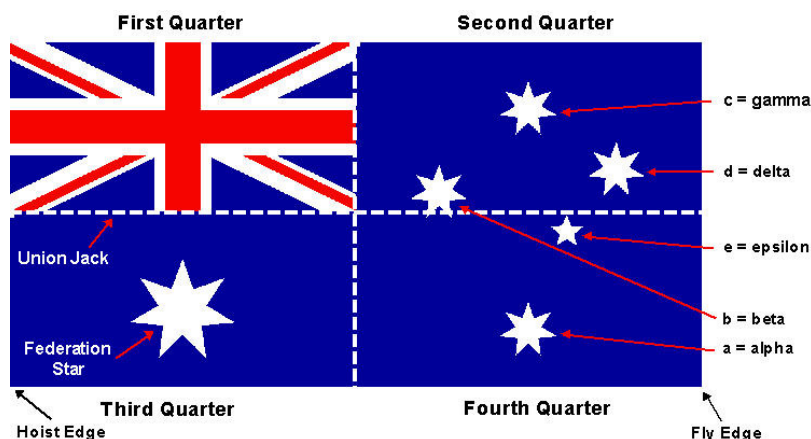


The Australian Flag



The Australian Flag came into being after the federation of the Australian States into the Commonwealth of Australia on 1 January, 1901. The Commonwealth Blue Ensign was selected as result of a public competition (over 30 000 designs were submitted); although selected in 1901 and gazetted in 1903, it was not given Royal assent and adopted as the definitive Australian flag until 1954 in the Flags Act 1953. It is based on the Blue Ensign of the United Kingdom, is twice as long as it is wide, and consists of a dark blue field that can be notionally divided into four quadrants. There is a different motif in each of the upper and lower hoist quadrants and the remaining two quadrants of the fly share another different constellation motif.

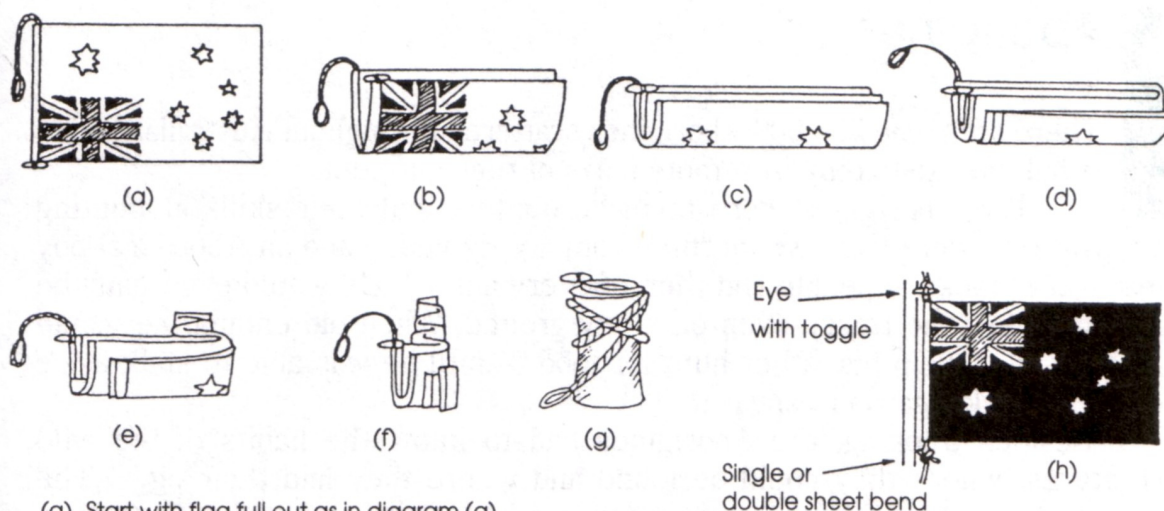
The present Australian flag can be considered to consist of three main elements:

The Union Jack in the upper hoist quadrant or first quarter, denoting Australia's historical links with Great Britain. The Union Jack itself is composed of red and white intersecting and overlaid vertical and diagonal crosses on a blue background,

The Southern Cross in the second quarter and fourth quarter. Consists of five stars in a more or less kite-like pattern - Alpha (7-point), Beta (7-point), Gamma (7-point), Delta (7-point) and the smaller Epsilon (5-point). The constellation of the Southern Cross is a significant navigational feature of the southern hemisphere, strongly places Australia geographically and has been associated with the continent since its earliest days.

The Commonwealth Star or Star of Federation, central in the third quarter, has seven points to denote the six states and the combined territories of the Commonwealth. The seventh point was added in 1909.

Rolling the Australian Flag for Breaking



- (a) Start with flag full out as in diagram (a).
 - (b) and (c) Fold lengthwise — bottom to top. This is done twice.
 - (d) Fold in half across the length.
 - (e) and (f) Fold in a concertina fold backwards and forwards.
 - (g) Hold the flag firmly, and wind the rope around and then under itself.
 - (h) The toggle is placed in the eye of the halyard, and the halyard is attached to the bottom of the flag rope with a sheet bend or double sheet bend.
- Care should be taken whenever preparing the flag to ensure it does not touch the ground.