



AMERICAN FLAG



Flag of the United States, popularly called the American flag, the official national flag of the United States.

It consists of 13 horizontal stripes, 7 red alternating with 6 white, and in the upper corner near the staff, a rectangular blue field, or canton, containing 50 five-pointed white stars.

The stripes symbolize the 13 colonies that originally constituted the United States of America.

The stars represent the 50 states of the Union.

Because of its stars, stripes, and colors, the American flag is frequently called the Star-Spangled Banner, the Stars and Stripes, or the Red, White, and Blue.





Encarta Encyclopedia, Photo Researchers, Inc./Van Bucher

The first American flag was made in 1776, after the 13 colonies declared independence from Britain.

The flag had a star and a stripe for each colony.

In 1777 it became the official flag of a new nation, the United States.

Betsy Ross managed her husband's upholstery business after his death in 1776, and became a maker of United States flags. According to legend, a committee headed by George Washington asked Ross to design and make the first American flag in 1776.



Encarta Encyclopedia, THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE

The National Anthem

The Star-Spangled Banner

The National Anthem
Oh, say can you see,
 by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hail'd
 at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars,
 through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd
 were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare,
 the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof thro' the night
 that our Flag was still there.
Oh, say does that
 Star-Spangled Banner yet wave,
O'er the land of the free,
 and home of the brave?

Звездно-полосатое знамя

И в самых первых утренних лучах,
И при последнем всполохе заката
Ты видишь, что приветствуем мы гордо,
Чьи полосы широкие и звезды
Сквозь все препоны битвы и сраженья,
Ты знаешь, путеводно нам светили?
И нам разрывы вражеских снарядов
Служили верным знаком среди ночи,
Что флаг наш полосатый не опущен.
Скажи мне, друг, по-прежнему ли реет
Свободы звездно-полосатый вестник
Над этой вольной храбрости купелью?

(Перевод М. Кауфман)