



## Prime Minister - What does the Prime Minister do?

### Fact

- The Prime Minister is like the team captain of the team of people that make up the government.
- The government makes important decisions that affect us all – things like how many hospitals there should be, where the motorways will be built, how much tax people should pay and how New Zealand should get on with other countries.
- The Prime Minister helps their cabinet (that's the name given to the key people in their team) come to an agreement on the decisions to be made
- The Prime Minister represents their party (that's the name given to their team) when talking to the media and the opposition parties about the decisions they've made.
- The Prime Minister represents New Zealand in other countries at important events and meetings.
- When important meetings or events are held in New Zealand the Prime Minister represents New Zealand at those meetings and events.

### Do you know

- Every three years adults, who have New Zealand residency, get to vote which party they want to be in government.
- At the Elections in July 2002 the Labour Party was voted into Government so Helen Clarke is our Prime Minister for another three years. She was voted into Government in the elections in 1999 too.
- The Prime Minister's day is a long one! She can be in meetings or on TV from 7am in the morning and finish meetings or attend a function until very late at night.
- Helen Clarke lives in Auckland but has to spend most of her time at the Beehive in Wellington attending meetings and functions.

### Experiments you can do

Who are the party leaders?

Helen Clarke is the leader of the Labour Party. Can you name the leaders of the National Party, the Greens and United Future? Those are just a few of the parties that ran for election this year but they all spent a lot of time in the media, on TV and in the papers.

### Other Investigations

If you were Prime Minister what one law would you like to see made or changed? Remember the Prime Minister isn't the person who decides what will happen by themselves. The law would have to benefit (be good for) the majority (most) of New Zealanders before it would be passed as law by the government.  
Why would you like that new law and what would it do for New Zealand?