

Hawaii State Flag

Aloha State • Capital: Honolulu • Statehood: 1959

Overview

Unusually, Hawaii’s flag bears the Union Jack in its canton, a legacy of ties to Britain, with stripes of white, red and blue flowing across. It is the only U.S. state flag with a foreign emblem, a reminder of the islands’ distinct monarchy and history before annexation. The flag has been in use since 1845.

Flag specifications

Adopted: 1845-05-25
Designer: Commissioned by Kamehameha I; designer uncertain
Ratio: 1:2
Union Jack in canton with eight horizontal red, white, and blue stripes.

Colors



Symbolism

Union Jack	Represents historic relations with the United Kingdom.
eight stripes	Symbolize the eight major Hawaiian islands.

Historical timeline

- 1845: Flag adopted under King Kamehameha III.
- 1959: Hawaii admitted as 50th state.

Notable facts

- Only U.S. state flag with the Union Jack.
- Eight stripes represent the islands.
- The Union Jack reflects Hawaii’s historical ties to the United Kingdom.
- The stripes symbolize the eight main Hawaiian Islands.
- The colors red, white, and blue do not officially represent the United States.
- The design dates back to the reign of King Kamehameha I.
- The flag is known locally as the Ka Hae Hawai»i.
- It is the only state flag that originated from a former kingdom.

Seal deep dive

unionJack
The Union Jack displayed in the canton (upper hoist corner).
Meaning: Historical ties to the United Kingdom and early alliances of the Hawaiian Kingdom

stripes
Eight horizontal stripes alternating white, red, and blue.
Meaning: The eight main Hawaiian Islands

Vexillology notes

Design type: National-style flag with colonial canton
Complexity: 5/10
Readability: 8/10