

Cultural Symbols & Animal Symbolism

Across cultures, animals are used in mythology, storytelling, and ritual or religious practices to represent or *symbolize* aspects of human nature. Universal archetypes (gods and goddesses) are also often symbolically manifested through the actions, characteristics, and behavior of animals. Cultural legends portray a strong link between animals, Deities, and humans. This connection is often depicted through pictures or statues. Animal imagery and symbolism has often been used to foster spiritual growth and to guide seekers along the sacred pathways. Here are some examples from a combination of cultures. You may use the meanings given or come up with your own personal meanings. * Accuracy of this list has not been verified.

- **Alligator** - Aggression, survival, adaptability. Cunning, deceptive.
- **Ant** - Group minded, perseverance, self-discipline, group effort, teamwork, industriousness, orderliness, virtue. strength, stamina, honor.
- **Antelope** - Lunar animal, associated with the Mother. Grace, beauty.
- **Ape/Monkey** - Mischief, mimicry, cunning, benevolence. Humanity, nurture.
- **Bat** - Guardian of the night, cleaner, obscurity, messenger, double nature, happiness, good luck, longevity, peace;
also - hypocrisy, melancholy, revenge, wisdom.
- **Bee** - Immortality, rebirth, industry, order, purity, soul, chastity, messengers between worlds, secret wisdom, Mother and priestesses. Community.
- **Birds** - The soul, transcendence, spirits of air, ascent, communication, freedom, sight.
(**Woodpecker**) - Prophecy, magic, power, guardian of trees, Heralds rain and storms.
- **Bear** - Primal power, mother, cunning, healer, gentle strength, dreaming, sovereignty, intuition married with instinct. Nurturing, protective.
- **Bear Paw** - Power, direction, connection to creator.
- **Boar** - The warrior spirit, leadership, direction, lust, gluttony, fertility, prophecy, magic, protection, hospitality.
- **Buffalo** - Sacredness, life builder. The buffalo provides all good things for living, and bestows great curing powers.
- **Bull** - Wealth, potency, beneficence, generative force, male procreative strength, kingship, taming of the masculine and animal nature. Destructive force.
- **Butterfly** - Metamorphosis, carefree, transformer, immortality, rebirth, resurrection. Grace, light, soul.
- **Cat** - Guardianship, detachment, sensuality, stealth, desire, liberty, pleasure, magic, lust, pride, vanity.
- **Cougar** - Leadership, courage, power, swiftness and balance.
- **Cow** - Nourishment, motherhood, power of Earth, plenty, procreation, gentleness, nurturing.
- **Coyote** - Prankster, insight, playful. The coyote symbolizes duality and the ability to present both sides of an issue. Clowning and humor, perhaps sarcastic.
- **Crane** - Solitude, independence, messenger, communion, higher state of consciousness, wisdom, knowledge.
- **Crow** - Messenger, death, wisdom, communication, the underworld.
- **Deer** - Love, gentleness, kindness, gracefulness, sensitivity, purity of purpose, walking in the light, swift, nimble, meek, gentle, meditation, love, longevity, wealth.
- **Dog** - Guidance, protection, loyalty, fidelity, faithfulness, watchfulness, the Hunt.
- **Dolphin** - Kindness, play, savior, guide, sea power, swift, intelligence, communication, breath control, awareness of tone.
- **Donkey** - Humility, patience, peace, stupidity, stubbornness, lewdness.
- **Dragon** - Power of Earth, combining bird and serpent as matter and spirit, breath of life, supernatural power, magic, strength, wisdom, knowledge, guardian.

Cultural Symbols (Animal Symbolism)

- **Dragonfly** - Flighty, carefree, swift, activity, shamanistic, supernatural powers.
- **Eagle** - Divine spirit, air, the sun, power in battle, protection from evil, clear vision, success, prosperity, wealth, intelligence, renewal, courage.
- **Elephant** - Strength, fidelity, memory, patience, wisdom, intelligence, power.
- **Fish (Salmon)**- Instinct, persistence, determination, wisdom, inspiration, rejuvenation.
- **Elk** - Strength, agility, freedom, power, nobility.
- **Fox** - Cunning, provider, intelligence, feminine magic, diplomacy, wildness.
- **Frog** - Power of water, sensitivity, medicine, hidden beauty, power.
- **Goat** - Vitality, fertility, creativity, virility, abundance, lust.
- **Goose** - Guardian, watchful, wind, the sun, war, inspiration, swift, happiness, providence.
- **Hare (Rabbit)**- Alertness, nurturing, intuition, balance, fertility, fire, madness, transformation
- **Hawk** - Nobility, recollection, cleansing, messenger, observer, Solar, clarity, discrimination, inspiration, the soul.
- **Heron** - Vigilance, quiet, power of water, the underworld, tact, delicacy, renewal, life, transformation.
- **Horse** - Stamina, mobility, strength and power, coping under difficult circumstances, love, devotion, loyalty, the land, travel. Life and death symbol, intellect, wisdom, power, nobility, energy, freedom, wildness, divination, prophecy, fertility.
- **Hummingbird** - Messenger, stopper of time, optimism, sweetness.
- **Jackal** - Guide of souls, associated with cemeteries.
- **Jaguar** - Messenger, forest spirits, power.
- **Leopard** - Ferocity, aggression, intrepid, Great Watcher, courage, activity, speed.
- **Lion** - Solar, splendor, power, majesty, strength, courage, nobility.
- **Lizard** - Conservation, agility, promotes dreaming.
- **Moose** - Headstrong, unstoppable, longevity, value, integrity.
- **Octopus** - The spiral, water, unconscious.
- **Otter** - Laughter, curiosity, mischievous, feminine power, grace, empathy, joy, play, helpfulness.
- **Owl** - Wisdom, truth, patience, darkness, a death messenger, divination, solitude, detachment, wisdom, change, totem of clairvoyants and mystics.
- **Peacock** - Recognition, Self-Assurance
- **Porcupine** - Innocence, Humility
- **Ram** - Sacrifice, breakthrough, achievement, virility, creativity, the Sun, solar power.
- **Raven** - Trickster, teacher, hoarder, healing, initiation, protection, shaman's power, transformation, change in consciousness, mark of a shape shifter.
- **Seahorse** - Confidence, grace.
- **Serpent (Python or Snake)** - Shrewdness, transformation, life, death and rebirth, resurrection, rain, fertility, wisdom, passion, healing, poison, preserver, destroyer, malice,
- **Shark** - Hunter, survival, adaptability.
- **Spider** - Creative, pattern of life, connects the past with the future, creating possibilities.
- **Stag (Male Horse)** - Pride, independence, purification.
- **Swan** - Grace, balance, innocence, faithfulness, solitude, retreat, poetry, sincerity.
- **Tiger** - Creator, destroyer, strength, ferocity, power, anger, power of Earth.
- **Turtle** - Self contained, creative source, Earth, informed decisions, planning, adaptability.
- **Unicorn** - Chastity, purity, dreams, virtue, strength, integrity, magic, healing, freedom.
- **Whale** - Power of Water, regeneration, death, rebirth.
- **Wolf** - Loyalty, success, perseverance, stability, thought, pathfinder, teacher, intuition, learning, the shadow.

Symbols of the Chinese Horoscope Cycle

The Twelve Earthly Branches and Their Attributes

1. **RAT:** intelligent, enterprising, has devotion to purpose, but can be devious and scheming at times.
2. **OX:** strong, steadfast and dependable, but not necessarily stupid; faithful to the end, slow to anger, but can be very forceful.
3. **TIGER:** loyal, courageous, energetic, strong, cunning. The tigress tends to be shrewish.
4. **RABBIT:** modest, fast mover, has delicate senses, and is a good listener.
5. **DRAGON:** benign, embodies wisdom, strength and goodness. Protector of the weak.
6. **SNAKE:** observant, quick to anger, usually possesses great physical beauty and is not necessarily venomous except when protecting the family.
7. **HORSE:** strong and powerful, usually vain if a woman, warlike and chivalrous.
8. **SHEEP:** proud, domineering, strive to help and guard their fellows, and are sometimes excellent doctors.
9. **MONKEYS:** quick and keen of wit, highly observant, curious, loving, a good parent, and excellent in small enterprises.
10. **ROOSTER:** quick to fight, single-purposed and persistent.
11. **DOG:** loyal, steadfast, persistent in adversity. Sensitive to feelings.
12. **PIG:** highly intelligent, scholarly, easily angered, easily swayed and affected by emotions.



Aboriginal Symbols and their Meanings

Many of the symbols used by Aboriginal artists are a variation of lines or dots. Similar symbols can have multiple meanings according to the art region and the elaborate combination of these can tell complex Dreamtime stories. Symbols used within paintings include **concentric circles** represent camp sites, waterholes or places of significance. **Curved lines represent** rain or water traveling underground. **Tracks**, whether human or animal, are often shown as they appear on the ground.



Bush Turkey



Budgerigar



Emu



Footprints



Frog



Goanna



Witchetty Grub



Honey Ant



Bush Potato



Bush Tomato



Campsite



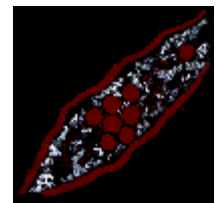
Hunting



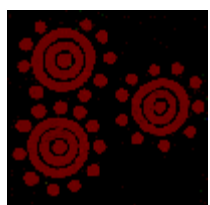
Kangaroo



Men Hunting



Milky Way



Stars



Possum



Sites



Snake



Spinifex



Rain



Thunder and
Lightning



Water Hole

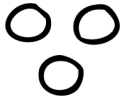


Water Hole



Women's Ceremony

Ants, Fruits, Flowers or Eggs



ANTS, FRUITS, FLOWERS
OR EGGS

Three circles can have multiple interpretations - ants (honey ants), fruits, flowers or eggs. These are gathered by the Aboriginal women, as a food source (bush tucker) or used as a bush medicine....



BOOMERANG

Boomerang

The boomerang is used by Aboriginal men for hunting small animals and for ceremonies....



BUSH BERRY

Bush Berry

There are many species of bush berries, gathered by Aboriginal women in Central Australia. Bush berries are a staple food source (bush tucker) for Aboriginal people....



CAMPSITE OR WATERHOLE

Campsite or Waterhole

Roundels can depict camp-site, meeting place, ceremonial site or water-hole. These sites are culturally significant to Aboriginal people living in Central Australia....

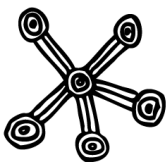
Emu



EMU

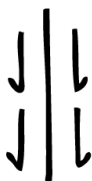
This icon depicts the emu track. The Aboriginal men follow these tracks to hunt the emu (large flight-less bird), which is a staple food source (bush tucker) and is used for bush medicine. In men's ceremonies the emu feathers are...

Honey Ant &

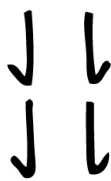


HONEY ANT SITE

Aboriginal women use their digging stick to dig deep into the sand in search of honey ants. The honey ants produce a honey-like liquid in their abdomen, which is regarded as a special treat by Aboriginal people in Central...



MOVING KANGAROO TRACKS



KANGAROO TRACK

Kangaroo Track

This icon depicts the track of the kangaroo. Aboriginal men hunt the kangaroo by following its tracks in the sand....



ADINKRA POWER SYMBOLS















African symbols known as adinkra are abundant in Ghana, a beautiful West African country on the Atlantic. *Adinkra* cloths were traditionally only worn by royalty and spiritual leaders for funerals and other special occasions. They were originally hand printed with stamps carved from gourds and red, dark brown or black inks. Now these symbols can be worn by anyone and are often mass-produced and can be found on cloth and walls, in pottery and logos. The symbols have a decorative function but also represent objects that encapsulate distinct messages that evoke traditional wisdom, like proverbs. They were one of the ways a pre-literate society transmitted complex and nuanced beliefs.






- http://www.adinkra.org/htmls/adinkra_index.htm















 Tumi te se kosua	Power is like an egg	Delicacy of political power, Fragility of democracy, Restraint	<i>Tumi te se kosua, woso mu den a, epae; na se woanso mu yie nso a, efiri wo nsa bo famu ma epae</i> Power is as fragile as an egg, when held too tightly it might break; if it is held too loosely, it might fall and break.
 Tuo ne Akofena	Gun and State sword	Power Responsibility Authority Legitimacy, National security protection, Military prowess	&







 <p>Adikrahene Dua</p>	<p>Adinkra king stamp.</p> <p>This is used only for printing on the Adinkra cloth.</p>	<p>Greatness</p> <p>Royalty</p>	
 <p>Adwera</p>	<p>Watery shrub</p>	<p>Purity and Sanctity</p> <p>Chastity</p> <p>good fortune</p> <p>Consecration</p> <p>Cleanliness</p>	<p><i>Adwera nsuo, wo ne nkwansuo, nsu korogyenn a wohuru nso wonhye.</i></p> <p>Water of life, you are the pure crystal clean water that boils but, does not burn.</p>
 <p>Adwo</p>	<p>Peace.</p>	<p>Peace/Calmness</p>	<p><i>Ohene nya ahontenafo pa a, ne bere so dwo</i></p> <p>When the king has good counselors, then he will have a peaceful reign.</p>
 <p>Agyinduwura</p>  <p>Akofena</p>	<p>Royal/ ceremonial sword.</p>	<p>Faithfulness</p> <p>Alertness</p> <p>Dutifulness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Gallantry ✦ Valour ✦ Bravery 	<p><i>Akofena kunini ko a, wobo a fena kye no safohene</i></p> <p>The great warrior always has a royal sword of rest even when he retires</p>
 <p>Akoben</p>	<p>War Horn</p> <p>The sound of Ako-ben is a battle cry.</p>	<p>Call to arms</p> <p>Readiness and preparedness for action or battle.</p>	



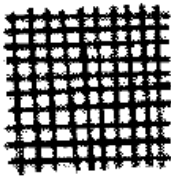

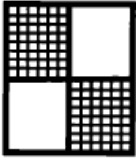
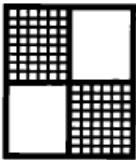

 Ako-ben	War Horn (another version) The sound of Ako-ben is a battle cry.	Call to arms Readiness and preparedness for action or battle. Vigilance	
 Akoko nan	The hen's feet	Parenthood. Care. Tenderness. Protection. Parental admonition is not intended to harm the child. (Parental discipline.)	<i>Akoko nan tia ba, na ennkum no.</i> The hen treads upon its chicks but it does not intend to kill them.
 Akoma	The heart.	Patience Endurance Love and faithfulness	<i>Nya Akoma</i> Take heart.
 Akoma ntoaso	Extension of the heart.	Understanding Agreement or charter Unity.	
 Ananse ntontan	Spider web	Wisdom creativity	
 Ani bere	Seriousness	Diligence Perseverance	<i>Ani bere a, nso gya, anka mani abere koo.</i> Seriousness does not show fiery eyes; else you would see my face all red.







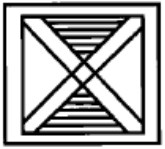
 <p>Asase ye duru</p>	<p>The earth has weight.</p>	<p>Divinity of the earth Providence Power/Authority Wealth Might</p>	<p><i>Tumi nyina ne asase</i> All power emanates from the earth <i>Asase ye duru sen epo</i> The earth is heavier than the sea</p>
 <p>Aya</p>	<p>The fern</p>	<p>Defiance Endurance Resourcefulness</p>	
 <p>Bese saka</p>	<p>Sack of colanuts</p>	<p>Power Abundance affluence Togetherness and unity (agriculture and trade bring people together).</p>	
 <p>Bi-nnka-bi (obi nnka obi)</p>	<p>Bite not one another</p>	<p>Peace Harmony Caution against strife and provocation</p>	
 <p>Biribi wo soro</p>	<p>There is something in the heavens.</p>	<p>Hope. Reliance on God for inspiration.</p>	<p><i>Nyame, biribi wo soro, na ma embeka me nsa.</i> God, there is something in heaven, let it get to me.</p>

 <p>Boa me na me boa wo</p>	<p>Help me to help you.</p>	<p>Interdependence Cooperation Helping one another</p>	
 <p>Dame-dame</p>	<p>A board game</p>	<p>Intelligence Ingenuity</p>	
 <p>Dono</p>	<p>Drum</p>	<p>Praise</p>	
 <p>Dono ntoaso (Nnonnowa)</p>	<p>Double drum</p>	<p>Unity Concord Strength</p>	
 <p>Duafe</p>	<p>Wooden comb</p>	<p>Feminine virtue. Everlasting love.</p>	
 <p>Dwannimmen</p>	<p>Ram's horn</p>	<p>Concealment Humility & Strength Wisdom & learning</p>	<p><i>Dwannini ye asisie a, ode n'akorana na...</i> It is the hart and not the horns that leads a ram to bully.</p>







 Eban	Fence/fort or castle Representing fenced homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Protection ✚ security ✚ safety ✚ fortress 	
 Epa	Handcuffs	Slavery Equality Law & Justice	<p><i>Onii a ne pa da wonsa no, na n'akoa ne wo</i></p> <p>You are a slave to the one whose handcuffs you are wearing.</p>
 Ese ne tekrema	The teeth and the tongue.	Friendship interdependence Advancement progress Strength in unity.	
 Fafanto/Esononamtam		Tenderness gentleness	
 Fihankra	House	Safety /security in a home.	
 Fawohudie	Freedom	Freedom Liberty	



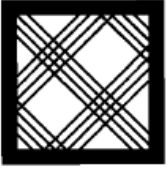


 Fofoo	<p><i>Fofoo</i> plant (a yellow-flowered plant)</p>	<p>Jealousy Envy</p>	<p><i>Se die fofoo pe ne se gyinantwi abo bidie.</i></p> <p>The <i>Fofoo</i> plant’s wish is that the <i>gyinantwi</i> seeds should turn black.</p>
 Funtunmfunafu dua	<p>The tree/altar of the funtunfunafu . (version of the Siamese crocodile)</p>	<p>Need for unity when there is the same destiny</p>	
 Funtumfunafu denkyem funafu/ Funntunmireku	<p>Siamese twin crocodiles joined at the stomach.</p>	<p>Democracy and oneness irrespective of cultural differences.</p>	<p><i>Funtumfunafu denkyemfunafu, won afuru bom, nso woredidi a na woreko.</i></p> <p>They share one stomach and yet they fight for getting food.</p>
 Gyawu atiko	<p>Symbol drawn by Gyawu, who was a chief of Bantama</p>	<p>Bravery Valour Fearlessness Leadership</p>	
 Gye Nyame	<p>Except God.</p>	<p>Omnipotence and immortality of God</p>	
 Hye wonnye	<p>That which cannot be burnt</p>	<p>Imperishability Endless Forgiveness Toughness</p>	<p><i>Hye wonnhye</i></p> <p>He who burns be not burned</p>






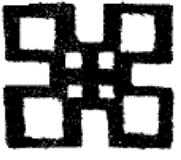

 Hwemudua		Excellence Superior quality	
 Kae me	Remember me.	Loyalty Faithfulness	
 Kete pa	Good bed	Good marriage. Love and faithfulness	
 Kojo baiden	Rays	Cosmos omnipresence	
 Kontire ne Akwamu	State elders	Reliance. Democracy.	One head does not make up council
 Kontire ne Akwamu	State elders	Reliance. Democracy.	One head does not make up council
 Krado - mmra krado	Seal of law and order	Authority of the court. Law and order	







 <p>Krapa (Musuyidie)</p>	<p>Sanctity, Pure in heart.</p>	<p>Sanctity Purity.</p>	<p><i>Krapa te se okra okyiri fi</i> Sanctity, like cats, abhors filth.</p>
 <p>Kramo bone</p>	<p>The Bad</p>	<p>Warning against hypocrisy</p>	<p><i>Kramo bone amma yennhu kramo pa</i> We cannot tell the good from the bad because of pretence and hypocrisy</p>
 <p>Kuntinkantan</p>	<p>Do not boast. Do not be filled with pride.</p>	<p>Need for humility and service Modesty</p>	
 <p>Kwatakye- atiko</p>	<p>Hair of the hero Kwatakye</p>	<p>Valour Bravery leadership</p>	
 <p>Mako</p>			
 <p>Me ware wo</p>	<p>I shall marry you.</p>	<p>Commitment</p>	
	<p>Wind house. House built to stand windy and treacherous</p>	<p>Fortitude</p>	







Cultural Symbols (Animal Symbolism)







 <p>Mmomudwan</p>	<p>Unity</p>	<p>Unity Togetherness</p>	
 <p>Mmra krado</p>	<p>Seal of law and order.</p>	<p>The Court's authority./law and order</p>	
 <p>Mmusuyidee</p>	<p>That which removes ill luck or evil.</p>	<p>Good fortune Sanctity Spiritual strength</p>	
 <p>Mpatapo</p>	<p>Reconciliation knot</p>	<p>Reconciliation Peacemaking</p>	
 <p>Mpuannum nkotimsofo puua</p>	<p>Five tufts of hair (a traditional hair style)</p>	<p>Skillfulness Priestly office Loyalty Adroitness</p>	
 <p>Nea onnim no sua a ohu</p>	<p>He who does not know can know from Learning. Knowledge comes by learning.</p>	<p>knowledge</p>	






 <p>Nea ope se nkrofoo ye ma wo no, ye saa ara ma won.</p>	<p>Do to others the things you want them to do to for you.</p>	<p>Justice</p>	<p>Nea ope se nkrofoo ye ma wo no, ye saa ara ma won</p> <p>Do unto others what you want others to do unto you.</p>
 <p>Nea ope se obedi hene</p>	<p>He who wants to be king.</p>	<p>Leadership</p>	
 <p>Nhwimu /Nkyimu</p>	<p>Crossing. The divisions done onto the plain cloth before the stamping is done.</p>	<p>Skill Precision</p>	
 <p>Nkuma kese</p>	<p>The great okra</p>	<p>Supremacy Superiority</p>	
 <p>Nkyinkyim</p>	<p>Zigzag/ twisting</p>	<p>Playing many roles. (Dynamism)</p> <p>Initiative</p> <p>Toughness</p> <p>Adaptability</p> <p>Resoluteness</p>	<p>Obra kwan ye nkyinkyimiie</p> <p>Life's path is full of ups and downs; twists and turns.</p>




 Nkonsonkonson	Chain links	Human relations Unity	
 Nkontim	Hair of the Queen's servant	Loyalty Service	
 Nnonnowa (Donno ntoasoa)	Double drum	Valour Strength	
 Nserewa		Wealth Abundance Affluence	
 Nsoromma	The Star Child of God/child of the heavens	Reflection of God faith in God Guardianship	
 Nssa	Type of hand woven-cloth/ Blanket	Excellence Authenticity Genuineness	<p><i>Nea onim nssa na oto n'ago</i></p> <p>The one who knows the nssa blanket is willing to buy it even when it is old.</p>
 Ntesie - Mate masie	I have heard and kept it.	Knowledge Wisdom	<p><i>Nyansa bun mu ne mate masie</i></p> <p>Deep wisdom comes out of listening and keeping what is heard.</p>






 Nya abotere	Be patient	Patience calmness	
 Nyame dua	Altar of God/tree of God God's altar in the sky; a place of worship.	God's presence/ protection.	
 Nyame nti	Since god exist For God's sake By God's grace	God's grace. Faith in God.	Nyame nti mi nnwe wura By god's grace, I will not eat leaves to survive.
 Nyame nnwu na me wu	God never dies; therefore I shall not die.	Life after death	
 Nyansapo	Wisdom knot	Wisdom Ingenuity Patience	
 Odenkyem.	The crocodile.	Prudence	Odenkyem da nsuo mu, nso onnhome nsuo, ohome mframa The crocodile lives in water but does breathe air and not water.


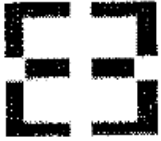


 Odo nyera fie kwan	Love does not lose its way home. Blessing in loving.	Power of Love Faithfulness	
 Ohene adwa	The king's stool	State Chieftaincy	
 Ohene	King	Wisdom	
 Ohene aniwa	king's eye	Beauty Vigilance	
 Ohene tuo	The king's gun. Defender and protector of the king.	Greatness	
 Okodee mmowere	Eagle's talons. A style of Shavings on the heads of some traditional court attendants.	Strength and unity.	

 Okuafo Pa	Good farmer	Hardwork Entrepreneurship Industry productivity	<p><i>Okuafo pa ne obi a oye nsiyefoo, ono na ose : w'afuo so a, woye ne nyinaa.</i></p> <p>The good and industrious farmer says: No matter how big your farm is you tend it all.</p>
 Onyakopon aniwa	God's eye	Omnipresence of God	<p><i>Onyakopon aniwa hu asumu asem biara</i></p> <p>God's eye sees all secrets</p>
 Onyakopon ne yen ntena	May God be with us	God's presence and protection	
 Osidan	The builder	Creativity	
 Osram / Osrane	The moon.	Patience and understanding	<p><i>Osram mmfiti preko nntwareman.</i></p> <p>It takes the moon some time to go round the earth.</p>
 Osram ne Nsoroma	The moon and the star.	Love Faithfulness Fondness.	

 Owo foro adobe	Snake climbing the palm tree.	Performing the impossible. Excellence/valor	
 Owu atwedee	Ladder of death.	Death, the ultimate fate of man. Mortal nature of man.	<i>Owu atwedee obaako nforo.</i> All men shall climb the ladder of death
 Pa gya	Striking of fire.	War	
 Pempamsie	Readiness	Readiness/Preparedness Strength and unity.	<i>Pempamsie se, bebre ahooden ne koroye.</i> That which will not overcome
 Sankofa	Return and get it. Learning from the past.	You can always correct your mistakes. Wisdom Using past experiences to build the future. Better late than never	<i>Se wo were fin a wo sankofa a yennkyi.</i> It is not a taboo to return to fetch something you forgot earlier on.

 <p>Sankofa (alternate version)</p>	<p>Return and get it.</p> <p>Learning from the past.</p>	<p>You can always correct your mistakes.</p> <p>Wisdom</p> <p>Using past experiences to build the future.</p> <p>Better late than never</p>	<p><i>Se wo were fin a wo sankofa a yennkyi.</i></p> <p>It is not a taboo to return to fetch something you forgot earlier on.</p>
 <p>Sankofa dua</p>			
 <p>Sepow</p>	<p>Knife used in executions.</p> <p>This is plunged through the throat of the victim's cheeks to prevent him from</p>	<p>Justice</p>	

 Sepow	Knife used in executions. This is plunged through the throat of the victim's cheeks to prevent him from invoking a curse on the King.	Justice	
 Sesa woruban	Change your life	Transformation A new beginning	
 Sunsum	The Soul The Akans believe that the soul of the chief reside in a younger courtier	Spirituality Purity Everlasting	
 Tabon	Paddle	Courage hard work	
 Tamfo bebre	The enemy shall suffer.	Jealousy	

 Wawa aba	Seed of the <i>wawa</i> tree. <i>Wawa</i> is a hardwood used in carving.	Skillfulness	
 Wuforo dua pa a	When you climb a good tree.	Support Cooperation Encouragement	<i>Wuforo dua pa a na ye pia wo</i> He who climbs a good tree is encouraged/supported.
 Wo nsa da mu a	If you have your hands in the dish	Democracy Pluralism	
			

Maori Designs – New Zealand Tattoo & Their meaning

The Maori are indigenous people that originated in New Zealand. They have a form of body art, known as moko but more commonly referred to as Maori tattooing. The art form was brought to the Maori from Polynesia and is considered highly sacred.

Ngapuhi Maori elder Kingi Taurua's traditional facial tattoo (Photo: AFP)



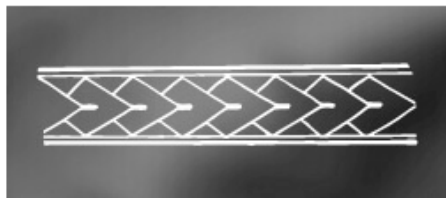
Since the Maori people consider the head to be the most sacred part of the body, the most popular kind of Maori tattoo was the facial tattoo, which was composed of curved shapes and spiral like patterns. Often this tattoo covered the whole face and was a symbol of rank, social status, power and prestige.

For Maori, tattooing was (and for some, still is) a rite of passage, which meant it was highly revered and ritualised. The tattooing would begin usually during adolescence.

The great thing about Maori tattoos is that to this day, no two tattoos are alike. Maori tattoos are one of a kind. They are always highly intricate and detailed and display the craftsmanship and artistry of not only the artist but of the Maori culture.

The Maori tattoo artist is called the tohunga ta moko which means moko specialist. These tattooists are highly respected, and considered tapu which means inviolable or holy. Tohunga ta moko were mostly men, but there are a few women who take up the practice.

Different Infill Patterns (Black Areas) in your tattoo and their meanings



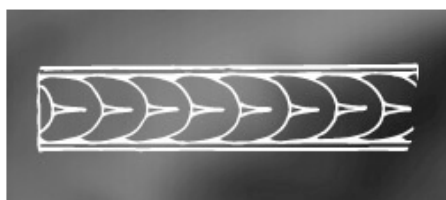
Pakati:

Dog skin cloak, representative of warriors/battles/courage and strength.



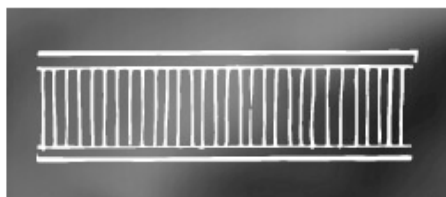
Hikuaua:

Representative of Taranaki (a region of New Zealand) as well as prosperity, mackerel tail.



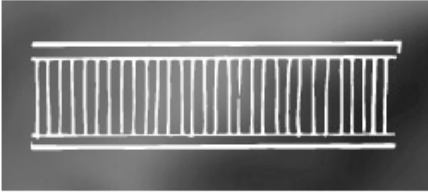
Unaunahi:

Fish scales that represent abundance and health.



Ahu ahu mataroa:

Shows talent and achievement in athleticism or sport and can also be representative of a new challenge.



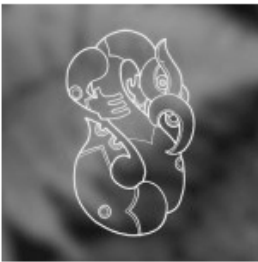
Ahu ahū mataroa:

Shows talent and achievement in athleticism or sport and can also be representative of a new challenge.



Taratarekae:

From whale teeth.



Manaia:

The manaia is known as a spiritual guardian, and carrier of supernatural powers. Traditionally depicted as a bird like figure with the head of a bird, body of a man and the tail of a fish it acts as a provider and protector over the sky, earth and sea. Likened to a bird sitting on your shoulder, looking after ones spirit, and guiding the spirit where it is supposed to go when the time comes.



Hei tiki:

Commonly known as a good luck charm the tiki is also considered a symbol of fertility. Assumed to be clear thinking, perceptive, loyal and knowledgeable, the wearers strength is their character. The tiki is a talisman to the Maori people, and has been regarded as a good luck charm from the ancient times. The Maori believe the tiki represents the unborn human embryo. The most valuable tiki's were carved from greenstone and were handed down through generations and treasured possessions.

Common Stand-Alone Maori designs



Koru (spiral):

The koru depicts new beginnings, growth and harmony, taken from the symbolism of an unfurled fern leaf. New Zealand has some of the most beautiful ferns in the world.



Hei matau (fish hook):

The Maori symbols or meaning of hei matau, more commonly known as the fish hook symbolises prosperity. Maori use fish in many of their traditional food dishes. Fish were so plentiful to the Maori that the simple ownership of a fish hook meant prosperity. The fish hook also represents strength, determination and good health, as well as providing safe journey over water.



Single twist:

The Maori symbols or meaning for the single twist represents the path of life, it is the symbol of eternity. The single figure eight is different than the double and triple twists mentioned below.



Double or triple twist:

These twists represent the joining together of two people, or two cultures for eternity and even though they may experience life's up and downs they remain bonded by friendship and loyalty for life (a favourite of the Maori symbols).