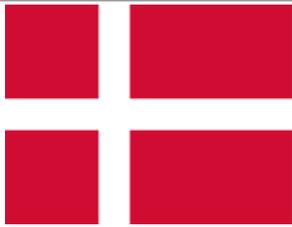


Denmark



Legend holds that the Danes were in a battle that was going badly, and defeat seemed imminent. However as a Danish priest prayed to God, the Danes moved closer to victory. Just as the Danes were about to win, a red flag with a white cross fell from the sky and the Danes won the battle.

Sweden



According to the mythology, a Swedish king saw a golden cross in the sky as he landed in Finland. Seeing this as a sign from God he adopted the golden cross against a blue background.

Finland



The blue coloring represents the country's 190,000 lakes, the blue sky, and white for the snow that covers the land in winter.

Germany



In the early 1800's, during Napoleon's conquest of Europe, the Germans struggled against the occupying French forces. A certain volunteer Prussian army defeated Napoleon's army and saved Germany's freedom. The German flag is a tribute to that army's colors, which were black with red trim and gold buttons.

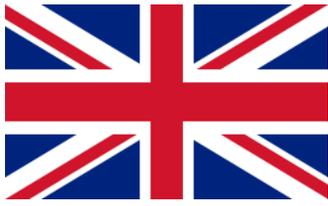
Belgium



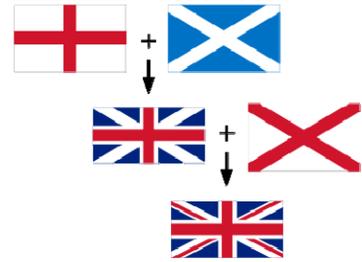
Belgium's flag was designed to represent it as an independent country. Black, gold and red are symbolic of the country's coat of arms; black representing the shield; gold representing the lion, and red representing the lion's claws and tongue. The stripes are vertical, as a tribute to France.



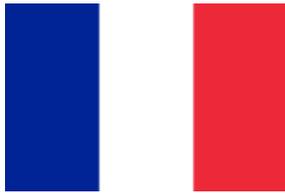
United Kingdom



Jack Stewart of Scotland had the idea to combine all the flags of the United Kingdom together, which is why it's called the "Union Jack." The red (+) cross of Saint George (patron saint of England), the white (x) cross of Saint Andrew (patron saint of Scotland), and the red (x) Cross of St Patrick (patron saint of Ireland).



France



Blue and red are the traditional colours of Paris. The blue stripe symbolizes all the regular people, the red stands for the nobility, and some say the white stripe symbolizes the nation, while others identify it with the monarchy.

Netherlands



Prince William of Orange created a banner to distinguish his country—the Netherlands—from the others, using orange, white and blue. But orange is made from red and yellow, and after a while the yellow faded and left red. Eventually, the color red replaced the orange, just to make things easier.

Italy



Italy's flag dates back to 1797, when Napoleon's French army crossed Italy. The three bands of equal size are inspired by France's. Today, the green represents the country's plains and the hills; white, the snow-capped Alps; and red, blood spilt in the Wars of Italian Independence. Another interpretation says that the green represents hope, the white represents faith, and the red represents charity.

Canada



Maple leaves turn red in autumn; the leaf symbolizes all the forests which cover the land of Canada. All of the snow-covered regions are symbolized by the white.

United States



American flag, has 13 horizontal stripes of red and white (which represent the 13 colonies that declared independence from Great Britain and became the first states). The 50 white stars on the blue rectangle represent the 50 states.

Mexico



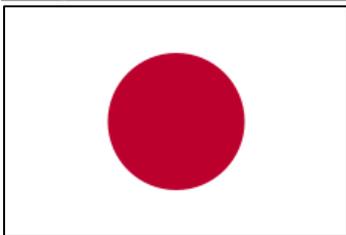
The coat of arms is derived from an Aztec legend that their gods told them to build a city where they spot an eagle on a prickly pear eating a serpent. The spot where the Aztecs found this symbol is now Mexico City.

Australia



Before 1901, what is now Australia was six separate British colonies. The flag of the British Empire was used in Australia. Six stars are on the Australian flag. The smaller five represent the Southern Cross, the most commonly known constellation in the Southern hemisphere. The sixth and largest star represents Australia itself. Also, the six stars represent the six states that make up Australia.

Japan



The name Japan means "source of sun." In the 1200's a Buddhist priest offered a sun banner to the Emperor of Japan, and the emblem of the red sun on the white background was eventually adopted as its national flag.

South Korea



The flag of South Korea has three parts: a white background; a red and blue taegeuk (yin / yang) in the center; and four black trigrams, one in each corner of the flag. The white background symbolizes "cleanliness of the people." The Taegeuk represents the origin of all things in the universe; holding the two principles of yin and yang in perfect balance; the blue yin is the negative, and the red yang is the positive. Together, they represent a continuous movement within infinity, the two merging as one. The four trigrams represent the four seasons as well as the four elements: earth, air, fire, and water.