

This place is a bit different to commercial social networks. Mastodon.NZ is neither a public utility nor a corporation. It exists because Admin decided to make it so and it is run by volunteers, for fun, in their spare time. Respect the mahi they're putting into this thing and remember your moderators are people too. Mastodon.NZ is a community, with rules and guidelines designed to foster that community, but ultimately what @theadmin says goes.

The rules are written in plain English, and we expect you to read and be familiar with them. Ignorance is not an excuse for violating the rules. Users and moderators alike are expected to uphold the rules in the spirit they are written.

If you need any clarification on a rule, make a post mentioning @theadmin. Official communication, including rule changes, will be announced by @theadmin. If you believe an account has broken the rules, please follow the reports process. Moderator decisions are final and will not be discussed publicly. If you believe moderator action has been taken against your account in error, please get in touch through any of our official channels @theadmin or email info@mastodon.nz. Blocking the @theadmin account is a bannable offence.

These are the rules:

1. In order to register here, you must be at least 13 years of age.
2. You must also be a kiwi or honorary kiwi, at home or abroad, to join Mastodon.nz. Please describe your link to NZ as part of your reason for wanting to join.
3. You may only have one account on Mastodon.nz.
4. Personal accounts only. We do not allow bots, commercial, business, organisation or purely promotional accounts. We *may* allow non-personal accounts for an event, community activity etc under limited circumstances but you need to have a regular personal account here in good standing to begin with, and you need to seek permission from @theadmin first.
5. Automated cross-posting from other services such as twitter is considered to be a bot and is not allowed. If you have a blog or something and you wanna feed that through, this should be OK as long as otherwise within the rules, isn't too frequent (see spam rule) and you are also participating here as a person. If in doubt, ask @theadmin.
6. No spamming. The occasional mention of your shop, fundraiser etc. is fine. It's hard to give a defined daily limit of what constitutes spam, but if this starts to take over your account, we'll be having a word. Personal or professional (i.e. Mutual Aid or Kickstarters) fundraisers must be clearly hashtagged as such.
7. Content Warnings are mandatory on posts containing gore, violence, and "hot button" political or news takes, including accompanying images and links. For example, if it's # SomethingPolitician, # ElectionCampaigns or # SoAndSoBeingAwfulAgain or # DistressingNewsStory it should have a content warning. If in doubt, err on the side of caution. For the avoidance of all doubt, people sharing their lived experiences around, for example, racism and discrimination, is not a "hot button political take". It's their life. See the guidelines below for additional advice on content warnings and hashtags.
8. No impersonation of others. We may consider obvious parody accounts, but they must be agreed with @theadmin in advance.
9. No racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia or transphobia.
10. No illegal content, gore or violence for the sake of it, incitement of violence or promotion of violent ideologies or conspiracy theories. If you share the Christchurch Video or anything similarly deranged, we'll send your details to the cops. This is about the only time we'll volunteer your information to a 3rd party.

11. No NSFW content. A bit of casual swearing is fine, but don't be derogatory or aggressive to other users (see rule 12).
12. Be kind. No abuse or harassment will be tolerated.
13. No doxxing other users. This means unless it is already public knowledge on the server, sharing *any* personal information of other users without their consent to it becoming public information, will be met with account suspension. This includes but is not limited to real names, locations, political or religious affiliations. This also applies the other way around: if you meet someone from here in real life, don't immediately assume everyone else in the room knows who they are. That's not your information to disclose.
14. Content hosted on Mastodon.nz or produced by its users may not be reused outside of the fediverse without the express permission of the author(s). This means it is against the rules to use content from here in the media, or for research studies without getting the user's consent first. It is also against the rules to maliciously post screenshots from here on other social media. If you have something to say, join the discussion.
15. Mastodon.NZ complies with copyright laws. We expect you to as well. Your content must be your own or acceptable use, and if someone here is using your content without permission, please let @theadmin know via tagging us or email info@mastodon.nz.
16. Image descriptions: It is expected that users will add image descriptions to their uploads (the actual image/video, using the alt text function) for our visually impaired users.

In addition to these rules, we also have some expectations, conventions, and advice.

Boosts: Boosts are absolutely endorsements. You are responsible for what you boost. If you boost content that doesn't comply with our rules, moderators may take action. There's a reason there's no "quote toot" function here. If you continually find yourself wanting to endorse content against our rules mastodon.nz might not be the right home for you.

Content warnings: CWs have been around on the fediverse longer than you. They might seem strange or silly at first, but they're the done thing here, and users are expected to follow suit. Content warnings are mandatory on certain posts as described above. Use your common sense for everything else and familiarise yourself with how other people use them.

Hashtags: Are your friend. Search doesn't work without them, and they allow people to filter more effectively. Please capitalise them like this #HashtagExample for those using screen readers.

Image descriptions: We made this a rule because accessibility matters, and this takes 2 seconds. There are bots you can follow that will remind you in case you forget. We won't ban you for forgetting occasionally, but you need to make an effort. Ask for help if you don't know how. Once you get into the habit it's easy as.

Concerning content: If a user is posting content that makes you concerned for their wellbeing or the safety of others, report it to the moderators so we're aware. We will assist however we can. That said, the moderators are no different to the users in this situation. This is a community, and we all have an equal responsibility to look out for our members. If you really feel that someone is in some kind of serious trouble and "someone should do something", make that call and be the one help.

Privacy: Any data you put here should be considered public information. We cannot control what happens to it once you post it on the public internet. This includes DMs, which we'll do our best to protect as private information, but these are stored unencrypted and are viewable by the instance admin (don't worry, we're not looking), or anyone with physical possession of our servers. If the cops ask, we're probably going to hand them over. Don't make it awkward.

Respect: Be respectful of the existing cultures. This server, and the fediverse at large has been around a while. There are existing users, conventions, and cultures here which predate you.

Slow down: It's not a race. Take a minute to get a feel for the place, then post something under #introductions when you're ready to jump in. Whatever happens, remember this is just the Internet. If it's not fun anymore turn it off and go outside for a while.

User caps: Our hardware is capable of scaling up to a certain point, however we may introduce an artificial cap to keep things manageable. As long as we have people and CPU, signups will not be closed. It is expected that users actively and constructively contribute to the community here. If we get close to a cap, we may purge inactive accounts that have not been used in 6 months or more.

Business, organisations, and Orgs: We strongly recommend organisations host their own mastodon instance. Services like <https://masto.host> offer turnkey solutions, otherwise <https://mastodon.social> and other servers allow orgs. We recommend <https://botsin.space/> for bots. People from Mastodon.nz can follow and interact with your account even if you're based on another server.