

The Maori Maramataka (Lunar Calendar)

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Nourish Your Soil, Nourish Your Soul

The **Maori Maramataka** translates literally to 'the moon turning'. For centuries, it has served as an environmental almanac guiding crop cultivation, harvesting, and soil rest by tuning into natural cycles. This guide is built for both Maori and Non-Maori 'Plant Parents' to maximize garden life using traditional ecological knowledge.

Understanding Lunar Energy (Mauri) in Your Garden

In the Maramataka system, each moon phase carries a specific level of energy (**mauri**) that pulls water tables and influences plant sap. Rather than fighting natural patterns, we schedule tasks to work in harmony with them.

Lunar Phase	Garden Energy (Mauri) & Action Plan	Paired Months
1. Whiro to Tirea (New Moon Phase)	Lowest Energy / Soil Rest. A time of low energy in the land. Avoid active planting or seed sowing. Best used for soil preparation, building compost, clearing weeds, and pest management.	Jan / Feb / Mar (Late Summer to Autumn Prep)
2. Te Marama Tupu (Waxing Moon / First Quarter)	Rising Energy / Above-Ground Growth. The moon's light is increasing, drawing moisture upwards. This is the optimal window for planting leafy greens, broccoli, cabbages, spinach, and above-ground herbs.	Apr / May / Jun (Autumn to Winter Sowing)
3. Te Marama Kaha (Full Moon Phase / Rakaunui)	Peak Energy / Fruitful Production. High sap flow. Extremely beneficial for sowing above-ground crops, fruiting varieties (like tomatoes and capsicums), or dividing ornamental perennials.	Jul / Aug / Sep (Late Winter to Early Spring)
4. Te Marama Hinga (Waning Moon / Tangaroa Phase)	Descending Energy / Root Development. Light decreases, pushing energy downwards into the root system. The ultimate planting window for root crops such as Kumara (sweet potato), Taewa (potatoes), carrots, and onions.	Oct / Nov / Dec (Spring to Summer Root Planting)

Plant Parent Checklist: Traditional Crops & Rules

Maori agriculture has always been observational. Pair these traditional wisdom blocks with modern crops for beautiful, healthy household gardens.

- **Kumara & Taewa (Sweet Potato & Maori Potatoes):** Always prioritize planting during the Tangaroa phase (22–26 days after the new moon). The downward sap flow speeds up root establishment dramatically.
- **Leafy Vegetables (Spinach, Bok Choy, Lettuce):** Plant during Te Marama Tupu (waxing moon) to stimulate vibrant, tender, rapid leaf and stem production.
- **Fruiting Varieties (Tomatoes, Peppers, Beans):** Thrive optimally when introduced into the ground immediately following the full moon phase (Rakaunui) when light levels are maximum.
- **Korekore Days (Low-Energy Days):** Do not plant anything during Korekore days (typically the 20th, 21st, and 22nd nights of the moon cycle). Plant growth stalls. Dedicate these days strictly to tool maintenance, layout planning, or weeding.

The Role of Matariki & Winter Rest

The appearance of the Matariki star cluster (usually in June/July) marks the Maori New Year. For a garden enthusiast, Matariki represents the completion of the harvest cycle. It instructs plant parents to give back to the soil by laying down nutrient-rich compost, clean mulch layers, sharpening workspace shears, and mapping spring layouts while the earth rests.