WELCOME TO OTAGO
Your guide to first year
Join us in celebrating 150 years of daring to be wise

Revised 7 Nov 2018

otago.ac.nz/150
150@otago.ac.nz

Key dates

- Residential college moving in days: Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 February
- Orientation Week: Monday 18 – Sunday 24 February
- Academic Orientation: Monday 18 – Friday 22 February
- First semester starts: Monday 25 February
Welcome!
We’re excited you’re joining us at Otago

You’re about to join a community of more than 20,000 students experiencing the combination of world-class teaching and unique student lifestyle that makes Otago special.

This booklet contains information you’ll need to prepare for a great first year.

otago.ac.nz/first-year
Nau mai, haere mai, tauti mai

It is my pleasure to warmly welcome you to New Zealand’s oldest and finest university at an exciting time – this year marks our 150th anniversary, and we would like you to join us in celebrating our long tradition of excellence in teaching and research.

Throughout your studies here at Otago, you will have access to New Zealand’s best teaching and mentoring services and you will experience our outstanding student culture, which is second to none.

Orientation Week (18-24 February 2019) is a time for you to get acquainted with Otago. All of our student services will be on display and our Academic Orientation programme will provide you with information and tips on how to succeed in your studies. I encourage you to attend as many activities as you can during the week.

I also request the pleasure of your company at the University of Otago Convocation Ceremony on Monday 18 February at 7:30pm at Forsyth Barr Stadium, Dunedin. This ceremony formally welcomes all first-year students to the University of Otago.

Please note, there are some letters included with this booklet for your family and whānau. Please share this information with them, especially if you are from outside of Dunedin and they are travelling with you as you settle into your new accommodation.

On behalf of us all here at Otago, we look forward to welcoming you on Monday 18 February 2019.

PROFESSOR HARLENE HAYNE, ONZM, PhD, HonDSc, FRSNZ
Vice-Chancellor
Life at Otago: “It’s like Studentsville”

“Everyone’s in the same boat … everyone’s studying … everyone’s here to have a good time.”

Dunedin is a true student city. Our campus is right in its centre and all of our world-class lecture theatres, research labs, libraries, recreational facilities and residential colleges are situated within a three-kilometre radius. You’re going to be studying, playing and living in a safe and welcoming student community.
“It’s scary thinking about moving away from home but it’s a one-of-a-kind experience. The atmosphere, the people, not to mention the top-notch education – it’s all worth it!”

Most of our first-year students live in one of our 14 undergraduate residential colleges. They offer support, guidance, amazing facilities and food, and are great places to make new friends and share new experiences. If you are one of our first-years living at home, flatting or boarding, you won’t miss out: our Locals programme provides academic support, volunteering opportunities and fun social events.

“There are so many places that you can just go and explore if you have a weekend off.”

It’s a 10-minute walk to town, so all of Dunedin’s best places for shopping, music, arts and entertainment are at your doorstep. And make sure you explore the fantastic beaches, mountains and rugged outdoors that offer an awesome range of activities, from surfing and kayaking to mountain-biking and hiking.
Bucket list

Things to do in your first year at Otago

- Take a selfie in front of the Clocktower.
- Eat a triple scoop from Rob Roy’s.
- Make it to the top of the steepest street in the world (Baldwin St).
- Brave the polar plunge at St Clair beach.
- Have a go at surfing.
- Watch the mid-winter lantern festival.
- Go to a local rugby game and dress up in support.
- If it snows (it might!) make a snowman.
- Walk through the town belt and listen to the birds.
- Wear pyjamas to an 8am lecture.
- Try all the libraries across campus – each has a different fantastic view!
- Sign up for one of our 160 clubs and societies.
- Audition for the capping show.
- Check out the glow worms in Leith Valley.
- Play frisbee golf at Chingford Park.
- Do the Dunedin street art trail.
- Go to OUSA cuddle fix.
- Walk the Pineapple Track.
- Walk up to the Signal Hill lookout.
- Walk to the top of the Richardson building by stairs (just to say you’ve done it).
- Go to the organ pipes near Mt Cargill.
- Explore Tunnel Beach.
- Join the UniCrew volunteers and get involved in your community.
How it all works

Studying at university is different to secondary school in many ways.

Teaching periods

The academic year is divided into two main teaching periods called **semesters**. A semester consists of 13 weeks of teaching followed by an exam period. Most papers are completed in one semester (i.e. either first or second semester), while others run for the whole year.

Teaching

**Lectures** are the main teaching method. They normally last 50 minutes and in many first-year subjects there can be up to 500 students at a lecture at one time. It is important that you go to your lectures — lecturers will tell you what you need to know and cover core information for your paper.

**Laboratory** sessions (labs) involve experimental or practical work for hands-on learning. Attendance may be a terms requirement.

**Tutorials** (tutes) are small group sessions, led by a tutor, where you discuss what you need to learn and get individual help. Attendance may be a terms requirement.

Assessment

**Examinations** are an important form of assessment and will generally make up most of your final mark. Most papers end with a three-hour examination. These finals are held at the end of each semester. Full-year papers are examined at the end of the second semester.

Many subjects also have **internal assessment**; shorter tests during the year, written essays and assignments and laboratory work that count towards your final grade.

Terms

For some papers, students must gain “terms” before being able to sit the final examination. This can vary from paper to paper but may include attending a number of tutorials or laboratories, taking part in seminars and practical sessions, or submitting an amount of written work. Terms requirements are made clear at the start of each paper in your course documents.

Workload

You need to treat being a student as a full-time job. If you can, study three papers in the first semester to help you get used to university. If you are doing well take four papers in second semester. You are expected to do a large amount of independent study (reading, writing up notes, doing assignments and studying for tests). Independent study plus lectures, practicals, and tutorials will work out to about 36-48 hours a week.
Digital tools to help with your study.

Blackboard
Blackboard is an online academic space where course materials, class discussions, assignments and assessments can be made available for each of your papers. All new students have access to UNIO 101: Getting started at Otago. This is a Blackboard paper about your first year at Otago. It also has information about how to use Blackboard. You can get a head start on your first year by accessing UNIO 101 in Blackboard in mid-January before the academic year starts. Use your student ID and password to log in to Blackboard.
blackboard.otago.ac.nz

eVision
eVision is your admin page for everything about your university programme. It is where you apply to study, access information about your programme, exam results and timetable, and maintain your personal information.
evision.otago.ac.nz

Free Office 365
All students are entitled to five free Microsoft Office licences. You can download and install Office on your own devices free of charge while you’re studying.
otago.ac.nz/studentIT/software

Attend an eTransition session to get started (see page 21).

Student desktop
The student desktop is a virtual computer environment that gives you access to your files and all the software required for your courses on your own computer anywhere via the web, and from any student computer on campus.

otago.ac.nz/studentIT/student-desktop
Student Charter

Our Student Charter promotes mutual respect and recognises that students and staff have rights and responsibilities to each other and to the University community.

Your rights

1. to experience high quality teaching
2. to have learning experiences that are challenging and stimulating
3. to be provided with course content that is up-to-date and informed by current scholarship
4. to acknowledge the Treaty of Waitangi, including support for Māori student participation within the University
5. to receive clear and accurate information and advice regarding all courses
6. to be informed well in advance how and when your work will be assessed
7. to receive fair, timely and useful feedback on your performance and progress
8. to “have a say” about the value, relevance and effectiveness of your academic programmes and the teaching you experience
9. to be treated with respect and courtesy by University staff and other students in an environment free from harassment and discrimination
10. to expect that the University will provide a safe and secure environment
11. to have reasonable opportunities to participate in University decision-making
12. to be informed about what is expected of you as a student
13. to have access to clear administrative guidelines and procedures
14. to have access to clear and appropriate procedures for dealing with grievances
15. to have reasonable, equitable and scheduled access to University staff and services
16. to have reasonable access to quality facilities, student support services, and resources necessary for achievement of academic goals
17. to be a member of a students’ association
Your responsibilities

1. to be a self-motivated and self-directed learner
2. to participate appropriately in your course of study
3. to prepare for classes that require work in advance
4. to put the best effort possible into assignments and to hand them in on time
5. to seek to develop critical thinking skills and apply these to your course of study
6. to submit work which is your own
7. to provide fair and appropriate feedback to University staff
8. to treat all staff, students and neighbours of the University with respect and courtesy
9. to listen and participate in classes
10. to observe appointment times and office hours
11. to promote an environment that is safe and free from harassment and discrimination
12. to respect both University and private property
13. to be aware of opportunities to participate in University affairs
14. to make yourself aware of and comply with University rules and policies
15. to use appropriately the services and resources that the University provides
Student support

A big part of what makes the Otago experience so good is all of the support that is on offer; our systems are focused on helping you to study hard and enjoy your time with us.

**AskOtago** is your one-stop-shop for all questions about studying at Otago. If they don’t know the answer, they know who to ask!

[ask.otago.ac.nz](http://ask.otago.ac.nz)

The **Campus Watch** teams ensure that our campus is a safe and friendly place to live and study.

[otago.ac.nz/campus-watch](http://otago.ac.nz/campus-watch)

The **Career Development Centre** assists with your career planning. Check out their workshops and drop in times.

[otago.ac.nz/careers](http://otago.ac.nz/careers)

The **Chaplaincy** team is available to offer pastoral care, spiritual support, encouragement and a confidential listening ear to all students.

[otago.ac.nz/chaplain](http://otago.ac.nz/chaplain)

If you have a disability, impairment, injury or medical condition that impacts your study, **Disability Information and Support** is there to help.

[otago.ac.nz/disabilities](http://otago.ac.nz/disabilities)

Our seven university **libraries** offer an outstanding range of information services and resources to support your learning.

[otago.ac.nz/library](http://otago.ac.nz/library)

The **Māori Centre (Te Huka Mātauraka)** creates a supportive whānau-learning environment for our Māori students from pre-enrolment through to graduation. They create opportunities for Māori students to meet, and operate from a kaupapa Māori base to provide services such as: Māori orientation and mentoring programmes, study advice, tutorials and seminars, and counselling and advocacy.

[otago.ac.nz/maoricentre](http://otago.ac.nz/maoricentre)

Otago ranks first in New Zealand for helping students succeed in their study. *(TEC Annual Educational Performance Indicators)*
The **Pacific Islands Centre** provides academic, social and cultural support to help Pacific students succeed at their studies. They work collaboratively with the academic divisions and the Pacific community to make your time at Otago memorable and successful.

[otago.ac.nz/pacific](http://otago.ac.nz/pacific)

**scarfie.com** is the fortnightly newsletter full of useful information about what’s happening on campus.

**Student IT** can help you with any computing questions you have while studying at Otago.

[otago.ac.nz/studentit](http://otago.ac.nz/studentit)

**Student Learning Development** provides free academic development including workshops, peer learning and support programmes, and online study resources.

[otago.ac.nz/sld](http://otago.ac.nz/sld)

If you are living at home, flatting or boarding in your first year, **Locals** will help you connect with other first-year students living in the local community.

They offer social events, volunteering opportunities, and academic support to help you through your first year at Otago.

Locals also provides the opportunity for our students to engage with other first-years across campus through inter-college sports and cultural competitions.

[otago.ac.nz/locals](http://otago.ac.nz/locals)

Come and check out all of these services at our Student Village:

**Monday 18 – Wednesday 20 February, 10am-4pm**

Richardson Building lawn
What to expect

The transition from secondary school to university is one of the biggest you’ll ever make. Here is a guide to what you can expect in your first semester.

**February**

- **Orientation week:** packed with music gigs, sports day, a market day and heaps of other activities.
- **Academic Orientation:** an important programme to prepare you for the academic journey ahead.
- Join one of our 160+ clubs and societies: they are a great way to settle in and make friends.
- First semester starts!

**March**

- **Reality sets in:** Struggling with the new environment? Homesick? Trouble managing your workload? Take advantage of all the help that is available from our support services.
- Contact Student Learning Development for help with academic skills.

**April**

- **Assignment season:** expect to be studying a lot – there will be multiple assessments due around this time.
- Check out all of the different study spaces on campus and find your favourite spot.
- **Mid-semester break:** most students stay around Dunedin during the one-week break, although some like to head home and catch up with family.

There will be ups and downs, it’s part of university
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**May**

- **First semester resumes.**
- **Exam preparation:** as the semester comes to a close, you will be completing your last assessments and studying for final exams.
- Make use of the exam prep resources from Student Learning Development and UNIO 101: Getting started at Otago.

**June**

- **Mid-year exams:** make sure you sleep and eat well, keep active and double-check your exam timetable!
- Exams are over and you can enjoy your two-week semester break before the second semester starts.
Every aspect of your life influences how you feel. Striking a balance between your study and social life is important for your mind, body and learning goals. Here are some simple tips to help you achieve this:

- Getting enough sleep is important.
- Have a consistent bedtime.
- Go device-free for an hour before bed.
- Find exercise you enjoy, and keep doing it.
- Try something new, check out Unipol for their well-being programmes, outdoor adventure programmes and outdoor equipment rental options.
- The colleges’ dining halls provide plenty of tasty meal options – make balanced choices and fill your plate with colour (i.e. fruit and vegetables).
- Stay connected with friends and whanau.
- Take regular study breaks.
- Reach out to OUSA Student Support if you need some uni life advice.
- If you’re looking for advice but want a more familiar face to start with, support is also available through the residential colleges, the Māori Centre and the Pacific Islands Centre.
Unipol

Unipol Recreation Centre includes a first-class gym facility that offers weight training and cardio rooms, and team sports areas that you can use free of charge.

Unipol also offers a huge choice of recreational activities. Their facilities and programmes can help make exercise fun, social and sustainable.

Fitness and well-being leaders can provide gym-based personalised programmes or advice on what recreation activities are available that will fit your study timetable. A one-hour session costs $17 and can be booked at Unipol reception.

Plus there’s a range of outdoor equipment for hire – from the beach to the hills, Unipol has you covered.

otago.ac.nz/unipol

UniCrew Volunteers

Share your time, energy and talent.

Join the UniCrew team to get involved with your community. Do something that matters for them and for you. They can help you find meaningful roles that work in well with your life as a student no matter how much time you have to spare.

otago.ac.nz/volunteer

OUSA Student Support Centre

Get help to navigate life while you’re at university. OUSA Student Support has extensive knowledge of student issues, and a dedicated group of volunteer peer supporters. All services are free, friendly, and confidential, and you don’t have to make an appointment.

ousa.org.nz/support

OUSA Clubs and Societies

The OUSA Clubs and Societies Centre is the ultimate student hub where you can embrace new experiences and activities, and meet new people along the way.

Housing over 160 campus clubs and societies, they provide a renowned recreation programme, a variety of services (including the Cuddle Fix and $3 lunches) and rooms and spaces for students to book free of charge.

Surprise yourself!

Check out OUSA Clubs Day:
Thursday 21 February, 10am – 3pm
Otago Museum Reserve

ousa.org.nz/recreation
Academic Orientation
18-22 February 2019

To ensure your success at university it is important that you quickly adapt to the new educational environment, so we have arranged a programme of academic events during Orientation Week to help you find out more about studying at Otago.
Welcome events

Pre-O-Week Locals welcome
Find out about the Locals programme, meet first-year students living locally (flattering, boarding or living at home), sign up for sports day and other Locals O-Week events and have some university myths busted. Lunch will be provided.
Friday 15 February, 10am-2pm
Main Common Room, Union Building

O-Week Locals welcome and BBQ
If you couldn’t make it to our pre-O-Week welcome, head to this one. Register, meet your future mates, enjoy a BBQ and hear about the Locals programme.
Thursday 21 February, 11am-2pm
Main Common Room, Union Building

Māori students
The Māori Centre will welcome new Māori students to the University with a pōwhiri at Ōtākou Marae.
Monday 18 February, 8:30am-2pm
Buses depart outside the Visitors’ Centre

Pacific students
Pacific students and their families are invited to hear from University leaders, meet academic and support staff, fellow students and be welcomed by Otago’s Pacific Performing Arts Group.
Thursday 21 February, 5:30pm
Castle 1 Lecture Theatre

Convocation ceremony
This is a formal ceremony to welcome all first-year students to the University. It marks the start of the academic year and provides an opportunity for you to hear from the leaders of the University and the city.
Monday 18 February, 7:30pm
Forsyth Barr Stadium
International students

New international students are invited to an official welcome from the Vice-Chancellor, with guest speakers and a kapa haka performance, followed by lunch.

Wednesday 20 February, 11:30am-12.30pm
Lunch 12:30-1:30pm
St David Lecture Theatre building

International students new to Otago are also required to register and attend an enrolment/orientation seminar. For times and locations, and to book a seminar, see: otago.ac.nz/international/orientation.html

There are three additional special sessions for international students:

Secrets to academic success
Wednesday 20 February, 3:30-4:30pm
Castle 2 Lecture Theatre

New Zealand culture: Spot the difference
Thursday 21 February, 1-2pm
Castle 2 Lecture Theatre

Thrive and survive
Thursday 21 February, 3:30-5pm
Castle 2 Lecture Theatre
**Introductory sessions**

**Introduction to LAWS 101: Pathway to the Profession**
Wednesday 20 February and Thursday 21 February, 11-11:30am
Moot Court, Level 10, Richardson Building

**Bachelor of Arts (BA) orientation**
Wednesday 20 February, 3:15-4:30pm
St David Lecture Theatre

**UNIO 101: University transition and success**
These presentations will highlight the important differences between secondary school and university and provide essential advice on how to succeed in your studies. They are followed by a discussion panel and a Q&A session with current students.

Mornings:
Monday 18 to Thursday 21 February, 10-11am
Afternoons:
Monday 18 and Wednesday 20 February, 2-3pm
Thursday 21 February, 1-2pm
All held in St David Lecture Theatre

**eTransition**
These interactive 20-minute sessions cover accessing and knowing how to use the IT systems essential for successful study at the University.
Monday 18, Wednesday 20 and Thursday 21 February: 9:30am–5pm (last session 4:30pm)
Tuesday 19 February: 9:30–12 noon (last session 11:30am)
St David Seminar Rooms 1 and 2
**Student Village**

Visit our Student Village and find out about all the support services and opportunities that are available to you at Otago.

Monday 18 – Wednesday 20 February, 10am-4pm
Richardson Building lawn

**Campus tours**

Take a 45-minute tour of the campus. Tours will cover the particular area in which you intend to study (Commerce, Humanities, Science, Health Science) as well as services like Student Learning Development, the Library, AskOtago, Student Health, and the Disability Information and Support Centre.

Monday 18 – Friday 22 February
Tours start at University of Otago Visitors’ Centre

**Preliminary lectures**

Many departments hold preliminary lectures – short presentations that give you important introductory information about the papers for which you are enrolled.

[otago.ac.nz/study/preliminary-lectures](http://otago.ac.nz/study/preliminary-lectures)

**Course advice**

Course advice is about ensuring your course of study is right for you and your goals, and is an opportunity to discuss your choices with the experts. Course advice is available during Academic Orientation and at any time during your studies. Visit a student adviser at the AskOtago Central Hub.

[otago.ac.nz/courseadvice](http://otago.ac.nz/courseadvice)

Find out about all of the events that are part of Academic Orientation and plan your week: [otago.ac.nz/academic-orientation](http://otago.ac.nz/academic-orientation)
Otago University Students’ Association (OUSA) proudly host the country’s largest and most heavily attended Orientation experience.

Make sure you head to their website to check out everything they’re putting on, and to grab your tickets.

Orientation includes the country’s largest toga party, two world-class stadium-based concerts, an outdoor movie, an International Food Festival, Clubs Day, Tent City and more.

ouusa.org.nz

**Sports day**

First-year students from residential colleges, Uni Flats and Locals meet – complete with chants and flags in their tribal t-shirts – for an afternoon of social sport. This is the chance to cement newly-formed friendships and get involved in some healthy competition.

Tuesday 19 February, 1:30-4:30pm
What to do now

Succeeding at university starts before you arrive. Here’s what you need to do to hit the ground running.

Before you arrive

- If you haven’t submitted your paper selection for course approval yet, now’s the time to get that sorted. If you have been course approved the course enrolment declaration should be available for you to submit.

- Once course enrolment is complete, the final phase of your enrolment is paying your fees – students starting study at the beginning of the year are required to pay all fees by 10 February. otago.ac.nz/tuition-fees

- If you cannot pay all your costs yourself, StudyLink can help arrange a student loan. Make sure you get your application in early. studylink.govt.nz

- Plan your week of Academic Orientation events. otago.ac.nz/academic-orientation

- If you are going to be living at home, flatting or boarding, sign up for Locals. otago.ac.nz/locals

- Apply for a Community Services Card to reduce the cost of GP consultations (for domestic students) at Student Health from $25 to $10.

- Log in to Blackboard and look at UNIO 101: Getting started at Otago, to get academically ready for university (see page 9).

- Sign up for our social media:
  - /otagouniversity
  - @otago
  - @universityofotago
  - otagouniversity
Fees-free in 2019 – are you eligible?

Most domestic students who are new to tertiary education will be eligible for one year of fees-free study at Otago.

If you meet the eligibility criteria, the New Zealand Government will pay up to $12,000 to cover tuition fees and student services fees for one year of full-time study. If you are studying part-time, your fees-free entitlement can be spread out over more than one year.

To find out if you are eligible, use the Government’s online tool at feesfree.govt.nz

If you are new to tertiary study and your eligibility is confirmed by the online tool, the Government will let us know, and you won’t be charged fees for 2019.

If the online tool indicates that your eligibility is unconfirmed, you will need to complete a statutory declaration before the University can treat you as a fees-free student. This will involve getting papers witnessed, so you may need the assistance of your family or whanau.

New students are encouraged to check their eligibility as soon as possible, and to complete their declarations (if required) before the end of January 2019 to avoid being charged fees.

Please note that fees-free does not cover residential college accommodation fees or other associated accommodation costs.

When you get here

• Get your student ID: you will need it to use the library, Unipol gym, to access buildings after hours, and much more. otago.ac.nz/student-ID

• Check your study timetable: it will be available in eVision just before the beginning of the semester. Make sure you know where all your classes are!

• Take a campus tour: they run every day during Orientation Week.

• Check your student email: this is how the University will contact you, so you need to check it regularly. You can arrange to have StudentMail emails forwarded to another email account.

• See student IT for free Office365 and antivirus software downloads. otago.ac.nz/studentIT

• Have an amazing Orientation Week!
Here is a snapshot of what’s on at the start of the year, as you settle into life in Dunedin.

**Thieves’ Alley Market Day**
Saturday 9 February  
The Octagon and surrounding streets  
Free entry  

A hugely popular event in the Dunedin summer calendar, the Thieves’ Alley Market Day features hundreds of stalls selling an array of crafts, jewellery, art, clothing, local delicacies and more. Entertainment and street performers complete the festive atmosphere, which makes for a wonderful day out for the whole family.

**International Cricket | Black Caps vs Bangladesh**
Wednesday 20 February  
University of Otago Oval, Dunedin  
ticketek.co.nz  

Grab your family and friends to experience the real New Zealand because this summer is shaping up to be a cracker. Watch the Black Caps take on the thrilling challenge of Bangladesh at the University Oval in Dunedin and enjoy a great day of live sporting action and crowd participation.
The Eagles
Saturday 2 March
Forsyth Barr Stadium
ticketmaster.co.nz

Legendary American rock band the Eagles will bring their critically-acclaimed Eagles World Tour to the Forsyth Barr Stadium in Dunedin. The perfect concert for late summer, the Eagles will deliver a feel-good repertoire of some of their most celebrated songs under the roof.

iD Dunedin Fashion Week
Monday 11 – Sunday 17 March
idfashion.co.nz

Emerging fashion from around the globe meets high profile international and Kiwi designers in a unique fashion mash-up like no other! Enjoy exhibitions, designer talks, pop-up stores, fashion films and exclusive behind-the-scenes encounters, iD Dunedin Fashion Week is your opportunity to experience the glamorous world of fashion up close.

Dunedin Fringe Festival
Thursday 21 – Sunday 31 March
dunedinfringe.nz

The Dunedin Fringe Festival is shaping up to be a cracker again, with an eclectic array of entertainment from the on-trend to the offbeat, guaranteed to make you laugh, cry, clap and/or gasp. Events take place everywhere from Waitati to Broad Bay, in theatres, bars, galleries, churches, book stores, pop-up spaces, the Town Belt and maybe even someone’s backyard.
The Pulse Energy Highlanders have two great deals for the families and whānau of our 2019 first-year students!

**Highlanders vs Crusaders**
Saturday 16 March
Forsyth Barr Stadium

Receive a 15% ticket discount using promo code: SCARFIE15

**Highlanders vs Hurricanes**
Friday 5 April
Forsyth Barr Stadium

Receive a 15% ticket discount using promo code: SCARFIE15

Tickets available online:
ticketdirect.co.nz/highlanders
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