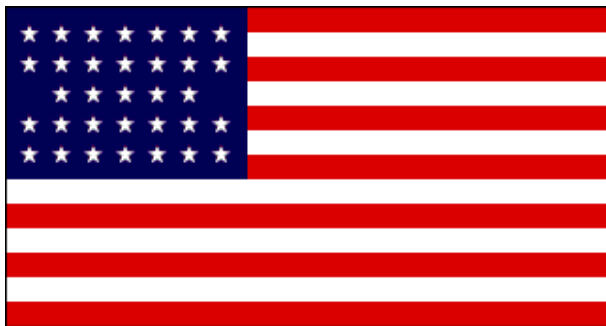
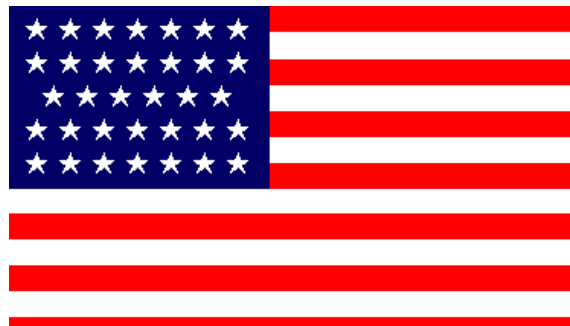


The Flags of the Union

The United States of America went through four different flags during the Civil War: The 33-star flag, the 34-star flag, the 35-star flag, and the 36-star flag. The original flag used during the attack on Fort Sumter was the **33-star flag**, created in 1859 after the admission of Oregon into the United States of America. On July 4, 1861 the **34-star flag** became the official flag of the United States of America to honor the admission of Kansas as a state. On June 1863, a **35th star** was added to the United States flag after Virginians who wished to remain part of the Union created their own state of West Virginia. In 1865, the admission of Nevada to the United States led to the creation of the **36-star flag**.



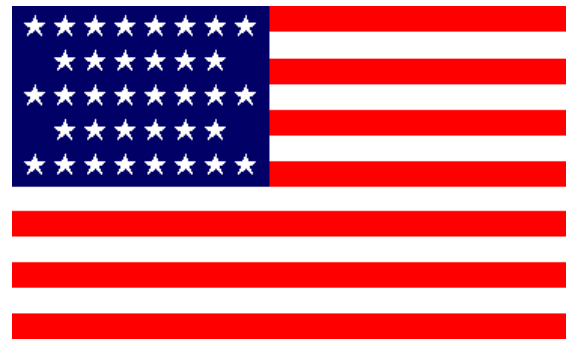
33-star flag



34-Star Flag



35-star flag



36-star flag

Flags of the Confederacy

The first flag associated with the Confederacy is known as the **Bonnie Blue Flag**, which was flown at the convention where Mississippi voted to join South Carolina in secession. The flag was blue with a single star in the middle to represent South Carolina (although it came to symbolize a united South). However, the Bonnie Blue Flag was never officially adopted as the national flag, and in March 1861 the Confederate government decided on the **First National Flag** (or “Stars and Bars” as it was sometimes called). It was remarkably similar to the American flag; it had three red and white stripes, and a blue canton featuring a star for each state of the Confederacy. The **Second National Flag** was adopted in May 1863 because the first national flag was too similar to the Union flag – causing confusion in battle. The new flag featured the famous **battle flag of the Army of Northern Virginia** (which the public today sometimes mistakenly cites as the Confederacy’s national flag) in the top left corner with a white field. Like the First National Flag, the Second National Flag (or “Stainless Banner”) was also easily misidentified. When the wind was calm and the flag hung limp on its staff, it was difficult to distinguish from a white flag of truce. In response, a **Third National Flag** was created in March 1865, featuring a red stripe on the right side of the field, to represent fortitude and courage.



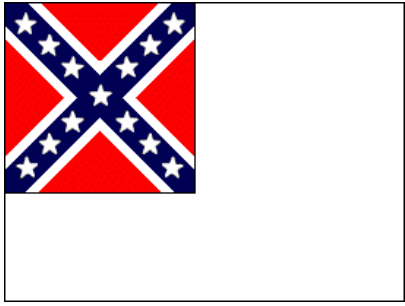
Bonnie Blue Flag



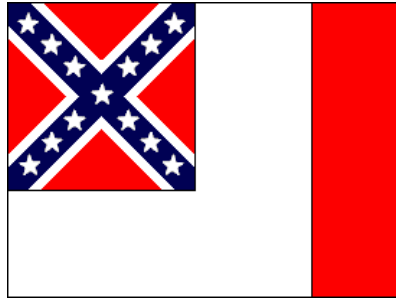
First Confederate National Flag (the “Stars and Bars”)



Battle flag of the Army of Northern Virginia



Second Confederate National Flag (the "Stainless Banner")



Third Confederate National Flag