

South Dakota State Flag

Mount Rushmore State • Capital: Pierre • Statehood: 1889

Overview

A sky-blue field with the state seal ringed by the words “South Dakota, The Mount Rushmore State.” The seal shows farming, industry, hills and river, a panorama of the state’s economy. The encircling sun’s rays lend brightness to the emblem.

Flag specifications

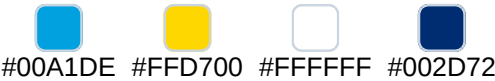
Adopted: 1963-03-11

Designer: State Legislature (based on 1909 sun design)

Ratio: 3:5

Sky-blue field with gold sunburst encircling the state seal; state name above and nickname below.

Colors



Symbolism

sunburst	Represents sunshine and openness of the plains.
state seal	Shows farming, industry, and natural resources.
lettering	‘South Dakota’ and ‘The Mount Rushmore State’ identify the state.

Historical timeline

- 1889: Admitted as a state (same day as North Dakota).
- 1963: Current layout with seal adopted.
- 1909 — Original sun design without the seal.
- 1963 — Seal added to the center of the sunburst.

Notable facts

- Shares statehood date with North Dakota (order intentionally obscured).
- Mount Rushmore is the state’s most famous landmark.
- The state seal is the central feature of the flag.
- The motto ‘Under God the People Rule’ appears on the seal.
- The hills and river represent South Dakota’s landscape.
- A sunburst symbolizes growth and opportunity.
- The flag features a sky-blue field.
- The wording changed from ‘The Sunshine State’ to ‘The Mount Rushmore State’.

Seal deep dive

stateSeal

The South Dakota state seal placed at the center of a light blue field.
Meaning: Agriculture, industry, transportation, and the development of the state

figures

A farmer plowing a field, with a smelting furnace nearby.
Meaning: The importance of labor, self-reliance, and economic productivity

landscape

A river scene with plains and distant hills.
Meaning: South Dakota’s natural environment and transportation routes

stateName

The words ‘SOUTH DAKOTA’ displayed above the seal.
Meaning: Clear labeling of the state

Vexillology notes

Design type: State seal on colored field

Complexity: 9/10

Readability: 3/10

Printable reference sheet for classroom use.