



I'd like a Flagpole – which is best for me?

A guide to choosing the right flagpole.

How tall can my flagpole be?

The size of a flagpole should reflect its surroundings and the buildings on which it is attached or stands in front of. Here is a guide to suggested sizes:

- A 6m flagpole would suit a 1-2 storey building.
- An 8m – 10m flagpole would suit a 2-3 storey building.
- A 12m - 15m flagpole would suit a tower block, stadium or prestige site and ideal on sites with more than one pole.
- A 20m flagpole would work well with a major development site, visible from a long distance.

Our most popular flagpole size is 8m - suitable in a wide range of locations.

Where can I place my flagpole?

If placing your flagpole in the ground, it will need to have a solid foundation, to ensure it is stable and able to withstand the forces that wind will exert on it. The dimensions of its foundation will depend on its height; as a rule, an 600mm x 600mm x 800mm cube of concrete will suit most poles up to 8m.

If placing your flagpole on a building, you can choose either a vertical or an angled bracket. Vertical brackets are mainly used to fit a flagpole at the top of the building, adding extra height, whilst Angled brackets project a flagpole into a street, well above head height, making them more visible and prominent and are commonly used on shop fronts. Our angled brackets are 45° as standard.

What sort of flagpole will I need for my use?

Permanent flagpoles are suited to any location where the flagpole remains in a fixed position such as in front of a business premises. They may be used for flying either a National flag or business brand flag.

Temporary flagpoles are a surprisingly common requirement and can be secured in a variety of ways:

- Directly into the ground, using guylines to secure.
- Using a heavy base, usually holding water when in place to create weight and making transportation easier.
- Attached to a vehicle - with brackets or using a drive on base.

They may be used for events and rallies such as the Scouts or Caravan Club and are also extensively used for promotional purposes at shows and exhibitions. They can be used to fly Advertising flags, business branded flags or National flags.

Do I need planning permission for my flagpole?

To install a permanent Flagpole, you will need planning permission from your local council. Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, flags come with the definition of an 'advertisement' and their display is controlled by the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992.

However, under Schedule 2 of the regulations, the national flag of any country, including the Union Flag, is exempt from advertisement control provided 'Each flag is flown from a single vertical flagpole and neither the flag nor flagpole displays any advertisement additional to the design of the flag.'

Our experience is that in general planning permission is straight forward to obtain, particularly if there are other poles in the area which form a precedent. Our team can help you with this and provide all the information you will need for your application.

What size flag will work best on the flagpole I choose?

You need to fly a flag that suits the size of your flagpole; too big or too small and it will look out of proportion. For standard landscape flags a good guide is that the longest (top) edge of the flag should be a quarter of the height of the pole; for example, a 2m x 1m flag would be ideal for an 8m Pole.

Portrait flags don't tend to follow quite such strict rules, as the width is a never more than 1.2m but the depth of the flag can vary and can sometimes be half the length of the pole. On an 8m pole therefore you could fly a flag 4m high. You may also consider a flagpole with a rotating arm, but be aware that a very large flag will cause extra wind loading on the pole itself and should be used with caution if high winds are expected.

What is my flagpole made from?

Flagpoles were once all made from wood, but now all modern poles are made from either Glassfibre or Aluminium. We supply both, recommending Aluminium for prestigious sites. Both have a 25-year lifespan. The Aluminium flagpole has a superb strength to weight ratio and won't rust or tarnish. In addition, it can be anodised or powder-coated in a wide range of colours and can be made up in sections, allowing for easier delivery.

What type of flagpole is best?

A standard pole with a halyard and finial is the most common ensemble and the most traditional type. The finial at the top is in the shape of an onion and the halyard (rope) allows the flag to be hoisted. All flag types can fly from this type of flagpole.

Rotating arm – fitted to the top of the pole, it holds the flag out on permanent display and ensures the message or design is displayed regardless of wind strength. It rotates to follow the wind direction but is only suited to portrait orientation flags.

Base options

Permanent flagpoles generally come with the option of either a ground sleeve or a hinged base. The Ground sleeve is an economic and simple solution, suitable for poles which won't need to be lowered regularly. The hinged base makes installation and maintenance much easier and enables the pole to be lowered with ease for cleaning.

Can I get my flagpole professionally installed?

Flagpoles are easy to install and most competent builders will be able to do it for you. We provide information about preparing a suitable foundation or effectively installing brackets when you buy a flagpole.

Alternatively, and recommended, our installation team can deliver and install your flagpole for you. They have had many years of experience and can overcome a variety of challenges. Most importantly, our team is experienced in working at height and hold the relevant industry certificates permitting them to install competently. Most of our flagpoles are supplied with installation added, giving much-needed reassurance to the owner that their flagpole will remain safe.

How long can I expect my flagpole to last?

All our permanent flagpoles come with a 10-year guarantee.

Both Aluminium and Glassfibre poles have a super tough resin-coated finish which is impervious to all that our weather can throw at it. Flagpoles should be lowered and cleaned periodically and the halyard should be checked for signs of wear and replaced if necessary; this alone can often give the whole pole a brand-new look.

What are the rules for flying national flags?

If you intend to fly a National flag from your flagpole you may be keen to follow the correct etiquette.

In Britain, if more than one flag is flown, it is customary for the Union Flag to be flown in the senior position, either on the tallest pole or on the most prominent pole, to the left of the building and usually that closest to the entrance to a site or building. If you are flying a company or an advertising flag as well, this should be flown on an adjacent pole and lower than the Union.

Are there any half-mast rules?

If a flag is to be flown at half-mast, there are guidelines here too. Half-mast means the flag is flown two-thirds of the way up the flagpole, with at least the height of the flag between the top of the flag and the top of the flagpole. Flags cannot be flown at half-mast on poles that are more than 45° from the vertical, but a mourning cravat can be used instead. When a British national flag is at half-mast, other flags on the same stand of poles should also be at half-mast, or should not be flown at all. Flags of foreign nations should not be flown, unless the other country is also observing mourning.

For further information or a more detailed response to any query, please contact us on 01494 783938 or drop us a line at sales@flagmakers.co.uk

Flagpole Jargon

Finial – the ‘cap’ at the top of the flagpole, usually a rounded mushroom or onion shape. It can be the same colour as the pole or in gold or silver.

Halyard – the rope used to hoist the flag up the flagpole.

Cleat – the small metal or plastic fitting used to secure the halyard in place once the flag is hoisted, usually positioned about 1.5m from the ground allowing easy access.

Step Tapered Pole – usually refers to Aluminium poles and made in sections that slot together when installed; a larger diameter of tube is used at the base to give extra strength.

Smooth Tapering Pole – usually refers to Glassfibre and Architectural poles and comes in one piece and is a smooth conical shape, with a larger diameter at the base, gently reducing in diameter up to the top.

An important note on the weather!

In winds exceeding Beaufort Scale 6 (31 mph; 27 knots; 14ms) flags should be taken down. This is to ensure that they don't get damaged and will not add undue stress to the flagpole.

If the Met Office issues a weather warning for your part of the country, especially relating to strong gusts of wind, we recommend that you take appropriate preventative action.