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# Good flag practice in Danish governmental authorities

Your guide with good  
advice on the use of  
your Dannebrog flag





# Good flag practice

## in Danish governmental authorities

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Welcome to our guide with good advice on good flag practice and how to fly your flag.

The guide is a handy and user-friendly tool that provides a quick overall view and guides you in the correct use of the Dannebrog, whether you use a flag, a narrow pennant, or a broad pennant in front of or on public buildings.

The flag rules are not regulated by actual law, but can be found in a number of regulations described in detail on the websites of e.g. [the Ministry of Justice](#) and [Danmarks-Samfundet](#) (a private society promoting use of the flag).

We have gone through these websites for you and collected the most essential information below. The guide contains many useful tips and provides you with more knowledge of subjects like

- 1 Which types of Dannebrog exist?**
- 2 How to choose the right flag size for your flagpole**
- 3 When to fly your flag?**
- 4 When to hoist the flag, and when to haul it down?**
- 5 How to hoist and haul down the Dannebrog in a secure and respectful manner**
- 6 Which flags are you allowed to display, and how should the flags be positioned?**
- 7 How to fly your flag at half-staff**
- 8 Are you allowed to fly a flag, if you don't have a flagpole?**
- 9 Learn how to fold your flag**
- 10 How to dispose of the Dannebrog**

There are many things you should know about correct flying of flags. At design flag we know all the rules thoroughly, and we can help you keep track of what is correct in relation to the flying of flags.

You are always welcome to contact us by telephone at **+45 33 31 90 00**, if you have any doubts.

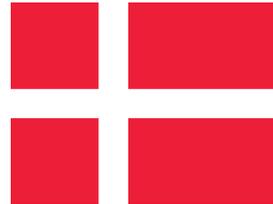
*Wishing you a good read!!*

## Which types of Dannebrog flags exist?

There are several variants of the Dannebrog: square flag, swallow-tailed flag, narrow pennant and broad pennant.

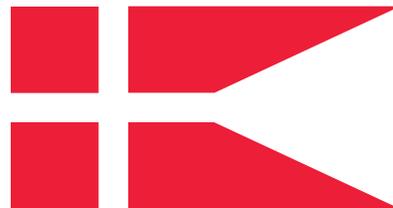
### The square flag

The square flag is the flag that most of us associate with the regular Dannebrog, as this flag may be used by all citizens. It measures 3:4 (height x width) and is red (Pantone 185) with a white cross.



### The swallow-tailed flag

The swallow-tailed flag is Denmark's official flag. It is used by the Royal House, the authorities in and outside Denmark as well as private enterprises authorized to use the flag. It measures 1:2 (height x width) and is red (Pantone 185) with a white cross and a split end. If used at sea, the flag is a darker red (Pantone 193) with a white cross and a split end.



### The narrow pennant

The narrow pennant is used, when the flag is not flown. It is a good supplement to the flag, and a good way to enjoy the flagpole even more.



### The broad pennant

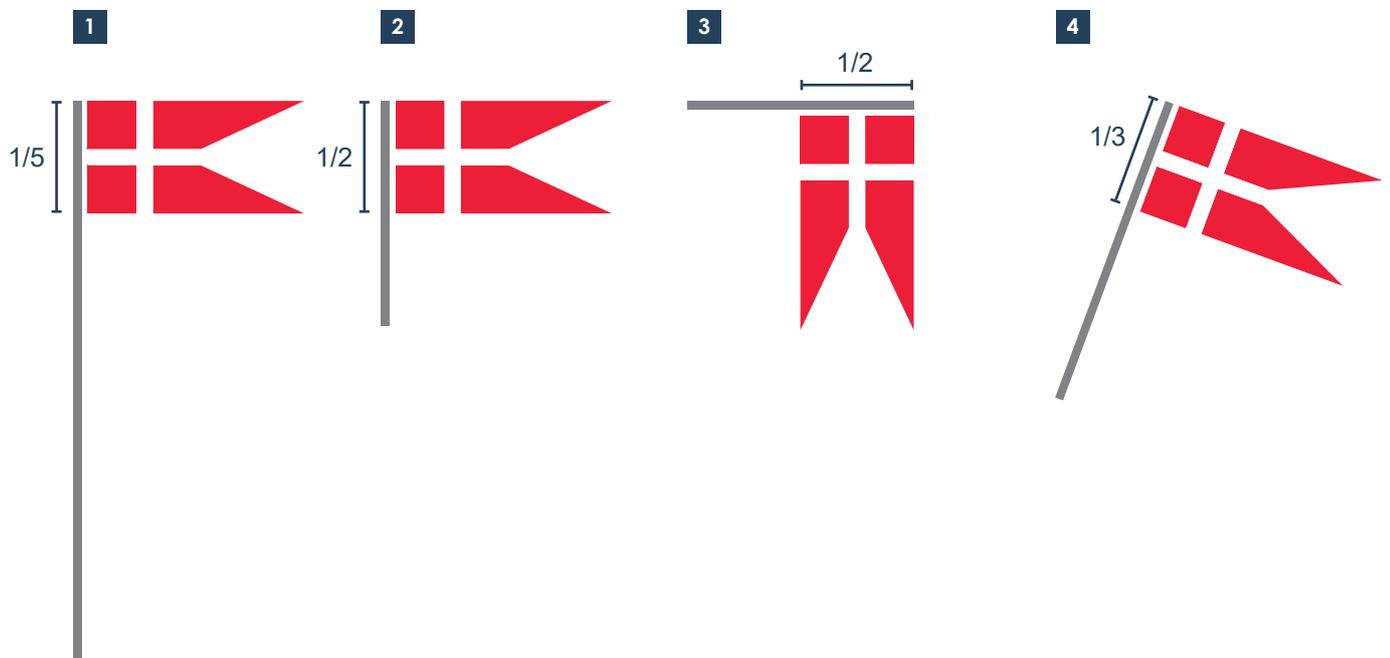
The broad pennant is a broader version of the narrow pennant, and it appears bigger on the flagpole. For example, the broad pennant is suitable, if there is limited space around the flagpole because of its location near plantation and houses, or if the flagpole is long.



## How to choose the right flag size for your flagpole?

When buying a flag it is important that the proportions are correct in relation to the usage of the flag and the nature of the surroundings, where the flagpole is placed.

The flag must be appropriate to the flagpole. Both from an aesthetic point of view, but also because, for example, a flag which is too big will have difficulties flying correctly in the wind. Further, too big a flag will expose the flagpole to great wear that will unnecessarily stress the flagpole over time, and in the end may cause the pole to break.



No.	Position of flagpole	Slope of flagpole	Size of flag
1	Mounted on ground	Vertical flagpole	1/5 of height of flagpole
2	Mounted on building	Vertical flagpole	1/2 of height of flagpole
3	Mounted on building	Horizontal flagpole	1/2 of height of flagpole
4	Mounted on building	Oblique flagpole	Approx. 1/3 of length of flagpole

## What is the suitable size for my flag?

To a large extent, the size of your flag depends on where you want the flag to hang.

Below, we will go through the principles of the various flag types, however, it is always a good idea to consult the company that produces and delivers the flag, to make sure that you get the solution that will fit your exact needs, and that the measures are correct.

### The Dannebrog flag

A rule of thumb is that the height of the flag should constitute one fifth of the flagpole height. For example, for a 10-metre free-standing flagpole, you will need a flag with a height of 200 cm. However, some weather and site conditions might call for departing from the rule, which means that on very windy days you will use a storm flag. The storm flag is similar to a regular flag, only smaller, as the height of the storm flag should measure one tenth of the flagpole height.

For a horizontal flagpole, the rule that the height of the flag should constitute half of the flagpole length generally applies, i.e. if the flagpole is 6 metres, the flag should be 300 cm.

For an oblique, wall-mounted flagpole, the height of the flag should be slightly over one third of the flagpole length. If the flagpole is 5 metres long, then, according to the guidelines, the height of the flag should measure approx. 175 cm.

### Swallow-tailed flag

The height of the swallow-tailed flag in relation to the height of the flagpole follows the same rule as for the square flag, i.e. one fifth of the flagpole height.

### Narrow pennant

A Dannebrog pennant should be half the length of the flagpole. A 10-metre flagpole should have a 500 cm long pennant (narrow).

### Broad pennant

A Dannebrog pennant (a broad pennant of 50 cm), should be a third of the length of the flagpole. A 10-metre flagpole should have a 350 cm long pennant (broad).

We have included the above mentioned rules in the three tables on the next page, as a help in your choice of flag size.

Note that the measures are guiding, as the surroundings of the flagpole also need to be considered. The flag sizes are indicated in centimetres as well as height x width.

## Flagpole placed in front of a building

Length of flagpole in metres	Size of swallow-tailed flag 	Size of storm flag of swallow-tailed flag 	Size of square flag 	Size of broad pennant 	Size of narrow pennant 
5	105 x 200	50 x 100	94 x 125	50 x 200	21 x 250
6	114 x 225	66 x 125	114 x 150	50 x 200	21 x 300
7	140 x 275	76 x 150	133 x 175	50 x 250	21 x 350
8	150 x 300	76 x 150	170 x 225	50 x 300	21 x 400
9	189 x 360	95 x 180	189 x 250	50 x 350	21 x 450
10	208 x 400	105 x 200	208 x 275	50 x 350	21 x 500
11	227 x 435	114 x 225	227 x 300	50 x 400	21 x 550
12	245 x 475	132 x 250	246 x 325	50 x 400	21 x 600
13	265 x 500	132 x 250	265 x 350	50 x 450	21 x 650
14	282 x 535	140 x 275	284 x 375	50 x 500	21 x 700
15	302 x 575	150 x 300	300 x 400	50 x 500	21 x 750
16	320 x 615	150 x 300	320 x 425	50 x 600	21 x 800
17	337 x 645	170 x 325	337 x 450	50 x 600	21 x 850
18	360 x 685	189 x 360	357 x 475	50 x 600	21 x 900

## Flagpole mounted obliquely on the building facade

Length of flagpole in metres	Size of swallow-tailed flag 	Size of square flag 
2	66 x 125	38 x 50
3	95 x 180	57 x 75
4	114 x 225	76 x 100
5	132 x 250	94 x 125
6	150 x 300	114 x 150

## Flagpole mounted horizontally on the building facade or vertically on the roof

Length of flagpole in metres	Size of swallow-tailed flag 	Size of storm flag of swallow-tailed flag 	Size of square flag 
2	95 x 180	50 x 100	94 x 125
3	105 x 200	66 x 125	114 x 150
4	114 x 225	76 x 150	133 x 175
5	132 x 250	95 x 180	150 x 200
6	140 x 275	105 x 200	170 x 225

## When to fly your flag?

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It is mandatory for governmental authorities to fly a swallow-tailed flag from their buildings on the official flag-flying days, while it is not mandatory for private individuals, private enterprises and organisations to do so.

When governmental authorities fly the flag on non official flag-flying days i.e. to celebrate the anniversary of an employee, they should hoist the square flag, and not the swallow-tailed flag.

In addition to the official flag-flying days - see overview here: [Flagdage](#) - the Ministry of Justice may decide that governmental authorities should fly the flag during special events. For instance, this could be the event of a state visit or special events in the Royal House.

Birthdays in the Royal Family may fall on Good Friday. In this event, the flag should be flown at half-staff.

If you find it difficult to keep track of the flag-flying days, you can get help from our free app: **'Husk Flaget'**. Download it below, and you will be reminded of the flag-flying day in advance, and when it is time to hoist the flag, and to haul it down again.

[Download for iOS here.](#)

[Download for Android here.](#)

When you don't fly the Dannebrog, it is good practice, and a beautiful sight, to fly a narrow pennant, and not to leave the flagpole empty. Or you can fly a broad pennant, which is somewhat broader than the narrow pennant.

## When to hoist the flag, and when to haul it down?

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The Dannebrog should be hoisted at 8.00 a.m. (however, not before sunrise), and hauled down again at sunset. If you wish to know the exact times, check out your local weather forecast.

You can haul down the flag earlier, if needed. But you are not allowed to fly the flag after nightfall, unless it is illuminated. To be suitably illuminated, the light source should be mounted on the flagpole, or a floodlight projector placed near the pole. A narrow pennant and a broad pennant may remain flying at night, also without illumination.

## How to hoist and haul down the Dannebrog in a secure and respectful manner

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You must show respect for the flag, when it is hoisted and hauled down. Never hoist a flag that is damaged, worn or dirty.

The flag is raised slowly, all the way to the top, with the audience facing the flag. The rule is that everybody takes off their cap, hat, etc., both the person hoisting/hauling down the flag and the people watching.

Generally, the flag is hoisted and hauled down by two persons, but if in big crowds, there are other ways to honour the Dannebrog. When the flag is hoisted or hauled down, someone shouts for instance 'Salute the flag', everyone pauses, and turns towards the flag, while it is raised or lowered. When the séance is over, someone shouts 'Continue', and everyone returns to what they were doing before.

Sometimes there is an actual parade in connection with hoisting and hauling down the flag, and a flag song is sung as a tribute to the Dannebrog. There are two possibilities – either the movements of the flag are adapted to the song, so that the song ends, when the flag is in position. Alternatively, the song is not sung, until the flag has reached its end position.

Enough about the people present during the hoisting and hauling down of the flag – and how they should act.

### **Now for the practical part – how to hoist the flag onto the flagpole.**

The flag should not touch the ground. Therefore, it is an advantage to hold the flag folded under the arm, both while you attach the flag and while you hoist it, until it is completely free of the ground and has unfolded.

There are two ways to attach the flag to the flag line. Older flags use single or double sheet bend, whereas newer flags usually are produced with flags hooks.

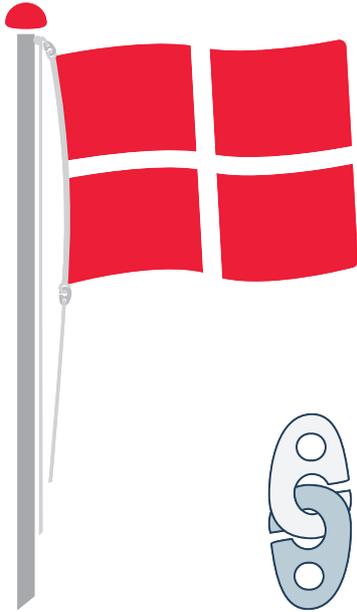
On the next pages you can read more about how to attach the flag.

When hauling down the flag, collect it over one of your arms. When hoisting and hauling down big flags, it is easier to use a nice box, in which the flag is prepared for hoisting, and where the flag can be collected, when it is hauled down again.

The flag line is winded loosely around the flagpole a few times. If it is too loose, there is a risk that it will beat against the flagpole. Be aware that the line shrinks in damp weather, and therefore it cannot be too tight either.

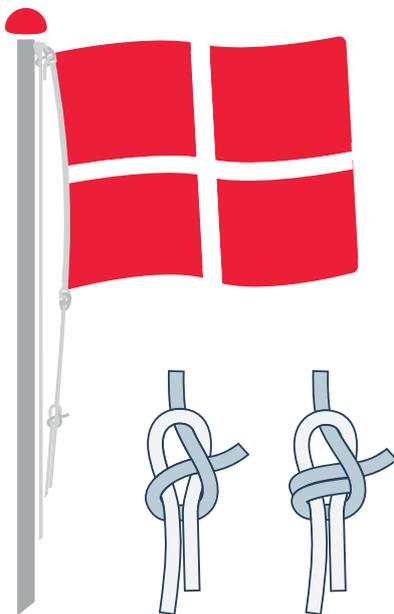
Read along on page 14, and see how to fold the flag.

## How to attach the flag with flag hooks



- 1 First wind out the flag line before you put on the flag hooks.
- 2 To facilitate the work you can attach the haul-down line to the flag line holder.
- 3 Put together the flag hook on the top of the flag with the hook on the hoisting line.
- 4 Then connect the two remaining flag hooks.
- 5 By using the hoisting line, the flag is hoisted all the way to the top knob, while keeping the line tight.
- 6 The haul-down line should be more slack in order for the flag to fly freely from the pole.
- 7 Now wind the flag line around the flagpole and attach it to the flag line holder.

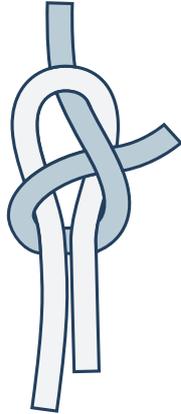
## How to attach the flag with sheet bend



- 1 First wind out the flag line before you tie the sheet bend.
- 2 To facilitate the work you can attach the haul-down line to the flag line holder.
- 3 It is the same approach – whether you tie a single or double sheet bend. Start with the top of the flag.
- 4 Make a loop with one end of the flag line.
- 5 Plug the other end through the loop, passing it around the loop once or twice.
- 6 Then lead the end of the line up and under itself. Tighten it.
- 7 Do it all again, so you attach the bottom of the flag with the lower part of the flag line.
- 8 When you want to release the sheet bend, then you loosen the line with the loop.
- 9 By using the hoisting line, the flag is hoisted all the way to the top knob, while keeping the line tight.
- 10 The haul-down line should be more slack in order for the flag to fly freely from the pole.
- 11 Now wind the flag line around the flagpole and attach it to the flag line holder.

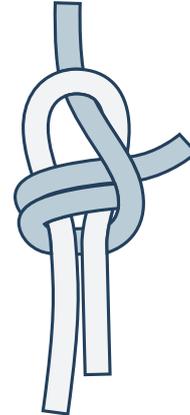
# How to tie the sheet bend

## Single sheet bend



- 1** Make a loop with one end of the flag line.
- 2** Plug the other end through the loop, passing it around the loop once.
- 3** Then lead the end of the line up and under itself. Tighten it.
- 4** When you want to release the sheet bend, then you loosen the line with the loop.

## Double sheet bend



- 1** Make a loop with one end of the flag line.
- 2** Plug the other end through the loop, passing it around the loop twice.
- 3** Then lead the end of the line up and under itself. Tighten it.
- 4** When you want to release the sheet bend, then you loosen the line with the loop.

## Which flags are you allowed to display, and how should the flags be positioned?

In Denmark it is not allowed to fly other national flags besides the Danish, unless you obtain a permission from the police. This does not apply to the following flags:

- 1 the Greenlandic flag
- 2 the Faroese flag
- 3 the Norwegian flag
- 4 the Swedish flag
- 5 the Finnish flag
- 6 the Icelandic flag
- 7 the UN flag
- 8 the EU flag

Above-mentioned flags may be flown without prior permission. Moreover, foreign embassies and consulates in Denmark are exempt from the prohibition.

If you wish to fly other states' flags, you need to apply for permission from the local police. Usually, such a permission is conditional on you simultaneously flying the Dannebrog of at least the same size and placed on the position of prominence. This condition may be disregarded in the event that you have only one flagpole at your disposal. If you only have one flagpole at your disposal, you are not allowed to fly multiple flags at the same time.

When the Dannebrog is to be flown together with one or more of the Nordic countries' flag(s) in Denmark, you should know the guidelines for the positioning of the individual flags. The Dannebrog should always be displayed in the position of prominence, and the countries are ranked in order of importance as follows:

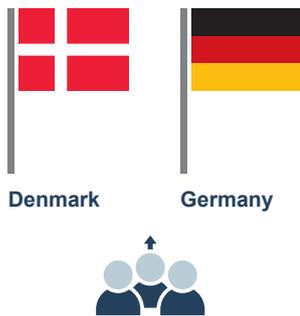
Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland, the Faroe Islands, the Åland Islands, Greenland.

If you have multiple adjacent flagpoles at your disposal, the number of flagpoles is relevant in terms of selecting the position of prominence, and concerning the positioning of the flags in relation to the person watching the flags.

When hoisting other countries' flags, the flags of all the foreign countries should be placed in alphabetical order by the countries' French names. The Dannebrog should still be placed on the position of prominence.

Above guidelines are illustrated below:

- 1** If you have only two flagpoles, the position of prominence is the flagpole to the left of the person watching the flags.



- 2** If you have an odd number of flagpoles, the position of prominence is the flagpole in the middle. The second most prominent position is the flagpole to the left of the most prominent flagpole, the third most prominent position is to the right of the most prominent flagpole – and so forth, in turns. Again, it is the idea that we are standing in front of the flagpoles and looking straight at them.



- 3** If you have an even number of flagpoles, the two poles in the middle are the most prominent, and of these two the one to the left is the most prominent. Again, we are standing in front of the flagpoles and looking straight at them.



On special occasions the flag positioning rule may be disregarded, if there is a good reason to honour and draw attention to a country's flag. In that case, this country's flag is placed right next to the Dannebrog.

Only when a supranational flag, e.g. the UN flag, is used, this flag should take the position of prominence, and preferably be hoisted on a flagpole with a special position.

## How to fly your flag at half-staff

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You can fly the flag at half-staff in the event of death, funeral and funeral service in order to express and signal mourning. When you want to raise the flag to half-staff, the following applies:

- 1** First, the flag is to be raised all the way to the top and then lowered, so that the flag's lower edge is in the middle of the flagpole. Before lowering the flag, it should first be raised all the way to the top again, and then it can be lowered all the way down.
- 2** You can fly the flag at half-staff on the day of the death. If the death occurs late in the day or after sunset, you may fly the flag on the next day. At a funeral or a funeral service the flag will be flown at half-staff and subsequently raised to the top.

## Are you allowed to fly a flag, if you don't have a flagpole?

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You are actually allowed to fly a flag, even though you don't have a flagpole. You can do so by hanging the flag for instance from a balcony, where it can hang freely without touching the ground. The flag should hang with the 'quadratic' fields upwards, and should be fixed to avoid being blown away. It must look respectable.

## Learn how to fold your flag

The flag should be completely dry, before you fold it up. Today, most flags are made of polyester and dries very quickly. On the other hand, if your flag is made of wool, which was widely used in the old days, you need more patience to let the flag dry in a suitable place before folding it up.

We suggest you to be two persons to fold the Dannebrog and make sure, that the white cross is not visible, when the flag is folded and rolled together.

Always store the flag in a dry place, and do not use a plastic bag.

- 1** Grasp each end of the flag, and fold (depending on size) twice on the long side, so the flag hooks lie on top of each other.



- 2** Roll the flag tight from right to left, make sure it does not curl.



- 3** Now store the flag in a dry place, so it is ready for next time, you want to flag.



## How to dispose of the Dannebrog

Never hoist a flag that is damaged, worn or dirty. It is good flag practice to make sure that a Dannebrog flag, which is no longer presentable, is disposed of properly. This is done by burning it – either on a private fire or by handing it over to the waste disposal site, where it is sent directly to incineration. It would be disrespectful to use the flag as a cleaning cloth.

## At the end...

Now you have reached the end of our guide with good advice on good flag practice in Danish governmental authorities, and how to fly your flag. We hope you will find this tool useful in ensuring correct flying of the flag, the next time you need to hoist the flag. If you think this guide is missing something, we would be happy to hear from you.

You probably agree with us that there is a great deal to keep track of. But do not despair. At design flag we have many years of experience and know all the rules thoroughly. We can help you keep track of what is correct in relation to what you need.

You are always welcome to contact us by telephone, or to visit our webshop. If we don't have the flag in store, we can make it according to your order.

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