

Practice Note 19 – Security features of New Zealand passports

One method of checking the authenticity of a New Zealand passport is to run your finger over the map of New Zealand on the inside back cover. The map should be slightly rough, raised and bumpy. This tactile aspect is created by raised intaglio printing, which is apparently extremely difficult to counterfeit, and is one of a number of security features of New Zealand passports. Many recently issued New Zealand passports (from 2023 onward, and increasing in number as stock levels of the previous passport format are utilised) also contain a little green fern, printed on the photo page with thermochromic ink – a special dye that changes colour depending on the temperature. Place your thumb over the fern, warming it up to body temperature. If it's the real deal, the fern will disappear.