



Australian Government

Department of the  
Prime Minister and Cabinet

The Australian National Flag is a symbol of the entire nation.



# Australian National Flag

## WHAT IS THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL FLAG?

The Australian National Flag is Australia's most important national symbol and should be treated with dignity and respect. Anyone may fly the flag on any day of the year. However, there are rules, or protocols, to follow when flying the flag.

## USE OF THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL FLAG

### Treating the flag with dignity

- The flag should not be allowed to fall or lie on the ground.
- It should not be flown if it is damaged or in poor condition.

### Flying and handling

When flown in Australia, the Australian National Flag is always the most important flag, so it must be flown first or in the position of honour. It must not be smaller than any other flag. Raise the flag quickly and lower it respectfully. It should be raised first and lowered last.

- Raise the flag from first light and lower at dusk. When the flag is raised or lowered, face the flag in silence.
- It can fly at night if it is lit up by lights and at full mast.
- The flag cannot be flown upside down.
- When part of a procession, the Australian National Flag should always lead. The right hand of the person carrying the flag should be above their left hand.

## FLYING THE FLAG AT HALF-MAST

- The flag may be lowered to half-mast (a third of the distance down from the top of the flagpole) as a sign of mourning when someone dies in the local community or when advised to do so by the Australian Government.
- All flags in a set should be flown at half-mast.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- The flag has three elements:
- The Southern Cross
  - The Union Jack
  - The Commonwealth Star

## GLOSSARY

- **Protocols** - Are similar to customs and are an agreed way of doing something.
- **Dignity** - Treating the flag honourably, with pride and respect.
- **Procession** - A line or group of people moving along in an orderly way, often for a ceremony.

## HOW TO FOLD THE FLAG



A) Start like this.



B) Fold long-ways, by bringing the bottom to the top, then once again.



C) Bring the left side over to the right side.



D) Fold like an accordion, back and forth, to the edge.



E) Bundle the flag by winding the rope around and under itself.

For more information on flag protocols, or to sign up to receive notices of when there are special occasions for flying the flag go to [pmc.gov.au/government/australian-national-flag](http://pmc.gov.au/government/australian-national-flag)

To find out more about Australia's national symbols visit [pmc.gov.au/government/Australian-national-symbols](http://pmc.gov.au/government/Australian-national-symbols)