

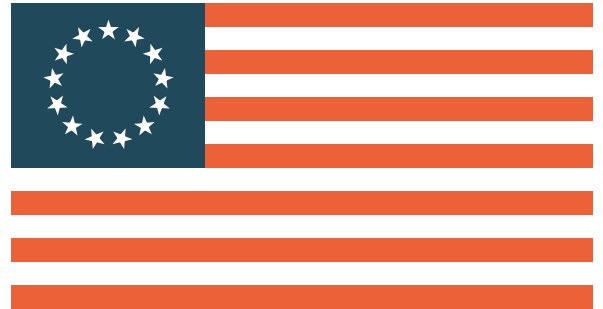
# National Symbols: The American Flag

**Directions:** Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

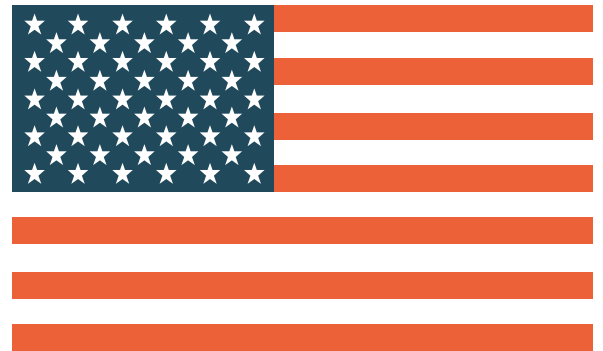
The U.S. flag has undergone many changes since the first original flag in 1777. Before the official flag was chosen, there were many different flags that were popular in different colonies. The exact origin of the first American flag is unknown, but many historians believe that a New Jersey Congressman, named Francis Hopkinson, designed the flag.

A committee decided that the design should have 13 stars and 13 stripes, each to stand for the colonies. They also decided that the flag should be red, white, and blue.

On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress passed the Flag Act, which approved the design of the American flag. The number of stars has grown from 13 to 50. The stars represented the original colonies and now they represent the fifty states.



The colonial flag



The current American flag

## Questions

1. Why are there 13 stripes? There are 13 stripes to represent the 13 colonies.
2. What do the stars on the flag stand for? The stars on the flag originally stood for the number of colonies, but now they stand for the number of states in the United States.
3. How many stars did the flag originally have? The flag originally had 13 stars.
4. What colors are the flag? The flag's colors are red, white, and blue.