

Canada: Canadian Provincial Flags 2

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The Canadian red and white maple leaf flag is officially called The National Flag of Canada. The Canadian flag shows a stylized red maple leaf with 11 points on a white background, with red borders down each side. The Canadian flag is twice as long as it is wide. The white square containing the red maple leaf is the same width as the flag.

The red and white used in the National Flag of Canada were proclaimed the official colors of Canada in 1921 by King George V. Although the maple leaf did not have official status as an emblem of Canada until the proclamation of the national flag in 1965, it had historically been used as a Canadian symbol, and was used in 1860 in decorations for the visit of the Prince of Wales to Canada. The 11 points on the maple leaf have no special significance.

Alberta



Adopted on June 1, 1968, the flag of Alberta contains the Shield centered on an azure-blue background. The shield is topped by St. George's Cross on a white background, representing King George III and symbolizing British heritage. An azure-blue sky highlights the snow-capped Rocky Mountains, shadowing the green foothills, the prairies and the wheat fields.

Blue, along with Gold, are official colors of Alberta.

The flag is twice as wide as it is high.

Yukon



Adopted in 1968 as a result of a territory-wide competition sponsored by the Whitehorse branch of the Royal Canadian Legion as part of Canada's Centennial celebrations in 1967. Of the 137 design submissions, this design, one of ten submitted by Yukoner Lynn Lambert, was selected by the judges as the best representation of the Yukon Territory.

Consisting of 3 vertical panels of green, white and blue, the color represent: green - the forests; blue - the rivers and lakes; white - the snow. Centered on the white panel and supported by a frame of fireweed (the official flower of Yukon) is the Coat of Arms. Topping the Shield is the Cross of St. George, representing early English explorers of the territory. Centered on the cross is a 'roundel in vair', representing the importance of fur trade in early Yukon history. The wavy white and blue lines beneath the cross represent the Yukon River as well as the many creeks and streams in which gold can be found. The red spires represent the mountains while the accompanying gold circles represent the mineral resources. The Malamute (Husky) standing atop a mound of snow represents the importance of the animal as a link to survival in the hostile wilderness of the Yukon.

Manitoba



Given royal approval in October 1965 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and officially proclaimed on May 12, 1966, the flag of Manitoba consists of the Red Ensign with the Armorial Bearings centered in the right half. The Red Ensign was, at the time, the flag of Canada.

The Shield is topped by St. George's Cross on a white background, representing King George III and symbolizing British heritage. The bison represents the once-vast herds of bison which once roamed freely throughout the province and provided food and clothing not only to the Aborigines, but to the early settlers as well.

Northwest Territories



Adopted by the Council of the Northwest Territories in January 1969.

Two blue panels represent the Northwest Territories' many rivers and lakes. The white section, representing ice and snow, is equal in area to the 2 blue panels combined. The territorial Shield is centered in the white section. The white section of the Shield, with a wavy blue line dividing it, represents the Arctic Ocean and the Northwest Passage. A diagonal line, representing the tree line, divides the lower portion into a green and red section with green symbolizing the trees and red symbolizing the tundra. The gold bars in the green section and the white fox in the red section represent the abundant minerals and furs upon which the history and prosperity of the Northwest Territories has been based.

British Columbia



Adopted in 1960, the flag of ^{B.C.} ~~Alberta~~ duplicates the Armorial Bearings. The flag is topped by the Union Jack with a gold crown centered in the cross bars, representing British Columbia's colonial beginnings. The waving blue and white lines and the setting sun symbolize British Columbia's geographic position between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean.

Proportionally, the flag measures 5 units wide by 3 units high.

Quebec



Adopted on January 21, 1948 at 3 p.m. through an order of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council and accepted as an 'official symbol' the same day. The fleurdelisé flag replaced the Union Jack. A white cross divides the flag into 4 azure quadrants in which are placed 4 white fleur-de-lis. The fleur-de-lis on azure first appeared under King Louis VII who reigned from 1137 to 1180. The fleur-de-lis had long been used on the Royal Seals. The banner proceeded King Louis everywhere, and he was the only person allowed to display it. In 1534, Jacques Cartier's ship displayed a white cross on a red background. At the same time, a new flag - a white cross on a blue background - was competing for prominence. By 1603, the blue and white flag was flying from Samuel de Champlain's ship as he sailed up the Saint Lawrence River.

In 1946, when Canada replaced the Union Jack with the Red Ensign, the people of Québec were less than pleased. There was nothing in the flag to represent French-Canadians. In 1947, an independent member of the legislative assembly, René Chaloult demanded a new flag which would reflect the French heritage of the province. When the Québec government hesitated in making a decision, Chaloult submitted a resolution on the matter to be discussed on January 21, 1948. There was no debate; however, as Québec Prime Minister Maurice Duplessis entered the legislature at 3 p.m. and announced that the fleurdelisé flag was already flying over the Parliament Building.

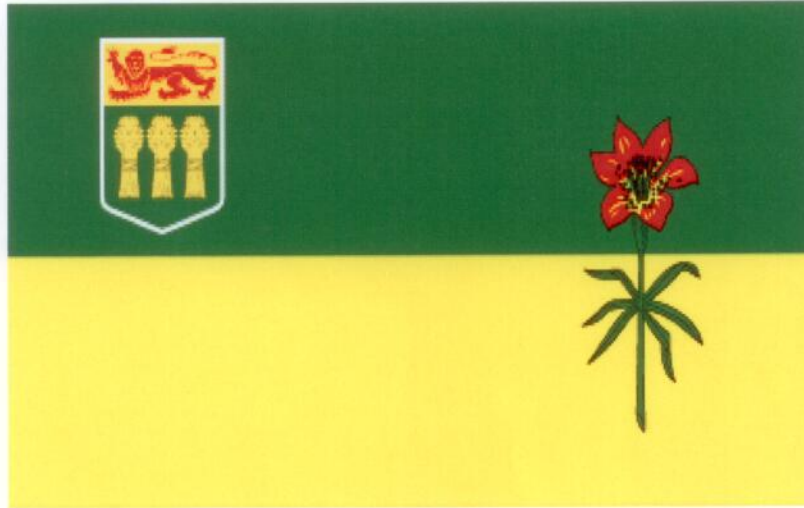
Nunavut



Simple by design, the flag of the newest territory, Nunavut, represents so much. The gold symbolizes the riches of the land while the blue symbolizes the riches of the sea and sky. The white, of course, represents the Arctic landscape; in conjunction with the red, also represents Canada's two official colors.

The inuksuk, which, in Inuktitut, means 'like a human', is a stone marker and monument, used for centuries to guide the Inuit across the barren Arctic tundra or to mark sacred and special places. The star is the Niqirtsuituq, or North Star, used for centuries as a point of navigation. It also represents the leadership of the elders.

Saskatchewan



Adopted in 1969, the flag of Saskatchewan is divided horizontally into two halves. The upper green half represents the forest areas of the north while the lower golden half represents the prairie grain fields of the southern regions.

The Armorial Bearings are placed in the upper left near the mast while a Western Red Lily, the floral emblem of Saskatchewan, spans the two colored halves of the flag on the right. The red Royal Lion on the gold background of the shield represents Saskatchewan's links to England while the 3 sheaves of grain on the green background represent Saskatchewan's agricultural contribution to Canada and to the world.

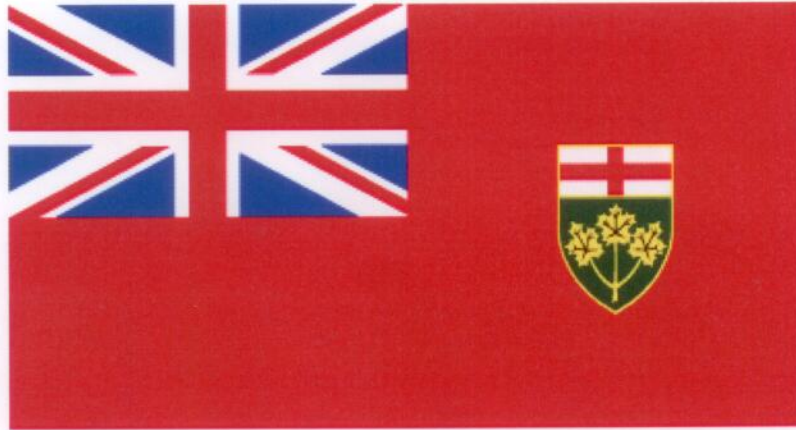
New Brunswick



Adopted by proclamation on February 24, 1965, the symbols on the flag were taken directly from the Armorial Bearings originally granted to New Brunswick in 1868 by Queen Victoria.

The gold lion on a red background represents the Duchy of Brunswick, a possession of Britain's King George III who ruled in the year of New Brunswick's creation in 1784. The galley, with oars in the water, represents New Brunswick's early seafaring industrial.

Ontario



Adopted on May 21, 1965 by the Ontario Legislature, combines the Canadian Red Ensign with the Union Jack in the upper-left corner, and the Armorial Bearings of Ontario to the right.

The Shield contains the Cross of St. George on a white background, representing Ontario's relationship to the Crown. The three gold maple leaves are also official symbols of Canada and are set on a green background.

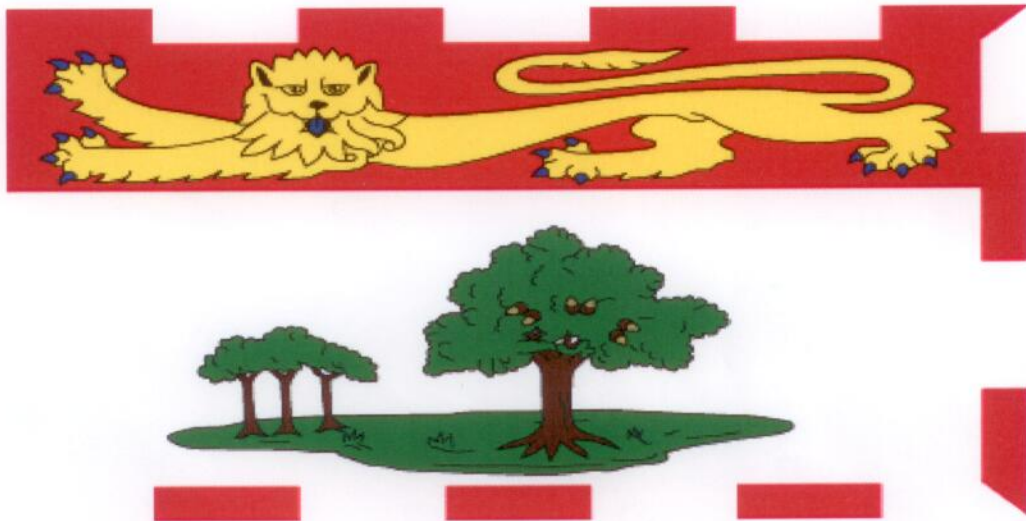
Nova Scotia



Based upon the Ancient Arms of Nova Scotia, granted by King Charles I in 1625, the background of the flag is an extended blue cross on a white background, a reversal of the colors found on the Cross of Saint Andrew, symbolizing Nova Scotia's links to Scotland. The flag is three-quarters as high as it is wide. In the centre of the flag is a Royal Lion set within a double red border on a yellow or gold background. This was the first flag to be flown in the Commonwealth outside of Great Britain.

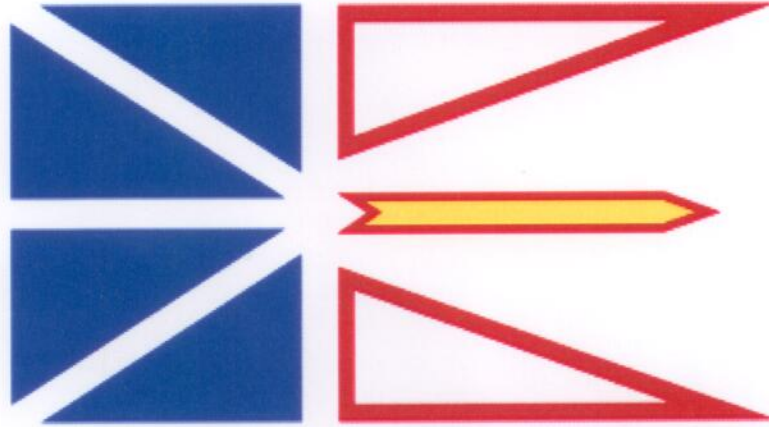
The Ancient Arms of Nova Scotia were substituted by a less-impressive Arms in 1868 following Confederation. However, the new Arms were a poor substitute and the citizens tried for decades to have the original Arms reinstated. Finally, in 1921, the tricentennial of Nova Scotia's Royal Charter, historians and scholars met in Annapolis Royal to petition the government to have the Ancient Arms reinstated. In 1929, in response to the petition, King George V reinstated the Ancient Arms of Nova Scotia by Royal Warrant.

Prince Edward Island



Based upon the Armorial Bearings of Prince Edward Island, the flag contains a gold Heraldic Lion which also appeared on the Coat of Arms for Prince Edward, Duke of Kent (for whom the Province was named) and on that of King Edward VII, who granted the Bearings. Beneath the lion is a single plot of grass representing PEI and England, both of which are islands. Upon the mound of grass stand a mature Oak tree (the official tree of Prince Edward Island) which represents England and three smaller saplings on the left, representing the 3 counties into which Prince Edward Island has been divided since 1767. Framing the flag on the three sides away from the mast are alternating bands of red and white, the official colors of Canada.

Newfoundland and Labrador



Adopted on June 6, 1980.

Simplistic in design, this flag represents so much more - Newfoundland's past, present and future.

The white background, which accentuates the other three colors, represents snow and ice. Blue represents the sea, upon which Newfoundland's livelihood relies. Red represents human effort and Gold represents confidence.

The blue pattern, which resembles the left half of the Union Jack, represents the province's Commonwealth history which has shaped present-day Newfoundland. The 2 red triangles, pointing toward the right, represent the mainland and island portions of the province and their advancement into the future, which is also symbolized by the gold arrow.

More than all this, though, is the fact that, if one looks at the flag in a different way, an entirely new set of symbols present themselves: a Christian cross; Beothuk and Naskapi pendants; an outlined maple leaf; a trident; and, if viewed as if hung like a banner, one sees a sword.

Newfoundland's and Labrador's entire history - past, present and future - is encompassed.

Quiz

1. What is the significance of the 11 points of the maple leaf?
2. What flag has an upper green half that represents the forest areas of the north and a lower golden half that represents the prairie grain fields of the southern regions?
3. On Yukon's flag what do the panels of green, white and blue represent?
4. What two flags are almost identical besides the armorial bearings?
5. What do the three small trees on the flag of Prince Edward Island represent?
6. Which flag has a blue star on the top right hand side?
7. Which flag was the first flag to be flown in the Commonwealth outside of Great Britain?
8. What does the waving blue and white lines and the setting sun symbolize on British Columbia's flag?
9. What does the blue cross on Nova Scotia's flag represent?
10. Which Province's Prime Minister simply announced that the new flag was already flying above parliament building before it was debated?

Answers

1. There is no significance to the 11 points on the maple leaf.
2. Saskatchewan.
3. Green - the forests, blue - the rivers and lakes, white - the snow.
4. Ontario and Manitoba.
5. The three counties of PEI.
6. Nunavut.
7. Nova Scotia.
8. They symbolize British Columbia's geographic position between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean.
9. It symbolizes Nova Scotia's links to Scotland.
10. Quebec.