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The Flag

A flag is a symbol. It can represent many things, like a nation, territory, office, organisation or group. Flags are simple, yet they are distinctive and meaningful. A flag should ideally be recognisable. It should not only have beauty but substance as well.

Civil flag

A civil flag is a national flag of a country that is flown by non-government vehicles or civilians. It was common to see civil flags in the past. They depicted buildings and ships that were not used by the military. In some countries, the civil flag is similar to the state (national) flag, but without the coat of arms (official symbol).
War flag

Countries like U.K. had different flags for war purposes, whereas other countries used the same flag everywhere. The Philippines’ armed forces have a different method. They use the national flag during wars but with a slight difference. They turn the flag upside down. The bigger versions of the war flag that countries’ navies use are called battle ensigns. In a battle, a white flag indicates surrender.

Flag shape

Flags usually have a rectangular shape. However, it is possible to find flags that are of different shapes – triangular, swallow-tailed or square. For instance, the flag of Nepal is in the shape of a two-stacked triangle.
North And Central America

The Arctic, North Atlantic and North Pacific oceans, and the Caribbean Sea surround the triangle-shaped continent of North America. Canada is the continent’s largest country. Greenland, the world’s largest island, lies in the North Atlantic Ocean.

**BELIZE**
Flag adopted on: September 21, 1981
Country Capital: Belmopan
Independence (from the United Kingdom): September 21, 1981
The flag stands for: Blue is the colour of the country’s main political party, the People’s United Party (PUP). Red represents the opposition party, the United Democratic Party (UDP). The national coat of arms features a mahogany tree at the centre. The mahogany tree represents Belize’s natural resource.

**REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA**
Flag adopted on: September 29, 1848
Country Capital: San José
Independence (from Spain): September 15, 1821
The flag stands for: All the United Provinces of Central America have blue and white in their flags. The red, white and blue at the bottom of Costa Rica’s flag are inspired by the French tricolour. The red band has the national coat of arms.

**GREENLAND**
Flag adopted on: June 21, 1953
Country Capital: Nuuk (Godthab)
Independence: Self-governing country of the Kingdom of Denmark
The flag stands for: White symbolises the ice cap and glaciers. Red represents the sun and the fjords.

**CANADA**
Flag adopted on: February 15, 1965
Country Capital: Ottawa
Independence (union of British North American colonies): July 1, 1867
The flag stands for: Red and white are the country’s national colours. The maple leaf in the middle is a national symbol.

**REPUBLIC OF EL SALVADOR**
Flag adopted on: May 17, 1912
Country Capital: San Salvador
Independence (from Spain): September 15, 1821
The flag stands for: The flag is blue and white. The coat of arms has the national motto “God, Union, Liberty”.
**REPUBLIC OF GUATEMALA**

Flag adopted on: August 17, 1871  
Country Capital: Guatemala  
Independence (from Spain): September 15, 1821  
The flag stands for: The flag is blue and white. The coat of arms features the quetzal, the country's national bird, as a symbol of liberty.

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**REPUBLIC OF HONDURAS**

Flag adopted on: February 16, 1866  
Country Capital: Tegucigalpa  
Independence (from Spain): September 15, 1821  
The flag stands for: The colours and the five stars symbolise the United Provinces of Central America, of which Honduras was once a member.

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**REPUBLIC OF NICARAGUA**

Flag adopted on: September 4, 1908  
Country Capital: Managua  
Independence from Spain: September 15, 1821  
The flag stands for: The flag is blue and white, as with all United Provinces of Central America. The coat of arms has five volcanoes, each representing the five original Central American countries.

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**REPUBLIC OF PANAMA**

Flag adopted on: June 4, 1904  
Country Capital: Panama City  
Independence (from Colombia): November 3, 1903; (from Spain): November 28, 1821  
The flag stands for: The flag is modelled on the U.S. flag. The red originally represented the Liberal Party, and the blue the Conservative party. White represents peace, and blue symbolises purity and honesty. Red also stands for authority and law.

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**UNITED MEXICAN STATES (MEXICO)**

Flag adopted on: November 2, 1821  
Country Capital: Mexico City  
Independence (from Spain): September 16, 1810  
The flag stands for: The National Liberation Army of Mexico inspired the colours in the flag. The coat of arms features an eagle atop a cactus with a snake lodged in its beak.

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**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Flag adopted on: July 4, 1960  
Country Capital: Washington, D.C.  
Independence from Great Britain: July 4, 1776  
The flag stands for: The 50 stars in the flag represent the 50 states of the Union. The 13 stripes represent the 13 original states that revolted against the British.
South America

South America is located between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, with the Equator running through it. The roughly triangular shaped South America is the world's fourth largest continent. It has a total area of 17,814,000 square kilometres. Brazil is South America's biggest country.

ARGENTINE REPUBLIC
Flag adopted on: February 12, 1812
Country Capital: Buenos Aires
Independence from Spain: July 9, 1816
The flag stands for: The colours were inspired by Argentina's independence struggle. The 'Sun of May' at the centre refers to the events of May 1810. On that day, the clouds were believed to have parted to show the shining sun and the blue sky.

FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL
Flag adopted on: November 15, 1889
Country Capital: Brasília
Independence from Portugal: September 7, 1822
The flag stands for: The green field stands for Brazil's forests. The yellow diamond symbolises the country's mineral resources, especially gold. The blue disc has the country motto that translates as 'Order and Progress'.

REPUBLIC OF COLOMBIA
Flag adopted on: December 17, 1819
Country Capital: Bogotá
Independence from Spain: July 20, 1810
The flag stands for: Yellow represents sovereignty and justice; blue stands for loyalty, and red symbolises courage.

REPUBLIC OF BOLIVIA
Flag adopted on: November 30, 1851
Country Capital: La Paz
Independence from Spain: August 6, 1825
The flag stands for: Red represents value; yellow symbolises mineral wealth, and green stands for the country's fertile land.

REPUBLIC OF CHILE
Flag adopted on: October 18, 1817
Country Capital: Santiago
Independence from Spain: September 18, 1810
The flag stands for: Blue symbolises the sky; white represents the snow on the Andes Mountains; and red represents the blood shed by the martyrs during the freedom struggle.

REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR
Flag adopted on: September 26, 1860
Country Capital: Quito
Independence from Spain: May 24, 1822
The flag stands for: The colours of the Ecuadorian flag are those of the tricolour flown by the revolutionary Francisco de Miranda.
DEPARTMENT OF GUiana
(FRENCH GUIANA)
Country Capital: Cayenne
Independence: Overseas department of France
The flag stands for: It is the same as the flag of France. The colours represent liberty, equality and fraternity.

REPUBLIC OF PERU
Flag adopted on: February 25, 1825
Country Capital: Lima
Independence from Spain: July 28, 1821
The flag stands for: Red and white colours represent the ancient Inca people, the original rulers of Peru. The coat of arms is featured in the government flag.

BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA
Flag adopted on: April 20, 1836
Country Capital: Caracas
Independence from Spain: July 5, 1811
The flag stands for: The arc of seven stars represents the seven major provinces that fought during the independence movement.

CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA
Flag adopted on: May 20, 1966
Country Capital: Georgetown
Independence from the United Kingdom: May 26, 1966
The flag stands for: Green symbolises the country’s large forests. The yellow triangle symbolises hope and a bright future, and the red triangle represents the citizens’ zeal in building the nation. Black stands for perseverance, and white for the country’s many rivers.

REPUBLIC OF SURINAME
Flag adopted on: November 25, 1975
Country Capital: Paramaribo
Independence from the Netherlands: November 25, 1975
The flag stands for: The green stripes represent the country’s forests; white stands for freedom and justice; and red symbolises the spirit of the nation. The star stands for home and unity.

ORIENTAL REPUBLIC OF URUGUAY
Flag adopted on: July 11, 1830
Country Capital: Montevideo
Independence from Brazil: August 25, 1825
The flag stands for: The nine stripes represent the nine original departments of the republic. The Uruguay flag, like most South American countries, features the ‘Sun of May’.

COLONY OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS
Flag adopted on: September 29, 1948
Country Capital: Stanley
Independence: Self-governing territory of the United Kingdom
The flag stands for: The ram in the national coat of arms symbolises the islands’ sheep industry. The U.K. flag features on the hoist side.

REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY
Flag adopted on: November 25, 1842
Country Capital: Asuncion
Independence from Spain: May 14, 1811
The flag stands for: The flag is inspired by the French tricolour. The coat of arms features the ‘Star of May’ – a representation of freedom for South American countries. The treasury seal on the reverse side has the motto that translates as ‘Peace and Justice’.
The Caribbean represents a group of islands in the Caribbean Sea. The Caribbean has coral-and-limestone islands like Anguilla, Cayman Islands, the Bahamas and the British Virgin Islands. Dominica, Guadeloupe, Grenada and Montserrat, on the other hand, are volcanic in origin. The size of the islands varies greatly. Cuba is the largest island while Anguilla is the smallest.

**Anguilla**
- Flag adopted on: May 30, 1990
- Country Capital: The Valley
- Independence: None; overseas territory of the United Kingdom
- The flag stands for: The flag has the U.K. flag in the upper hoist side. The coat of arms has three interlocking dolphins.

**Antigua and Barbuda**
- Flag adopted on: February 27, 1967
- Country Capital: Saint John's
- Independence: November 1, 1981
- The flag stands for: The centre V stands for victory, while the sun represents the coming of a new era.

**Barbados**
- Flag adopted on: November 30, 1966
- Country Capital: Bridgetown
- Independence from the United Kingdom: November 30, 1966
- The flag stands for: The blue-yellow-blue stripes symbolises the sea, sand and sky. The trident head represents the country's freedom from its colonial past.

**Aruba**
- Flag adopted on: March 18, 1976
- Country Capital: Oranjestad
- Independence: Self-governing part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- The flag stands for: The four-pointed star symbolises the island. The blue base represents the waters of Aruba and the blue skies. The parallel yellow stripes represent Aruba's sovereign position with regards to the Netherlands.

**Commonwealth of the Bahamas**
- Flag adopted on: July 10, 1973
- Country Capital: Nassau
- Independence from the United Kingdom: July 10, 1973
- The flag stands for: The aquamarine stripes represent the water surrounding the islands, and the yellow symbolises the beaches. The black triangle represents the strength of the people of the Bahamas.
**BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS**

*Adopted in: 1956*

*Country Capital: Road Town*

*Independence: None; overseas territory of the United Kingdom*

*The flag stands for:* The flag has the U.K. flag in the upper hoist side. The badge has St. Ursula, a British Christian saint, who is represented by 12 lamps.

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**CAYMAN ISLANDS**

*Adopted in: 1959*

*Country Capital: George Town*

*Independence: None; overseas territory of the United Kingdom*

*The flag stands for:* The U.K. flag is on the upper hoist side. The coat of arms' three stars symbolise the three main islands. The turtle and the pineapple stand for the islands' fauna and flora.

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**COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA**

*Flag adopted on: November 3, 1978*

*Country Capital: Roseau*

*Independence from the United Kingdom: November 3, 1978*

*The flag stands for:* The green stands for the country's vast forests and the yellow-white-black cross represents the island's original inhabitants. The sisserou parrot is the national bird.

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**REPUBLIC OF CUBA**

*Flag adopted on: May 20, 1902*

*Country Capital: Havana*

*Independence: From Spain – December 10, 1898; from U.S. occupation – May 20, 1902*

*The flag stands for:* The red triangle symbolises equality, and the white star stands for independence.

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**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

*Flag adopted on: November 6, 1844*

*Country Capital: Santo Domingo*

*Independence from Haiti: February 27, 1844*

*The flag stands for:* The blue and red are taken from the flag of Haiti. The white cross symbolises faith. The official flag has the coat of arms that features the national flag, the Bible and a cross.

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**GRENADA**

*Flag adopted on: February 7, 1974*

*Country Capital: Saint George's*

*Independence from the United Kingdom: February 7, 1974*

*The flag stands for:* The central star represents the capital city, and the six outer stars stand for the six outer parishes. The rumneeg at the hoist side is Grenada's most popular product.
DEPARTMENT OF GUATEMALA
Country Capital: Basse-Terre
Independence: Overseas department of France
The flag stands for: It uses the flag of France.

REPUBLIC OF HAITI
Flag adopted on: May 18, 1803
Country Capital: Port-au-Prince
Independence from Haiti: February 27, 1844
The flag stands for: Blue and red are derived from the French flag. The coat of arms has the motto that translates as ‘Union makes Strength’.

COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO
Flag adopted on: 1922
Country Capital: San Juan
Independence: None; self-governing commonwealth associated with the United States
The flag stands for: The white stripes represent liberty. The red stripes and the triangle corners stand for the state’s legislative, executive and judicial branches.

JAMAICA
Flag adopted on: August 6, 1962
Country Capital: Kingston
Independence from the United Kingdom: August 6, 1962
The flag stands for: The black, yellow and green colours represent, respectively, the troubles suffered by the nation, the bright sun, and the fertile land.

DEPARTMENT OF MARTINIQUE
Country Capital: Fort-de-France
Independence: Overseas department of France
The flag stands for: The French tricolour is used during official ceremonies.

NETHERLANDS ANTILLES
Adopted: 1994
Country Capital: Willemstad
Independence: Part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
The flag stands for: The stars stand for the five main islands. The blue and red are derived from the flag of the Netherlands.

MONTSEYRAT
Adopted in: 1962
Country Capital: Plymouth
Independence: Overseas territory of the United Kingdom
The flag stands for: The hoist side has the U.K. flag. The Montserratian coat of arms has a cross as a symbol of Christianity; the harp and the woman represent the Irish immigrants in the country.
FEDERATION OF SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS
Flag adopted on: September 19, 1983
Country Capital: Basseterre
Independence from the United Kingdom: September 19, 1983
The flag stands for: The green triangle symbolises the fertile land; the red one symbolises the freedom struggle; and the black represents the island’s African heritage.

SAINT LUCIA
Flag adopted on: March 1, 1967
Country Capital: Castries
Independence from the United Kingdom: February 22, 1979
The flag stands for: Blue stands for the Caribbean Sea. The triangles represent the twin peaks of the Pitons.

TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS
Adopted in: 1968
Country Capital: Grand Turk
Independence: None; overseas territory of the United Kingdom
The flag stands for: The U.K. flag lies in the upper hoist side. The shield has a conch shell, a crayfish (symbolising the island’s fishing industry), and a cactus (signifying flora).

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES
Flag adopted on: October 12, 1985
Country Capital: Kingstown
Independence from the United Kingdom: October 27, 1979
The flag stands for: The three green diamonds symbolise the ‘Gems of the Antilles’, as the islands are known. The V shape stands for the first letter of ‘Vincent’.

REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
Flag adopted on: August 31, 1962
Country Capital: Port-of-Spain
Independence from the United Kingdom: August 31, 1962
The flag stands for: The white stripes represent the sea that joins the two main islands of the nation. Red represents the people’s vitality, and black symbolises their strength.

VIRGIN ISLANDS (UNITED STATES)
Adopted in: 1971
Country Capital: Charlotte Amalie
Independence: None; island territory of the United States
The flag stands for: The flag incorporates a simplified version of the U.S. seal, which has an eagle holding an olive branch in one claw and three arrows (symbolising the three major islands) in the other.
North And West Africa

Northern Africa is home to the Sahara, the largest desert in the world. The desert covers an area of nearly 8,600,000 square kilometres. The Atlas Mountains stretches through northwestern Africa for over 2,000 kilometres. Sudan, with an area of 2,503,890 square kilometres is Africa's largest country.

**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA**

Flag adopted on: July 3, 1962  
Country Capital: Algiers  
Independence (from France): July 5, 1962  
The flag stands for: The crescent and star and the colour green are traditional Islamic symbols.

**REPUBLIC OF BENIN**

Flag adopted on: November 16, 1959  
Country Capital: Porto Novo  
Independence (from France): August 1, 1960  
The flag stands for: The flag has pan-African colours, which are symbolic of African unity.

**REPUBLIC OF CAPE VERDE**

Flag adopted on: February 25, 1992  
Country Capital: Praia  
Independence (from Portugal): July 5, 1975  
The flag stands for: The blue field and the gold stars symbolise the 10 primary islands of Cape Verde situated in the Atlantic Ocean.

**BURKINA FASO**

Flag adopted on: August 4, 1984  
Country Capital: Ouagadougou  
Independence (from France): August 5, 1960  
The flag stands for: The red in the flag symbolises the 1984 revolution, and the star represents the revolution's guiding force. Green stands for hope and abundance.

**CAMEROON**

Flag adopted on: May 20, 1975  
Country Capital: Yaoundé  
Independence (from France): August 5, 1960  
The flag stands for: The flag has pan-African colours. The star in the middle symbolises national unity.

**CONGO, REPUBLIC OF THE**

Flag adopted on: August 18, 1958  
Country Capital: Brazzaville  
Independence (from France): August 15, 1960  
The flag stands for: The flag has pan-African colours.
ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT
Flag adopted on: October 4, 1954
Country Capital: Cairo
Independence (from the United Kingdom): February 28, 1922
The flag stands for: The flag has Pan-African colours. The coat of arms features the golden eagle of Saladin, the country's 12th-century ruler.

REPUBLIC OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA
Flag adopted on: October 12, 1968
Country Capital: Malabo
Independence (from Spain): October 12, 1968
The flag stands for: The six stars in the flag represent the mainland and the five principal islands. The coat of arms has the silk-cotton tree and the motto that translates to 'Unity, Peace, Justice'.

GABONESSE REPUBLIC
Flag adopted on: August 9, 1960
Country Capital: Libreville
Independence (from France): August 17, 1960
The flag stands for: Green and yellow symbolise the country's wealth. Blue stands for the extensive coast.

REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA
Flag adopted on: February 18, 1965
Country Capital: Banjul
Independence (from the United Kingdom): February 18, 1965
The flag stands for: The red in the flag represents the savannah grasslands; blue stands for the Gambia River; and green symbolises the forests. The white stripes stand for unity and peace.

REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU
Flag adopted on: September 24, 1973
Country Capital: Bissau
Independence (from Portugal): September 24, 1973
The flag stands for: The flag has Pan-African colours. The black star on the flag's red band stands for African freedom and unity.

REPUBLIC OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE
Flag adopted on: December 3, 1959
Country Capital: Yamoussoukro
Independence (from France): August 7, 1960
The flag stands for: The flag is inspired by the French tricolour. The orange on the flag symbolises dynamic growth, white symbolises peace, and green stands for hope.

REPUBLIC OF GHANA
Flag adopted on: March 6, 1957
Country Capital: Accra
Independence (from the United Kingdom): March 6, 1957
The flag stands for: Ghana is the first country to use Pan-African colours in its flag. The black star in the middle stands as a symbol for 'African freedom'.
**REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA**
Flag adopted on: July 26, 1847
Country Capital: Monrovia
Independence: July 26, 1847
The flag stands for: The 11 stripes on the flag is symbolic of the 11 men who signed the Liberian Declaration of Independence.

**GREAT SOCIALIST PEOPLE’S LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA (LIBYA)**
Adopted in: 1977
Country Capital: Tripoli
Independence: July 26, 1847
The flag stands for: Libya’s national flag is the only one in the world with a single colour. Green is the country’s national colour as well as the traditional Islamic colour.

**FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**
Flag adopted on: October 1, 1960
Country Capital: Abuja
Independence (from the United Kingdom): October 1, 1960
The flag stands for: White symbolises unity and peace, and green stands for a fertile land.

**REPUBLIC OF MALI**
Flag adopted on: March 1, 1961
Country Capital: Bamako
Independence (from France): September 22, 1960
The flag stands for: Modelled after the French flag, the Mali flag incorporates pan-African colours.

**ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA**
Flag adopted on: April 1, 1959
Country Capital: Nouakchott
Independence (from France): November 28, 1960
The flag stands for: The star, crescent and the green colour are associated with Islam.

**REPUBLIC OF NIGER**
Flag adopted on: November 23, 1959
Country Capital: Niamey
Independence (from France): August 3, 1960
The flag stands for: The orange disc represents the sun. The orange in the flag represents the savannah grasslands; the white stands for the Niger River; and the green represents the country’s rainforests.

**KINGDOM OF MOROCCO**
Flag adopted on: November 17, 1915
Country Capital: Rabat
Independence (from France): March 2, 1956
The flag stands for: The deep-red field stands as a symbol for the descendants of Prophet Muhammad. The green star at the centre represents the ancient seal of Solomon.
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SÃO TÓMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE
Flag adopted on: November 5, 1975
Country Capital: São Tomé
Independence (from Portugal): July 12, 1975
The flag stands for: The red triangle symbolises the freedom struggle. The two stars stand for the country's two main islands.

REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE
Flag adopted on: April 27, 1961
Country Capital: Freetown
Independence (from the United Kingdom): April 27, 1961
The flag stands for: Green represents the natural and agricultural resources. White stands for unity and justice, and blue symbolises Freetown's natural harbour.

REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL
Adopted in: September 1960
Country Capital: Dakar
Independence (dissolution of federation with Mali): August 20, 1960
The flag stands for: The flag is modelled after the French tricolour and incorporates pan-African colours. The green star symbolises unity and hope.

WESTERN SAHARA
Flag adopted on: February 27, 1976
Country Capital: El-Aaiun
Independence: Unresolved; under control of Morocco
The flag stands for: Features pan-African colours.

REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN
Flag adopted on: May 20, 1970
Country Capital: Khartoum
Independence (from Egypt and the United Kingdom): January 1, 1956
The flag stands for: Red represents progress and socialism. White stands for hope and peace. Black stands for the name of the country (Sudan is Arabic for black). Green symbolises Islam.

REPUBLIC OF TOGO
Flag adopted on: April 27, 1960
Country Capital: Lomé
Independence (from French-administered UN trusteeship): April 27, 1960
The flag stands for: Red stands for loyalty, love and charity. The flag features the "Star of Hope" that symbolises national unity. The five stripes represent the country's administrative regions.

REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA
Adopted in: 1835
Country Capital: Tunis
Independence (from French-administered UN trusteeship): March 20, 1956
The flag stands for: The red field is modelled after the national flag of Turkey.
East Africa

The Great Rift Valley stretches from Ethiopia to Mozambique in East Africa. About 160 kilometres (100 miles) east of the East African Rift System is Mt. Kilimanjaro. The Kilimanjaro is the Africa's highest point – with a peak elevation of 5,895 metres (19,340 feet).

**REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI**
Flag adopted on: June 28, 1967
Country Capital: Bujumbura
Independence (from UN trusteeship under Belgian administration): July 1, 1962
The flag stands for: The three stars in the flag represent the three major ethnic groups of the country – the Tutsi, Hutu and Twa.

**REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI**
Flag adopted on: June 27, 1977
Country Capital: Djibouti
Independence (from France): June 27, 1977
The flag stands for: Blue stands for the Issa people, and green symbolises the Afar people. The white triangle has a red star which represents national unity.

**FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA**
Flag adopted on: February 6, 1996
Country Capital: Addis Ababa
Independence: It is the oldest independent country in Africa
The flag stands for: Pan-African colours are incorporated in the flag. The star represents unity among different Ethiopian nationalities.
**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

Flag adopted on: December 12, 1963  
Country Capital: Nairobi  
Independence (from the United Kingdom): December 12, 1963  

The flag stands for: Black, red and green are the colours of the Kenya African Union (KAU) party. Later, white was added to represent the democratic party and symbolise national unity. The two crossed spears, the Masia shield, represents tradition and unity.

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**REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

Flag adopted on: October 9, 1962  
Country Capital: Kampala  
Independence (from the United Kingdom): October 9, 1962  

The flag stands for: The striped colours are derived from the flag of the Ugandan People's Congress (UPC). The crested crane is Uganda's national symbol.

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**UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**

Flag adopted on: June 30, 1964  
Country Capital: Dar es Salaam  
Independence (Republic formed by union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar): April 26, 1964  

The flag stands for: Green and black are derived from the Tanganyika flag and represent the people and the land of Tanzania. Blue came from the Zanzibar flag.

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**SOMALIA**

Flag adopted on: October 12, 1954  
Country Capital: Mogadishu  
Independence (from the United Kingdom and Italy): July 1, 1960  

The flag stands for: The blue is modelled on the United Nations' flag. The 'Star of Unity' symbolises the Somali people across different countries.

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**REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES**

Flag adopted on: January 8, 1996  
Country Capital: Victoria  
Independence (from the United Kingdom): June 29, 1976  

The flag stands for: Red, green and white are the official colours of the Seychelles People's United Party (SPFP). Yellow and blue represent the Democratic party.

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**STATE OF ERITREA**

Flag adopted on: December 5, 1995  
Country Capital: Asmara  
Independence (from Ethiopia): May 24, 1993  

The flag stands for: Green, red and blue are the colours of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), the party that led the struggle for independence. The olive branch circled by a wreath is similar to the flag of the United Nations and represents the country's autonomy.
Central And Southern Africa

Central Africa stretches across the Equator. The terrain consists of big, wide plateaus, which reach 914 metres (3,000 feet) close to the Angolan border. At 5,119 metres (16,795 feet), Margherita Peak is Central Africa’s highest point.

Southern Africa also has high plateaus that consist of rolling grasslands. Then there is the Kalahari desert and the Great Escarpment, a series of mountain ranges. The Zambezi and the Limpopo are the region’s largest rivers.

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**REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA**

Flag adopted on: November 11, 1975  
Country Capital: Luanda  
Independence (from Portugal): November 11, 1975  
The flag stands for: The machete in the central yellow emblem stands for agriculture and the cogwheel represents industry. The star symbolises progress. The red colour represents the blood shed during the fight for independence, and the black signifies Africa.

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**REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

Flag adopted on: September 30, 1966  
Country Capital: Gaborone  
Independence (from the United Kingdom): September 30, 1966  
The flag stands for: The blue background represents life and water. The black-and-white centre, derived from the coat of the zebra, the country’s national animal, symbolises racial equality.

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**REPUBLIC OF CHAD**

Flag adopted on: November 6, 1959  
Country Capital: N’Djamena  
Independence (from France): August 11, 1960  
The flag stands for: The flag is a combination of pan-African colours and the French tricolour. Blue represents water and sky; yellow stands for sun and desert; and white signifies the sacrifice of the freedom fighters.
UNION OF THE COMOROS

Flag adopted on: December 23, 2001 (current flag)
Country Capital: Moroni
Independence (from France): July 6, 1975
The flag stands for: The stars and the crescent represent Islam. The four stars symbolise the four main islands.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Flag adopted on: May 17, 1997
Country Capital: Kinshasa
Independence (from France): June 30, 1960
The flag stands for: The six stars in the flag represent the original provinces of Congo.

REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

Flag adopted on: July 6, 1964
Country Capital: Lilongwe
Independence (from France): July 6, 1964
The flag stands for: The colour black represents the country’s African heritage. Red represents the blood of the freedom fighters. Green represents the land. The rising sun is a symbol of hope and freedom for Africa.

KINGDOM OF LESOTHO

Flag adopted on: January 20, 1987
Country Capital: Maseru
Independence (from the United Kingdom): October 4, 1966
The flag stands for: The three horizontal stripes of blue, white, and green represent rain, peace, and prosperity respectively. The black Lesotho hat in the centre represents the indigenous people.

REPUBLIC OF MADAGASCAR

Flag adopted on: October 14, 1958
Country Capital: Antananarivo
Independence (from France): June 26, 1960
The flag stands for: Red and white are the country’s traditional colours. Green is a tribute to Madagascar’s former peasant class.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Flag adopted on: December 1, 1958
Country Capital: Bangui
Independence (from the United Kingdom): August 12, 1960
The flag stands for: The colours blue, white and red are inspired by the French tricolour. These colours are fused with the colours red, yellow and green – the pan-African colours. The red stripe represents the bond between Europeans and Africans. The yellow star symbolises hope for a better tomorrow.
**REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS**

*Flag adopted on:* January 9, 1968  
*Country Capital:* Port Louis  
*Independence (from the United Kingdom):* March 12, 1968  

*The flag stands for:* Red symbolises the independence movement; blue stands for the Indian Ocean; yellow is the light of freedom that shines over the island; and green stands for the natural vegetation.

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**REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE**

*Flag adopted on:* May 1, 1983  
*Country Capital:* Maputo  
*Independence (from Portugal):* June 25, 1975  

*The flag stands for:* The yellow in the red triangle stands for education, the rifle represents the defence of the land, and the hoe stands for peasantry.

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**REPUBLIC OF RWANDA**

*Flag adopted on:* October 25, 2001  
*Country Capital:* Kigali  
*Independence (from Belgium-administered UN trusteeship):* July 1, 1962  

*The flag stands for:* Blue represents happiness and peace. Green is a symbol of prosperity, whereas yellow stands for progress.

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**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

*Flag adopted on:* March 21, 1990  
*Country Capital:* Windhoek  
*Independence (from South African mandate):* March 21, 1990  

*The flag stands for:* The colours blue, red and green are colours derived from the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), who were responsible for liberating the country in 1990. The sun represents energy and life.

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**REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**

*Flag adopted on:* October 24, 1964  
*Country Capital:* Lusaka  
*Independence (from the United Kingdom):* October 24, 1964  

*The flag stands for:* The colours of the flag are derived from the United Nationalist Independent Party, the main political party at the time of the country's independence. The eagle symbolises patriotism and freedom.

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**REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE**

*Flag adopted on:* April 18, 1980  
*Country Capital:* Harare  
*Independence (from the United Kingdom):* April 18, 1980  

*The flag stands for:* The bird is the national emblem. The red star denotes the country's national ideals, and the triangle represents peace.
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Flag adopted on: April 27, 1994  
Country Capital: Pretoria  
Independence (from the United Kingdom): May 31, 1910; proclaimed a Republic on May 31, 1961  
The flag stands for: The Y-shape represents unification. The red, white and blue were derived from the colours of the Boer Republics. The yellow, black and green are the party colours of the African National Congress (ANC).

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**KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND**

Flag adopted on: October 30, 1967  
Country Capital: Mbabane  
Independence (from the United Kingdom): September 6, 1968  
The flag stands for: The background is based on the flag given to the Swazi Pioneer Corps in 1941, by King Sobhuza II. The Swazi shield in the middle features two spears, a staff, and hanging widowbird feathers.
Eastern Europe covers the geographical and political areas of the easternmost part of Europe. It is full of mountains. Exceptions include the countries of Hungary, Poland, Estonia, Lithuania and some parts of the Czech Republic. Russia is the largest country in the world covering 17,075,400 square kilometres.

**REPUBLIC OF BELARUS**
Flag adopted on: May 16, 1995
Country Capital: Minsk
The flag stands for: The red in the flag signifies the blood shed by the patriots of Belarus during their independence struggle. The green represents the country's forests. Then there is the red embroidered pattern in the flag, a design that has been traditionally woven in a peasant's dress.

**REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA**
Flag adopted on: November 27, 1990
Country Capital: Sofia
Independence (declared; from Ottoman Empire): September 22, 1908
The flag stands for: The white in the flag stands for peace, freedom and love; green represents the country's vast natural resources; and red symbolises the independence movement and the bravery shown by the freedom fighters.

**REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA**
Flag adopted on: May 8, 1990
Country Capital: Tallinn
Independence (recognised – from Soviet Union): August 20, 1991
The flag stands for: The blue in the flag is a symbol of faith. It also represents the sky, seas and lakes. The black stands for soil as well as the suppression faced by the country in the past. The white in the flag stands for virtue, enlightenment and snow, and the eventual victory for independence.

**REPUBLIC OF CROATIA**
Flag adopted on: December 22, 1990
Country Capital: Zagreb
Independence from Yugoslavia: June 25, 1991
The flag stands for: The stripes in the flag represent the traditional Croatian colours. The national coat of arms has five shields atop the main shield in the middle. The checkerboard design is the symbol of old Croatian rulers.

**CZECH REPUBLIC**
Flag adopted on: March 30, 1920
Country Capital: Prague
Independence: January 1, 1993 (Czechoslovakia split into the Czech Republic and Slovakia)
The flag stands for: The stripes represent the colours of Bohemia, which make up a large part of the country. The blue triangle represents the state of Moravia in Czech Republic.
**REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA**

Flag adopted on: March 20, 1989  
Country Capital: Vilnius  
Independence (recognised by Soviet Union): September 6, 1991  
The flag stands for: The yellow in the flag stands for ripening wheat and freedom from need. The colour green represents the country's forests as well as hope. Red symbolises patriotism.

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Flag adopted on: August 22, 1991  
Country Capital: Moscow  
Independence (from Soviet Union): August 24, 1991  
The flag stands for: The white in the Russian flag stands for nobility; blue stands for truthfulness; and red symbolises valour and love. This flag was adopted by the Russian czar, Peter the great. The czar was inspired by the Dutch tricolour.

**REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA**

Flag adopted on: May 12, 1990  
Country Capital: Chisinau  
Independence (from Soviet Union): August 27, 1991  
The flag stands for: The flag reflects traditional Romanian colours, as Moldova was once a part of Romania.

**REPUBLIC OF POLAND**

Flag adopted on: August 1, 1919  
Country Capital: Warsaw  
Independence: November 11, 1918  
The flag stands for: The colours red and white have traditionally been associated with the country's coat of arms.

**UKRAINE**

Flag adopted on: September 4, 1991  
Country Capital: Kiev (Kyiv)  
Independence (from Soviet Union): August 24, 1991  
The flag stands for: The colours of the Ukrainian flag symbolise blue skies over the golden fields of the Steppes.

**REPUBLIC OF LATVIA**

Flag adopted on: February 27, 1990  
Country Capital: Riga  
Independence (recognised by Soviet Union): August 21, 1991  
The flag stands for: According to a legend, the flag represents an injured tribal leader wrapped in a white cloth after a battle. The red colour of the flag depicts his blood stains.
Central Europe

Montenegro and Slovenia aside, Central Europe is mostly a landlocked territory. Slovenia has limestone plateaus, caves, ridges, underground rivers, valleys and steep Alpine peaks. Serbia is mostly low hills and plains, whereas Montenegro has quite a few high mountains. The Western Carpathian Mountains dominate the Slovakian landscape. Hungary is mainly plains, but has low mountains and hills close to its border with Slovakia.

**Republic of Hungary**

Flag adopted on: October 1, 1957  
Country Capital: Budapest  
Independence (unification by King Stephen I): 1000  
The flag stands for: The Hungarian flag is modelled after the French tricolour. The colour red signifies strength, green stands for hope, and white symbolises faithfulness.

**Republic of Slovenia**

Flag adopted on: June 27, 1991  
Country Capital: Ljubljana  
Independence from Yugoslavia: June 25, 1991  
The flag stands for: The coat in the upper hoist side has the image of Triglav, Slovenia’s highest peak. The three pointed stars in an inverted triangle are taken from the coat of arms of the Counts of Celje, the Slovene dynastic house of the late 1300s and the early 1400s.

**Serbia**

Flag adopted on: August 16, 2004  
Country Capital: Belgrade  
Independence: 5 June, 2006  
The flag stands for: There are three horizontal stripes of red (top), blue, and white. The Serbian coat of arms is featured slightly to the hoist side.

**Republic of Austria**

Flag adopted on: May 1, 1945  
Country Capital: Vienna  
Independence: July 27, 1955  
The flag stands for: Red and white have long been associated with Austria and are national emblems. The coat of arms at the centre is only used when the flag is flown by the government.
MONTENEGRO
Flag adopted on: 13 July, 2004
Country Capital: Podgorica
Independence: June 3, 2006
The flag stands for: The flag is a red field bordered by a golden-yellow stripe. The Montenegrin coat of arms is in the centre.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC
Flag adopted on: September 1, 1992
Country Capital: Bratislava
Independence (Czechoslovakia split into the Czech Republic and Slovakia): January 1, 1993
The flag stands for: The flag incorporates traditional pan-Slavic colours.
Western Europe is made up of varying landscapes. Spain lies at the intersection of Africa and Europe. Finland, on the other hand, is one of the world's northernmost countries. Iceland is abundant with glaciers and natural geysers, whereas Greece is full of mountains and has over 2000 islands. Ireland has a coastline as long as 3,200 kilometres.

**PRINCIPALITY OF ANDORRA**
Adopted in: 1866
Country Capital: Andorra la Vella
Independence: 1278
The flag stands for: The colours are derived from the flags of France and Spain—these two countries have joint jurisdiction over the principality. The coat of arms is in the centre of the flag.

**FRENCH REPUBLIC**
Flag adopted on: February 15, 1794
Country Capital: Paris
Independence: 486
The flag stands for: The colours represent liberty, equality and fraternity—ideals of the 1789 French Revolution.

**REPUBLIC OF FINLAND**
Flag adopted on: May 29, 1918
Country Capital: Helsinki
Independence from Russia: December 6, 1917
The flag stands for: Blue represents the lakes in Finland, and white symbolises the snow. The official flag has the coat of arms featuring a lion.

**KINGDOM OF BELGIUM**
Adopted in: January 23, 1831
Country Capital: Brussels
Independence from the Netherlands: October 4, 1830
The flag stands for: The colours are derived from the national coat of arms—gold from the lion, black from the shield, and red from the lion's tongue and claws.
**FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY**
Flag adopted on: May 23, 1949
Country Capital: Berlin
Independence (Federal Republic proclaimed): May 23, 1949
The flag stands for: The colours are derived from the uniforms of German soldiers who were involved in the Napoleonic Wars (1804-1813).

**HELLENIC REPUBLIC (GREECE)**
Adopted in: 1822
Country Capital: Athens
Independence from the Ottoman Empire: 1829
The flag stands for: The nine stripes represent the nine syllables in the battle cry for independence that is translated as "Freedom or Death". The cross symbolises the religious faith of the Greek people.

**IRELAND**
Flag adopted on: January 21, 1919
Country Capital: Dublin
Independence from the United Kingdom: December 6, 1921
The flag stands for: Green symbolises the Roman Catholics, orange represents the Protestants, and white represents the peace between the two Christian sects.

**REPUBLIC OF ICELAND**
Flag adopted on: June 19, 1915
Country Capital: Reykjavik
Independence from Denmark: June 17, 1944
The flag stands for: Red represents the volcanoes in Iceland. White represents ice and snow. Blue stands for the bordering Atlantic Ocean. The cross is derived from the Danish flag.

**ITALIAN REPUBLIC**
Flag adopted on: January 21, 1919
Country Capital: Rome
Independence (Kingdom of Italy proclaimed): March 17, 1861
The flag stands for: According to one legend, the green on the Italian flag was used because it was Napoleon's favourite colour. Another theory suggests that the colours white and green are based on the uniforms of the militia of Milan, Italy.

**KINGDOM OF DENMARK**
Adopted in: 1625 (oldest European flag)
Country Capital: Copenhagen
Independence (became a constitutional monarchy): June 5, 1849
The flag stands for: The Danish flag is believed to be a token that the Pope presented during the time of the Crusades. The cross design (Scandinavian Cross) was subsequently adopted by other regional flags.
**PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN**
Flag adopted on: June 24, 1937  
Country Capital: Vaduz  
Independence from the Holy Roman Empire: July 12, 1806  
The flag stands for: The crown represents the principality's independence. Blue stands for the sky, and red stands for the evening fires at homes.

**GRAND DUCY OF LUXEMBOURG**
Adopted in: 1972  
Country Capital: Luxembourg  
Independence from the Netherlands: May 11, 1867  
The flag stands for: The colours are derived from the coat of arms used by the grand duke in the 1200s.

**REPUBLIC OF MALTA**
Flag adopted on: September 21, 1964  
Country Capital: Valletta  
Independence from the United Kingdom: September 21, 1964  
The flag stands for: The colours are derived from the badge that the Knights of Malta once used.

**PRINCIPALITY OF MONACO**
Flag adopted on: April 4, 1881  
Country Capital: Monaco  
Independence (the House of Grimaldi begins its rule): 1419  
The flag stands for: The white and red are the heraldic colours of the House of Grimaldi.

**KINGDOM OF NORWAY**
Flag adopted on: July 17, 1814  
Country Capital: Oslo  
Independence from Denmark and Sweden: 1775  
The flag stands for: The tricolour symbolises liberty, and is influenced by the French, U.S. and Swedish flags. The cross is modelled on the Danish and Swedish flags.

**KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS**
Flag adopted on: February 19, 1937  
Country Capital: Amsterdam  
Independence: January 23, 1813  
The flag stands for: The colours were derived from the livery colours of the Dutch prince, William of Orange. The orange in the flag was later replaced by the red colour.
PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC
Flag adopted on: June 30, 1911
Country Capital: Lisbon
Independence (Kingdom of Portugal recognised): 1143
The flag stands for: Green represents King Henry the Navigator, who was a Portuguese explorer. Red was once used in the revolutionary flag. The central shield symbolises the country’s history of ocean exploration.

REPUBLIC OF SAN MARINO
Flag adopted on: April 6, 1862
Country Capital: San Marino
Independence (Republic founded): September 3, AD 301
The flag stands for: White symbolises snow on Mount Titano, which is the country’s highest point, and blue represents the sky.

STATE OF THE VATICAN CITY
Flag adopted on: June 7, 1929
Country Capital: Vatican City
Independence: February 11, 1929
The flag stands for: The colours are derived from the keys of St. Peter. The emblem has the keys upholding the papal crown.

KINGDOM OF SPAIN
Flag adopted on: July 19, 1927
Country Capital: Madrid
Independence (unification of several independent kingdoms): 1492
The flag stands for: Yellow and red are the colours of the coat of arms of the Aragon and Castile regions.

KINGDOM OF SWEDEN
Flag adopted on: June 22, 1906
Country Capital: Stockholm
Independence: June 6, 1523
The flag stands for: The yellow and blue colours are derived from the national coat of arms. The cross is inspired by the Danish flag.

SWISS CONFEDERATION
Flag adopted on: December 12, 1869
Country Capital: Bern
Independence (founding of the Confederation): August 1, 1291
The flag stands for: The design is modelled on the war flag used by the Holy Roman Empire.

UNITED KINGDOM
Flag adopted on: January 1, 1801
Country Capital: London
Independence (current name of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland adopted): 1927
The flag stands for: The design features three crosses representing different countries—cross of St. George (England), cross of St. Andrew (Scotland) and cross of St. Patrick (Ireland).
The Middle East

Deserts surround the Middle East. Iran is mostly surrounded by soaring mountain ranges. Forty percent of Iraq is desert. Kuwait and Qatar have deserts too. The eastern side of Jordan is mostly desert while Oman’s centre is a desert plain. Saudi Arabia has vast sand spaces, and the country is largely uninhabited. Turkey, which shares its boundaries with both Asia and Europe, is the exception with mountains and coastlines along the Aegean, Black, and the Mediterranean seas.

KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN
Adopted in: 1932
Country Capital: Manama
Independence from the United Kingdom: August 15, 1971
The flag stands for: The flag is red and white, traditional colours of the Persian Gulf states.

REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
Flag adopted on: August 16, 1960
Country Capital: Nicosia
Independence from the United Kingdom: August 16, 1960
The flag stands for: The olive branches symbolise the hope for peace between the Greek and Turkish communities in the island. The copper-coloured outline represents the island’s name; Cyprus is the Greek word for ‘copper’.

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN
Flag adopted on: July 29, 1980
Country Capital: Tehran
Independence: April 1, 1979
The flag stands for: The Arabic phrase Allahu Akbar (‘God is Great’) is written 22 times along the edges of the red and the green portions of the flag. The coat of arms is a stylised Arabic representation of the word Allah.
**Republic of Iraq**
Flag adopted on: January 14, 1991
Country Capital: Baghdad
Independence from League of Nations mandate under British control: October 3, 1932
The flag stands for: The phrase Allahu Akbar is written between the stars. Red, green, white and black are the traditional colours of all Arab countries.

**State of Israel**
Flag adopted on: October 28, 1948
Country Capital: Jerusalem
Independence from the League of Nations mandate under British control: May 14, 1948
The flag stands for: The six-pointed star is also known as the Magen David (Shield of David). The colours white and blue are derived from the traditional Jewish prayer shawl.

**Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan**
Flag adopted on: April 16, 1928
Country Capital: Amman
Independence from the League of Nations mandate under British control: May 25, 1946
The flag stands for: The hoist-side triangle symbolises the Great Arab Revolt of 1916. The seven-pointed star represents the opening seven verses of the Islamic holy book, the Qur’an.

**State of Kuwait**
Flag adopted on: September 7, 1961
Country Capital: Kuwait
Independence from the United Kingdom: June 19, 1961
The flag stands for: Green signifies fertile land, and white stands for purity. The red and the white stand for, respectively, the blood of the enemy and the defeat of the enemy.
**LEBANESE REPUBLIC**

- **Flag adopted on:** December 7, 1943
- **Country Capital:** Beirut
- **Independence from League of Nations mandate under French control:** November 22, 1943
- **The flag stands for:** The cedar tree is a symbol of immortality, wealth, and strength.

**SULTANATE OF OMAN**

- **Flag adopted on:** April 25, 1995
- **Country Capital:** Muscat
- **Independence (the Portuguese were driven out):** 1650
- **The flag stands for:** The colour green symbolises the mountains that lie north of the country, White stands for peace, and then there is red – the common colour of all the Gulf countries’ flags.

**STATE OF QATAR**

- **Adopted in:** 1949
- **Country Capital:** Doha (Ad-Dawhah)
- **Independence from the United Kingdom:** September 3, 1971
- **The flag stands for:** It is said that the red dye on the flag changed into maroon in the Qatar sun.

**KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**

- **Adopted in:** 1973
- **Country Capital:** Riyadh
- **Independence (unification of the kingdom):** September 23, 1932
- **The flag stands for:** Green is the common colour in all the Arab countries’ flags. The Arabic inscription translates as: ‘There is no god but God; Muhammad is the messenger of God.’

**SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC**

- **Flag adopted on:** May 29, 1980
- **Country Capital:** Damascus
- **Independence from the League of Nations mandate under French control:** April 17, 1946
- **The flag stands for:** The stars symbolise Syria and Iraq. The colours are derived from the Arab Liberation.

**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY**

- **Flag adopted on:** June 5, 1936
- **Country Capital:** Ankara
- **Independence (Republic declared):** October 29, 1923
- **The flag stands for:** The star and the crescent are the symbol of Islam.
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Flag adopted on: December 2, 1971
Country Capital: Abu Dhabi
Independence from the United Kingdom: December 2, 1971
The flag stands for: The flag has traditional Arab colours. The red, green, white and black, colours signify Arab unity. Other colours like green is for fertility, white is for neutrality, and black is for its incredible oil wealth.

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Flag adopted on: May 22, 1990
Country Capital: Sana’a
Independence (Republic declared with the union of North Yemen and South Yemen): May 22, 1990
The flag stands for: The flag is based on the earlier flags of the south and north divisions of the country.
Western And Southern Asia

Most countries in Western Asia are landlocked. The region is full of rugged mountains. Western Asia is home to some of the world’s highest mountain peaks, including Annapurna, Kanchenjunga, Lhotse and Mount Everest. The Himalayas fortifies the northern boundary of India.

**ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN**
- **Flag adopted on:** January 27, 2002
- **Country Capital:** Kabul
- **Independence (from U.K. control over foreign affairs):** August 19, 1919
- **The flag stands for:** The coat of arms in the middle features a mosque that is circled by sheaves of wheat and an Islamic inscription.

**KINGDOM OF BHUTAN**
- **Adopted in:** 1969
- **Country Capital:** Thimphu
- **Independence from India:** August 8, 1949
- **The flag stands for:** The dragon at the centre is Bhutan’s national emblem. White symbolises purity and loyalty. Yellow stands for the king’s power, and the colour orange is synonymous with Buddhist religion.

**REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA**
- **Flag adopted on:** August 24, 1990
- **Country Capital:** Yerevan
- **Independence (from Soviet Union):** September 21, 1991
- **The flag stands for:** Red symbolises the blood shed by Armenians in their fight for independance. Blue represents the sky and hope. Orange stands for work.

**REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**
- **Flag adopted on:** February 5, 1991
- **Country Capital:** Baku
- **Independence from Soviet Union:** August 30, 1991
- **The flag stands for:** The star and the crescent are Islamic symbols. The eight-pointed star stands for the eight traditional people of the Republic.

**REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES**
- **Flag adopted on:** July 26, 1965
- **Country Capital:** Malé
- **Independence (from the United Kingdom):** July 26, 1965
- **The flag stands for:** Red is the colour of the country’s first flag. The crescent in the green panel is symbolic of Islam.
**REPUBLIC OF INDIA**

*Flag adopted on:* July 22, 1947  
*Country Capital:* New Delhi  
*Independence (from the United Kingdom):* August 15, 1947

The flag stands for: Orange stands for courage and sacrifice; white signifies peace and truth; and green represents faith and chivalry. At the centre, the flag has a 24-spoked wheel that stands for non-violence.

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**ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN**

*Flag adopted on:* August 14, 1947  
*Country Capital:* Islamabad  
*Independence (from the United Kingdom):* August 14, 1947

The flag stands for: Traditional Islamic symbols are used in the flag. White stands for Pakistan's non-Muslim population. The star represents knowledge and light, and the crescent stands for progress.

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**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH**

*Flag adopted on:* January 13, 1972  
*Country Capital:* Dhaka  
*Independence (from Pakistan):* March 26, 1971

The flag stands for: The disc represents the "Rising Sun of a New Country". The colour red stands for the blood that was shed during the independence movement.

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**DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA**

*Flag adopted on:* December 17, 1978  
*Country Capital:* Colombo  
*Independence (from the United Kingdom):* February 4, 1948

The flag stands for: The dark-red rectangle has lion holding a sword and bo leaves at the four corners. The bo tree is symbolic of Buddhism. The sword represents authority. The orange and green panels stand for the minority Tamil and Islamic communities.

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**KINGDOM OF NEPAL**

*Flag adopted on:* December 16, 1962  
*Country Capital:* Kathmandu  
*Independence (unified by Prithvi Nareyana Shah):* 1768

The flag stands for: This is the only national flag that is neither square nor rectangular. Two triangles overlap each other. One has a sun and the other features a moon. Red represents the colour of the rhododendron, the national flower. The blue symbolises peace.
East And Southeast Asia

East and Southeast Asia are located between the Pacific and the Indian oceans. A number of smaller islands lie to the south and east of mainland Southeast Asia. China, the largest Asian country, occupies a big chunk of the region's mass.

STATE OF BRUNEI
Flag adopted on: September 29, 1959
Country Capital: Bandar Seri Begawan
Independence (from the United Kingdom): January 1, 1984
The flag stands for: The yellow stands for the Sultan of Brunei, while the other two colours, white and black, represent Brunei's two chief ministers. The coat of arms has a crescent, and a ribbon with the inscription "Brunei, abode of peace" below it.

KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
Flag adopted on: June 29, 1993
Country Capital: Phnom Penh
Independence from France: November 9, 1953
The flag stands for: Blue and red are Cambodia's traditional colours. In the middle is a three-towered temple complex of Angkor Wat, which makes this flag the only one to feature a building.

JAPAN
Flag adopted on: January 26, 1870
Country Capital: Tokyo
Independence (traditional founding): 560 BC
The flag stands for: The sun's red disc (Hinomaru) has been used in Japanese culture for centuries. The white background represents purity and honesty.
DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF KOREA (KOREA, NORTH)
Flag adopted on: September 9, 1948
Country Capital: P’yongyang
Independence (from Japan): August 15, 1945
The flag stands for: The red star and the stripe stand for communist ideals. The blue stripe symbolises peace and the white stripes stand for purity.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA (KOREA, SOUTH)
Flag adopted on: January 25, 1950
Country Capital: Seoul
Independence (from Japan): August 15, 1945
The flag stands for: White is Korea’s traditional colour. The yin-yang symbol in the middle stands for unity. The four sets of black bars represent heaven, earth, moon and sun.

LAO PEOPLE’S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (LAOS)
Flag adopted on: December 2, 1973
Country Capital: Vientiane
Independence (from France): July 19, 1949
The flag stands for: The white disc on a blue field is deemed to represent the moon's glow over the Mekong River.

MALAYSIA
Flag adopted on: September 16, 1963
Country Capital: Kuala Lumpur
Independence (from the United Kingdom): August 31, 1957
The flag stands for: Inspired by the American flag, the 14 stripes and 14 points of the star stand for the original 14 states of Malaysia. Today, the 14th stripe and point represents the Malaysian government, after Singapore left the federation in 1965.

UNION OF MYANMAR (BURMA)
Flag adopted on: January 4, 1974
Country Capital: Yangon
Independence (from the United Kingdom): January 4, 1948
The flag stands for: The 14 stars represent the 14 states and other divisions in Burma. A cogwheel frames a stalk of rice, which represents the peasants as well as the union of industry and agriculture.

REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE
Flag adopted on: December 3, 1959
Country Capital: Singapore
Independence (from Malaysian Federation): August 9, 1965
The flag stands for: The white crescent symbolises a young nation. The five stars represent peace, progress, democracy, justice and equality. Red symbolises universal brotherhood, and white stands for purity and virtue.
**Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (East Timor)**

Flag adopted on: May 20, 2002  
Country Capital: Dili  
Independence (recognised; from Portugal): May 20, 2002  
The flag stands for: The colour yellow stands for centuries of colonial repression; black represents difficult times that need overcoming; and red stands for the independence struggle. The white star in the black triangle is the 'light that guides'.

**Republic of Indonesia**

Flag adopted on: August 17, 1945  
Country Capital: Jakarta  
Independence (declared; from the Netherlands): August 17, 1945  
The flag stands for: The flag is inspired by a similar flag used during the 1200s by the Majapahit Empire. The colour red denotes courage and white means holy.

**Republic of the Philippines**

Flag adopted on: May 19, 1898  
Country Capital: Manila  
Independence (from Spain): June 12, 1898  
The flag stands for: The white triangle represents peace. The three stars symbolise Luzon, Mindanao and Visayan – the three main geographical regions of the country. The sun stands for independence, while its eight rays represent the eight provinces that opposed the Spanish rule. Blue stands for patriotism and red stands for courage.

**Kingdom of Thailand**

Flag adopted on: September 28, 1917  
Country Capital: Bangkok  
Independence (traditional founding): 1238  
The flag stands for: Red represents the blood sacrificed by the country's people; white stands for Buddhism; and blue represents the monarchy.

**Socialist Republic of Vietnam**

Flag adopted on: November 30, 1955  
Country Capital: Hanoi  
Independence (from France): September 2, 1945  
The flag stands for: The five points of the star represent the five main classes of workers – the military, intellectuals, wage-earners, peasantry, and middle class.
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Flag adopted on: October 1, 1949
Country Capital: Beijing
Independence (People's Republic established): October 1, 1949

The flag stands for: Red represents the communist revolution. The large star represents the country's Communist Party, with the other four smaller stars symbolising the four social classes.
International Flags

Arab League
The flag has the emblem of the league that comprises of 22 Arab states.

Asean
The flag represents the main colours of the flags of all members of the association.

Caricom
The yellow circle represents the sun. The logo is that of the Caribbean Community and Common Market that was founded in 1973.

CIS
The Commonwealth of Independent States is a confederation of the twelve countries that belonged to the former Soviet Union.

Commonwealth
The logo features the letter C around the figure of a globe.

European Union
The twelve gold stars represent the union of the peoples of European countries.

NATO
The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation is an international defence alliance meant primarily for the countries in North America and Europe.

OAS
The Organisation of American States is an association of all independent countries in Central, South and North America.

Olympic Movement
The rings represent the five different parts of the world where the Olympic games were actively followed.

OPEC
The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries was set up to look at the petroleum-related policies of oil-producing nations.

Red Cross
The red cross symbol stands for mercy and neutrality.

Pacific Community
The stars in the flag represent the member countries.

United Nations
The flag has two olive branches – symbols of peace – flanking a map of the Earth.

African Union
The middle white portion features the coat of arms.

OIC
The flag of the Organization of Islamic Conference features pan-Arab colours, and an inscription that translates as 'God is Great.'
Facts At A Glance

- Vexillology is another name for the study of flags.
- The Romans used flags as a sign of communication – for signaling people at a distance.
- The word ‘flag’ has its origins in the word ‘flaken’ which means to float in the air.
- A ship carrying an admiral’s flag is called a flagship.
- There were no uniforms for soldiers in bygone days; so armies used to paint their shields with emblems as a way of identifying friend or foe.
- Emblems were also used to cover suits of armour – that was the birth of the Coat of Arms.
- The first to use flag made of cloth were Romans.

Flags And Symbols

- White - peace and honesty
- Red – bravery and strength
- Blue – truth, loyalty and justice
- Green - hope, joy and love, and has a religious significance in many countries
- Black - determination and heritage of the people of some countries
- Yellow – generosity
Activity

The motto that translates as 'Order and Progress' can be found in the flag of this country:
  a) Belgium   b) Belarus   c) Brazil

The coat of arms in this country's flag has the motto that translates as 'Union makes Strength':
  a) Netherlands Antilles   b) Republic of Haiti   c) Morocco

The phrase that translates as 'God is great' is written 22 times along the edges of this country's flag:
  a) Islamic Republic of Iran   b) Republic of Chile   c) Republic of Chad

The treasury seal on the flag of this country has the motto that translates as 'Peace and Justice':
  a) Republic of Suriname   b) Republic of Paraguay   c) Somalia

The coat of arms in the flag of this country has the motto that translates as 'Unity, Peace, Justice':
  a) Republic of Equatorial Guinea   b) Malaysia   c) State of Kuwait

Match The Following:

1. Star of May
   A. Cyprus
2. Rising sun of a new country
   B. Argentina
3. Freedom or death
   C. Brunei
4. Copper
   D. Bangladesh
5. Abode of peace
   E. Greece
6. God, union, liberty
   F. Haiti
7. Union makes strength
   G. Morocco
8. Seal of Solomon
   H. El Salvador
9. Star of Hope
   I. Togo
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FLAG BOOK

A flag is primarily a symbol of a nation or an organisation. They have other uses as well. Learn all about flags in this book that is both easy-to-follow and informative.