand for up to a maximum of 12 months. Although road conditions are generally good in New Zealand, it takes a while to get used to local driving conditions. Even the main highways can be narrow, winding and hilly. Read a copy of the [Road Code](#) - the official guide to traffic rules and traffic safety - before driving. Car rental companies should provide you with information about [Whats Different About Driving in New Zealand](#).

In 2013 there were 254 road deaths in New Zealand (source: Department for Transport). This equates to 5.6 road deaths per 100,000 of population and compares to the UK average of 2.8 road deaths per 100,000 of population in 2013.

You should take out private motor vehicle insurance. Accident victims don't have a legal right to sue a third party in the event of an accident in New Zealand. Instead the Accident Compensation Commission (ACC) helps pay for your care if you're injured as a result of an accident. However, the ACC only covers the cost of treatment in New Zealand and delayed travel or loss of income in a third country isn't covered. You should therefore make sure you have adequate travel and accident insurance.

Helmet laws are in force in the Cook Islands. Anyone using a bicycle, motorcycle or scooter must wear an approved helmet at all times.

If you need emergency medical assistance during your trip, dial 111 and ask for an ambulance. You should contact your insurance/medical assistance company promptly if you are referred to a medical facility for treatment.

If you're visiting remote areas of New Zealand, make sure your journey details are known to local authorities or friends/relatives before setting out. Weather conditions can quickly become treacherous, especially in winter. See [Local travel](#)

### **Local laws and customs**

Importing illegal drugs is punishable by up to 8 - 12 years' imprisonment.

New Zealand has an established tradition of tolerance towards homosexuality, but there are still isolated incidents of homophobic related crimes. LGBT travellers should be aware of local sensitivities, particularly when visiting rural areas. See our [information and advice page](#) for the LGBT community before you travel.

If you travel to the Cook Islands or the Islands of Niue or Tokelau, check local customs and courtesies with local visitors' offices.

**Swimming safety** Rip currents are the main surf hazard for all beach users. They can occur at any beach, and can sweep even the strongest swimmer out to sea. Rip currents are directly responsible for 20 coastal drowning deaths and over 15,000 rescues in Australia and New Zealand each year. There are more British victims than any other foreign nationality, with as many as 400 British nationals rescued and up to 4 drowning each year.

Take the following simple precautions: - Always swim between the red and yellow flags - these indicate it is a supervised location where a lifesaving service is currently on duty. - Don't swim at unsupervised locations. - Read the safety signs - they indicate current and typical hazards for that location. - Ask a lifeguard for advice - they are there to provide safety advice and make your experience safe and enjoyable. - Always swim with a friend; never alone. - If you get into trouble, stay calm and attract attention by calling and waving your arm above your head. - Never swim after drinking alcohol or taking drugs - they impair your ability and judgement in the water.

Rivers and pools can be subject to sudden flash flooding as a result of heavy rain elsewhere in the area. There have been cases of British nationals being injured by diving into water which was too shallow. Make sure that there is sufficient depth of water before diving, and always follow warning signs if present.

Hazard	Control measures
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<b>Natural Disasters</b>	New Zealand is located in a seismic zone and is subject to earthquakes. There are also a number of active volcanoes in New Zealand. Follow the advice of the local authorities and emergency services in the event of a natural disaster. To learn more about what to do before, during and after an earthquake, see the <a href="#">New Zealand Ministry of Civil Defence &amp; Emergency Management</a> , <a href="#">New Zealand Earthquake Commission</a> and <a href="#">Get Ready Get Thru</a> websites. If a major earthquake or landslide occurs close to shore, you should follow the instructions of local authorities, bearing in mind that a tsunami could arrive within minutes.
<b>Water sports, beach safety: Rip currents for all beach users; surfing accidents;</b>	<b>Follow local advice and local beach advice</b>
<b>Crime:</b>	<b>Vigilant in cities and take advice from locals; avoid lonely and isolated areas.</b>