

THE NATIONAL SYMBOLS

The National Flag

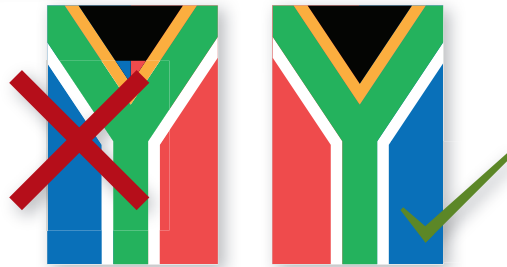


The National Flag of the Republic of South Africa was brought into use on Freedom Day, 27 April 1994. The unique central design

of the flag which begins as a “V” at the flag-post and comes together in the centre of the flag, -extending further, as a single horizontal band to the outer edge of the fly, can be seen as representing the convergence of diverse elements in South African society- which then takes the road ahead in unison. The National Flag must be treated with dignity and respect.

When the flag is hoisted on a flag pole, the red band must be uppermost and the black triangle must be on the side of the pole or the hoist. When it is displayed horizontally against a wall, the hoist should be to the left of the spectator and the red band uppermost.

When the National Flag is displayed vertically against a wall, the red band should be to the left of the spectator with the hoist or cord seam uppermost.



Citizens responsible for the flag should decide whether the small flag (storm flag) should be used during stormy weather when a larger flag, the halyards and the flagstaff, are likely to be damaged. The storm flag is 90 x 60 cm and the flag in general use is 270 x 180 cm or 180 x 120 cm.

The flag must not touch the ground, must not be used as a tablecloth or draped in front of a platform; the flag must not be used to cover a statue, plaque, cornerstone, etc. at an unveiling or similar ceremony; and the flag must not be used to start or finish any competition, race or similar event.

The National Coat Of Arms



The Coat of Arms was launched on Freedom Day, 27 April 2000.

A central image of the Coat of Arms is the well-known secretary bird with its uplifted wings.

Above the bird is the rising sun, a force

that gives life while representing the flight of darkness and the triumph of discovery, knowledge and understanding of things that have been hidden, and illuminating the new life that is coming into being.

Below the bird is the protea, an indigenous flower of South Africa, which represents beauty, the aesthetic harmony of all its cultures, and South Africa flowering as a nation.

At the centre stands a shield which signifies the protection of all South Africans from one generation to the next.

Above it is a spear and a knobkierie. Together they assert the defence of peace rather than the posture of war. This shield of peace which also brings to mind an African drum, conveys the message of a people imbued with a love of culture.

Its uppermost part is a shield being imaginatively represented by the protea.

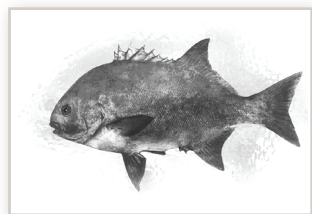
Contained within the shield are some of the earliest representations of humanity in the world. These depicted were the first inhabitants of the land, namely the Khoi and

the San people. These figures are derived from images on the Linton Stone, a world famous example of South African rock art.

The ears of wheat are symbols of the fertility of the land, while the tusks of the African elephant symbolise wisdom, steadfastness and strength.

The motto of the Coat of Arms, *Ike e! /xamra//ke*, written in the Khoi and San language of the /Xam people, means “diverse people unite” or people who are different joining together.

The National Fish



Is the **GALJOEN** (*Coracinus capensis*). It is found only along the South African coast. It keeps to mostly shallow water, is

often found in rough surf and sometimes right next to the shore. Every angler is familiar with the galjoen. The diet of the galjoen is mainly red bait (ascidians).

The National Tree

Is the **REAL YELLOWWOOD**

(*Podocarpus latifolius*) found from Table Mountain along the southern and eastern Cape coast, in the ravines of the Drakensberg up to the Blouberg and Soutpansberg in Limpopo. The bark of the Real yellowwood is khaki coloured to grey when it is old, deeply split and peels off in strips. The crown is relatively small in relation to its height and is often covered with grey lichen.



The National Animal

is the **SPRINGBOK** (*Antidorcas mersupialis*).



This species has adapted to the dry, barren areas and open grass plains and is thus found especially in the Free State, North West Province and from the Karoo to the West Coast. They breed throughout the year and lambs are born after a six-month gestation period.

The National Flower

is the **GIANT** or **KING PROTEA** (*Protea cynaroides*).

Found in the south-western and southern areas of the Western Cape, from the Cedarberg up to just east of Grahamstown. The artichoke-like appearance of the flower heads of the King Protea lead to the specific name “cynaroides”, which means “like cynara” (the artichoke). A number of varieties of colours and leaf shapes are found, but the pink flower is the most beautiful.

The National Bird

is the **BLUE CRANE** (*Anthropoides paradisea*).

This species is quite common in the Karoo, but is also seen in the grasslands of Kwa Zulu-Natal and the Highveld, usually in pairs or small family parties. This elegant bird is light blue-grey, with a long neck supporting a rather bulbous head, long and elegant wing plumes which sweep to the ground. It eats seeds, insects and reptiles.



The National Anthem

The National Anthem was proclaimed in 1997 and is a shortened, combined version of two anthems (Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica and the Call of South Africa / Die Stem van Suid Afrika). It is unique in that it is sung in four languages. This demonstrates the tireless desire South Africans have to reconcile and promote national unity.

Die Stem van Suid-Afrika is a poem written by CJ Langenhoven in May 1818, with music composed in 1921 by the Reverend M L de Villiers. It was first sung publicly at the official raising of the National Flag in Cape Town on 31 May 1928 but it was not until 2 May 1957 that government pronounced Die Stem as the official national anthem of South Africa. In 1952 the official English version, “The Call of South Africa” was accepted for official use.

Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica was composed in 1897 by Enoch Sontonga, a Methodist Mission School teacher. The poet Samuel Mqhayi later added seven additional stanzas in Xhosa. A Sesotho version was published by Moses Mphahlele in 1942. Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica became a popular church hymn that was later adopted as an anthem at political meetings and was sung as an act of defiance during the apartheid years. The first stanza is generally sung in isiXhosa and isiZulu followed by the Sesotho stanza.

- The National Anthem should be recited with appropriate respect.
- When the anthem is sung all should stand up straight and pay attention.
- Civilians should take their headgear off as a sign of respect.

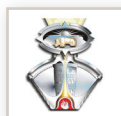
The National Orders

The National Orders are the highest awards that the country, through its President, can bestow on individual South Africans and eminent foreign leaders and personalities. From 27 April 2001 new, radically different National Orders were unveiled. Their designs contain indigenous symbols which take into consideration previously excluded communities.



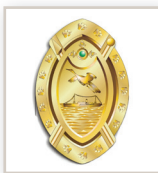
The Order of Ikhamanga is awarded to South African citizens who have excelled in the fields of arts, culture, literature, music, journalism and sport.

The Order of Mapungubwe is awarded to South African citizens for excellence and exceptional achievement.



The Order of Luthuli is awarded to South Africans who have made a meaningful contribution to the struggle for democracy, human rights, nation-building, justice and peace, and conflict resolution.

The Order of Mendi for Bravery is awarded to South African citizens who have performed extraordinary acts of bravery in which their lives were in danger.



The Order of Companions of OR Tambo is awarded to heads of state and other dignitaries for diligently promoting peace, cooperation, and friendship towards South Africa.

The Order of the Baobab is awarded to South African citizens for distinguished service in the fields of business and the economy, science, medicine, technological innovation and community service.



Use this guide to learn about our heritage. Let us take pride in our proudly South African symbols and become ambassadors for our country **BETTER TOGETHER.**



Western Cape
Government

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