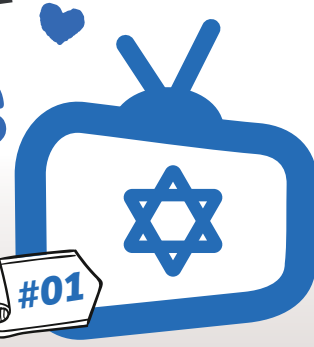


# ISRAEL news for kids

The Magazine

#01



## My Flag

Imagine a piece of cloth hung on a stick, flapping in the wind.

Would you think it was important?

Would you feel proud in any way?

Would you perhaps even stop and salute it?

Of course not! Right?

Then why do we all do this when we pass a flag?

After all, a flag is only a piece of cloth flapping in the wind...

So why do people, nations and countries place so much importance on their flags?



The use of flags began in ancient times, mainly for identity purposes in battle to differentiate between the fighting armies. They were also used as signals between ships at sea.

It was only a few hundred years ago that the flag became a national symbol. The earliest flag still in use today is the flag of Denmark. There is evidence that the same flag was in use 800 years ago.



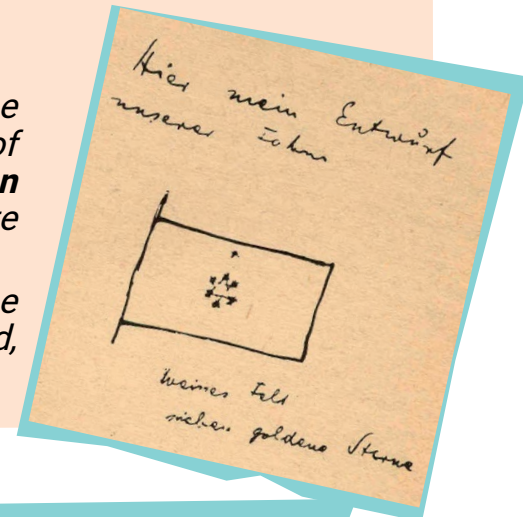


In 1895, Theodore Herzl, "The Visionary of the State," sent a letter to Baron Hirsch, in which he wrote the following:

**"You may ask mockingly: Flag? What's that? A wooden pole with a piece of cloth on it? No sir. A flag is much more than that. With a flag you can lead people... people live and die for a flag..."**

Actually, Herzl suggested a very interesting flag for the State of Israel, a flag that symbolized the universality of the country he visualized, and its work ethic: **seven golden stars representing seven hours of work a day** on a white background, signifying purity.

Here is an example of the flag Herzl suggested, as he sketched it himself. Six stars forming a type of Star of David, with a seventh star hovering above.



If that's the case, how did we get to the flag we know today as the flag of the State of Israel?



In 1897, when the First Zionist Congress took place in Basel, the participants understood the need to fly an official flag for the country everyone was talking about. However, they did not accept Herzl's suggestion.

David Wolfson proposed another idea...



"Upon the command of our leader, Herzl, I came to Basel, to make all the preparations for the First Congress. Amongst the many questions that engaged me then was... with what flag do we decorate the Congress Hall? What should its colors be? After all, we don't have a flag. This idea pained me a lot. We need to create a flag.

What colors should we choose?

And lo and behold, an idea sparkled in my mind: we do have a flag! Blue and white. The *Tallit* with which we wrap ourselves in prayer – that is our symbol. Let us take the *Tallit* out of its bag and unfurl it in front of the eyes of the Jewish people and the world at large. So I ordered a blue and white flag with a Star of David drawn on it. And that's how our national flag came into being."

And so, from that day to this, the State of Israel's official flag remains blue and white, with two stripes hinting at the stripes of the Tallit, and a Star of David in the middle.





The flag, a source of national pride and connection, inspires people and raises morale. Even during the “Swords of Iron” War, many Israelis have chosen again to take out their flags and hang them on their houses, cars, businesses and any places visible to all.



As in many countries, the Israeli flag flies on many official buildings and special places. **And on Yom HaAtzmaut, Israel's Independence Day, which we celebrate on the day the State was established, the 5th of Iyar,** many citizens hang Israeli flags on their balconies and cars. Flags are hung across all cities, stores and roads in Israel.



As a sign of solidarity and an expression of support for the people of Israel during the war, many places across the world flew Israeli flags, **or lit up buildings in blue and white, like the Eiffel Tower in Paris, the Triumphal Arch in Rome, the Prime Minister's Residence in England, and many more.**

In demonstrations, conventions and other gatherings around the world, people carried and waved Israeli flags to express their great support and love for Israel.

**And what about you? Are you also moved when you see an Israeli flag?**

## Unique Story

### The Ink Flag

On November 30, 1947, the morning after the UN voted to accept the Partition Plan, the War of Independence began. This was the State of Israel's first war.

The War of Independence is also called the War of Liberation.

The Arabs of Israel started this war because they did not agree with the Partition Plan, a plan to divide the Land of Israel between the Arab people and the Jewish people, with an area under international control that would include Jerusalem and Bet Shemesh.

The fighting grew worse on Shabbat, May 15, 1948, immediately after David Ben-Gurion, the first Prime Minister, declared the establishment of the State of Israel.

The armies of Israel's five Arab neighbors – Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq – joined the war.

The war lasted about 20 months. The IDF's (Israel Defense Forces) last operation in the war was «Operation Uvda,» in which they conquered the southern area of Israel, up to Eilat.

In those days, Eilat was called Um Rash-Rash, its Arabic name.

On March 10, 1949, soldiers from the Negev Brigade gained control of the police station in Um Rash-Rash.

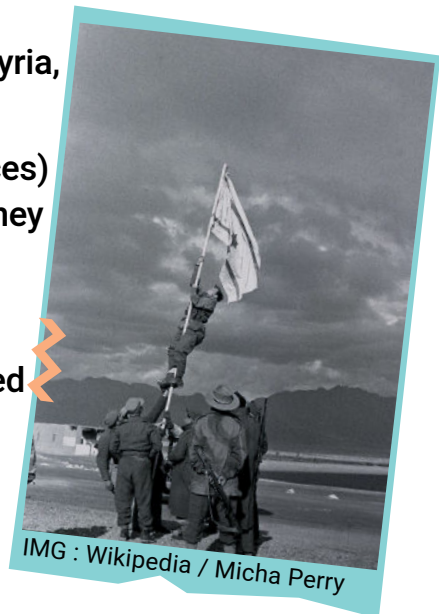
They wanted to raise the Israeli flag, but they didn't have one.

The only thing they had was a makeshift flag made by Pua Erel, the brigade secretary.

She made the flag in a very creative way: using a white sheet and blue ink.

The photo of the soldiers raising the Ink Flag in Eilat is still one of the most familiar symbols of the War of Independence.

And even today, you can see it in the emblem of the IDF's Southern Brigade, the Yoav Brigade, which protects Israel in the Eilat region.



## What Does It "Mean"?

### UN (United Nations)

An organization made up of many different countries, whose aim is to

- keep international peace and security
- and develop friendly relations among
- nations.

**What Does It "Mean"?****Partition Plan**

On November 29, 1947, the UN (United Nations) voted for a plan to divide the area of the Land of Israel into a Jewish State and an Arab State. Jerusalem was to be an area under UN control.

**International**

Connected or belonging to more than one country. In our context here, an international area under the UN's control.

**Operation (Military Operation)**

A particular mission the army has to carry out.

**Southern Area**

The area in the south of the country. In the Land of Israel, the southern area begins from around Beersheba, and includes the Negev, the Arava, and the desert.

**Eilat**

The southernmost point and city in the State of Israel.

**Brigade (Negev Brigade)**

A brigade is a unit in the army. Each brigade is responsible for a particular area, and usually has a name connected to that area. For example, the Negev Brigade.

**Make shift**

Made on the spot instead of preparing in advance.

**Secretary (Brigade Secretary)**

The person responsible for organizing all the office work in the brigade.

**Emblem (Insignia)**

In the IDF, each unit has its own special emblem, often connected to its history, an area in Israel, or something else related to it.

**« שָׂאוּ צִיּוֹנָה נֶס וְדָגָל » "Raise Your Banner and Flag to Zion"**

"Raise Your Banner and Flag to Zion" is a song composed by Noah Rosenblum, a Russian Jew, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

He composed the song after the First Zionist Congress, and it expresses the wish for the unification of the Jewish people, connecting its various groups into one large movement.

The song's opening sentence received its inspiration from the verse in the Book of Jeremiah: "Raise a banner over Zion; gather together, do not stand..."

Perhaps you've heard the familiar melody to this song to the words שָׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים רַאשֵׁיכֶם "Se'u she'arim rasheichem," composed by Noah Zaludkowski.

Do you want to sing the song?  
Click the link here.



# 1. Flag Maze Game

Connect each flag to its country.

**France | USA | Spain | Italy | Germany | Greece**



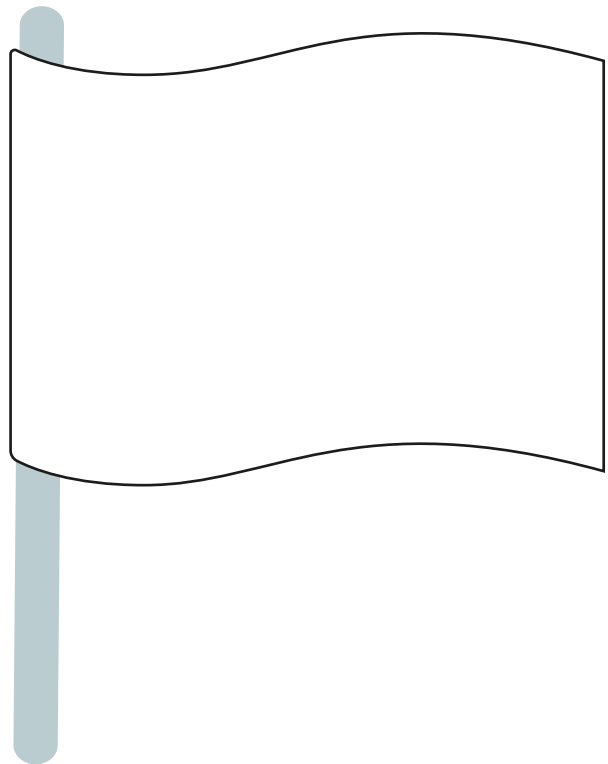
**Great Britain | Israel | Argentina | Japan | China**

# 2. My flag is...

Design a special flag for your class/  
school/family.

Think about an object/animal/bird,  
etc. that is special to you.

Think about colors that you have a  
special connection with, and prepare  
the most original flag you can!



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ISRAEL'S CHILDREN'S NEWS**



**Watch the  
"Iron Swords" War edition**

