

# FLAG OF NORWAY - A BRIEF HISTORY



Where In The World



## Trivia

Fredrik Meltzer, the designer of today's Norwegian flag, chose red, white and blue for their connection to liberty and freedom in the USA, Holland, France and Britain.

## Technical Specification

<b>Adopted:</b>	1821
<b>Proportion:</b>	8:11
<b>Design:</b>	A blue Scandinavian cross with white fimbriation, set on a red field.
<b>Colours:</b>	PMS - Blue: 281 U, Red: 032 U CMYK - <b>Blue:</b> 100% Cyan, 92% Magenta, 32% Yellow, 27% Black; <b>Red:</b> 6% Cyan, 95% Magenta, 82% Yellow, 1% Black

## Brief History

The oldest known flag that could be said to represent all of Norway, through its King, was the Royal Standard of Norway.

This flag, bearing a lion and an axe as its central device, dates back to before the 14th Century.



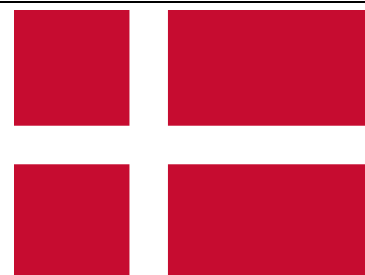
The Royal Standard of Norway

In 1397, a personal union brought all the Scandinavian nations into one empire, the Kalmar Union. This flag took its colours from the red and yellow of the Coat of Arms of Norway.

With Copenhagen as its capital, the union effectively lasted for a few decades, before descending into rebellion and warfare in the 15th Century. However, Norway and Denmark maintained their relationship and used a red flag with a white Scandinavian cross extending to its edges. This flag is also still being used by Denmark today.



The Flag of the Kalmar Union



The Flag of Denmark-Norway

The union lasted until 1814, when the province of Norway was acquired by Sweden in the Treaty of Kiel. During this time of occupation, the present-day Norwegian flag was designed: a white-trimmed blue Scandinavian cross on a red field.

The government, which was beholden to Sweden, could not use it but it could be used as a civil ensign. In 1844, Norway fought for independence from Sweden, but found itself once again in the terms of a personal union as a compromise.

The Norwegian flag was now a permissible national symbol, with the caveat that it always featured the Swedish-Norwegian Union mark in its canton.



**The Flag of Norway in Union**

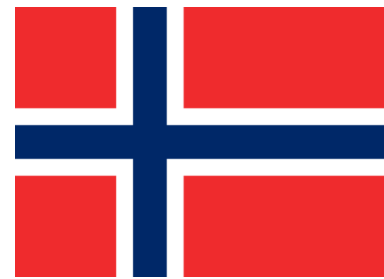


**The Mark of the Swedish-Norwegian Union**

Initially the mark of Union was seen as a positive sign of equal status, but the novelty wore off in time.

The Norwegian government legally erased it from the national and state flag before the century was out.

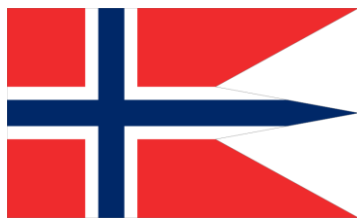
The 'pure' Norwegian flag has been in use ever since as a national flag and as a military/naval ensign since the dissolution of the Swedish union in 1905.



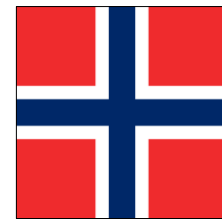
**The Present Day Lithuanian Flag**

### Ensigns of Norway

While the national Norwegian flag doubles as a civil ensign. There is a separate flag for the state, the army and navy. An alternate, square design is used as a naval jack.



**The State Flag of Norway**



**The Norwegian Jack**

### Conventions of the Flag

The Norwegian flag is rare in that it is permissible to fly it during the night, albeit only in times of war.

Illuminated by a spotlight, the intention of this custom is to demonstrate courage and perseverance in the face of the enemy.

The flag is also rolled for storage, not folded. Respect for all national flags, not just the Norwegian flag, is enshrined in law. A dishonoured Norwegian flag is to be cut into its constituent colours before burning.