

Precepts for the design of an Alternative New Zealand National Flag

Advice for NZ flag designers and for NZ flag referendum committees, circa 2022, from nz.flagoptions.com page 1 of 7

Eleven guidelines: *These guidelines are reasoned opinions, not 'rules'. If you feel that you should ignore any or all of them, you should do so.*

(1) The dimensional ratio should be 1:2 (length of flag should be twice its height)

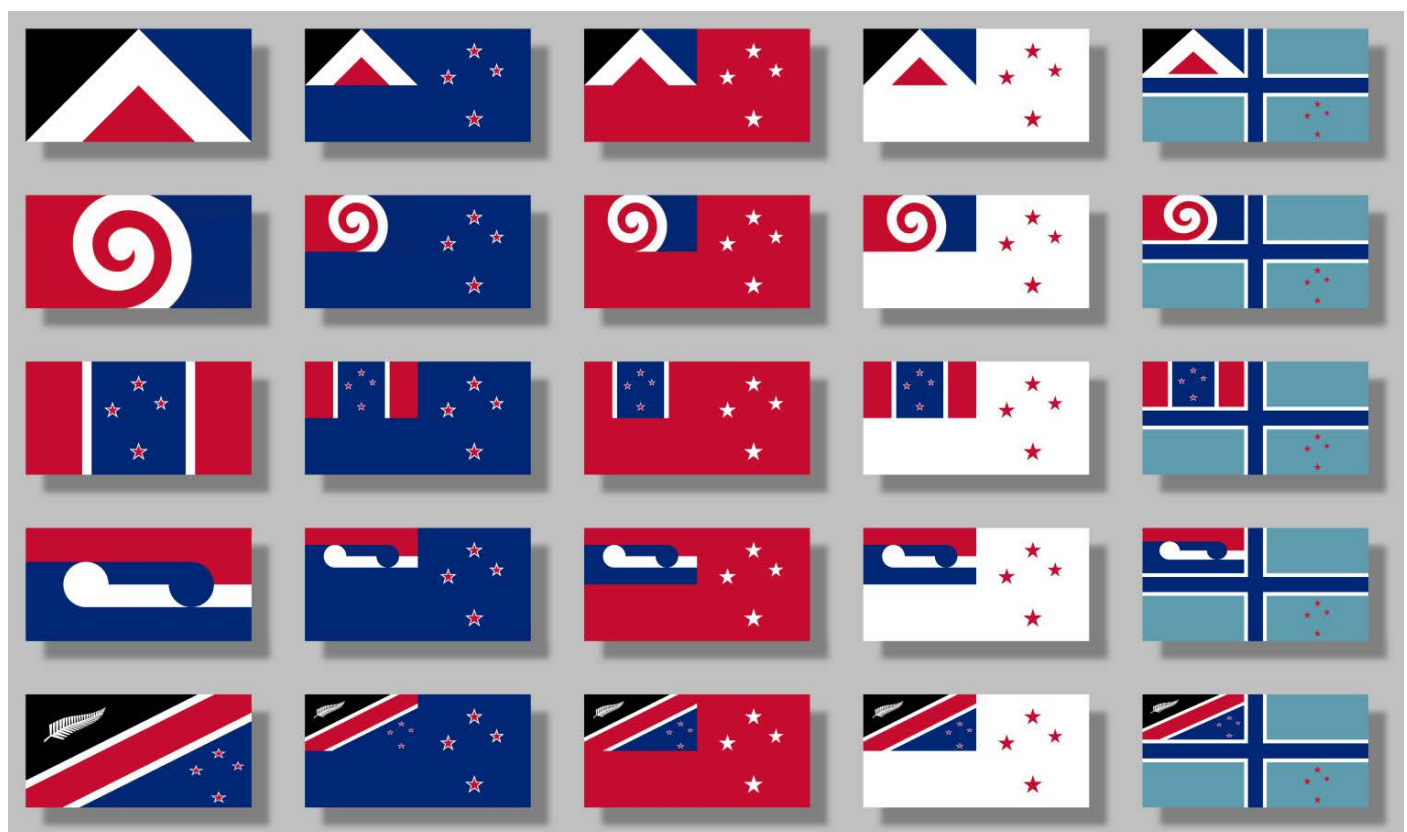
All New Zealanders have lived their entire lives under a national flag with this dimensional ratio. Without exception, all of the rest of the major flags and ensigns of the full Realm of New Zealand, numbering some twenty or more, have this dimensional ratio as well, including all of New Zealand's civil and Defence Forces ensigns. Any new flag design with another dimensional ratio would not only intuitively look wrong and intuitively wave wrong in the eyes of every New Zealander, but it would inevitably be difficult to adapt for all of the other flags and ensigns of the nation. There is only one New Zealand flag that requires a different dimensional ratio than 1:2, and that is New Zealand's United Nations ensign. The United Nations mandates that the [outdoor flags](#) of all of its Member States have a dimensional ratio of 2:3, with a length that is 1.5 times the flag's height. However, a flag of any other dimensional ratio can always be easily adapted to suit UN requirements (see the separate PDF entitled "[New Zealand's UN ensign](#)"). Emasculating the New Zealand national flag and all of its twenty or so major derivative flags into the dimensional ratio of a United Nations flag would be tantamount to the tail wagging the dog. Last but certainly not least, a 1:2-ratio flag can properly drape over a coffin as a pall, whereas a shorter 2:3-ratio flag cannot. There are absolutely no logical nor aesthetic reasons for the New Zealand national flag to have any other dimensional ratio than 1:2.

(2) The fly of the national flag should not be red, white, or azure (light) blue

These fly colours are reserved for New Zealand civil and Defence Forces ensigns, so they should generally not be used for the fly of the national flag, and designs that *do* have such fly colours may deserve rejection. Guideline (3) explains why simply reducing such designs into the cantons of the ensigns can be problematic.

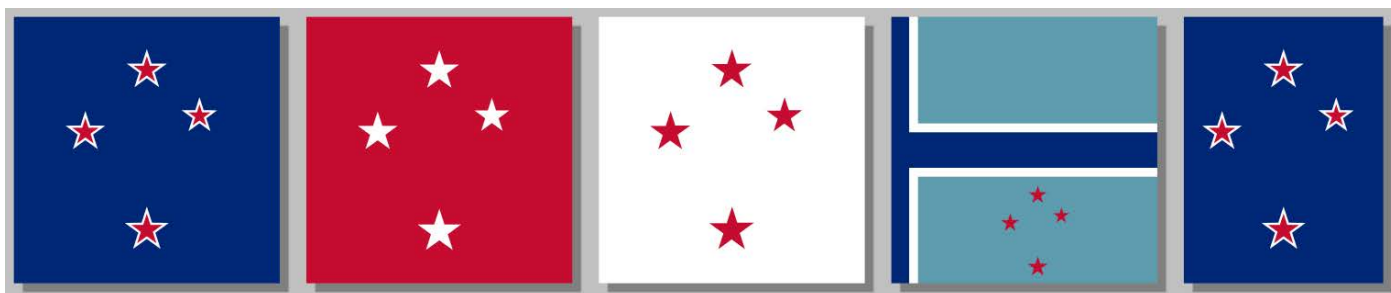
(3) The fly of the flag should be *capable of becoming blue, red, white, or azure blue*

In order to be easily adapted into certain official service ensigns and into all of the New Zealand civil and Defence Forces ensigns, the design of the flag should allow for these colour changes to its entire fly area. Flag designs with flies that are incapable of becoming these colours without some drawback would need to be reduced to the canton of the flag or ensign in question. This may not seem like a major problem, but the area of a canton is only one-quarter that of a full flag, meaning that reducing a national flag to canton-size will usually make it considerably more difficult to recognise for any given distance. Consider the flag designs in the left column below, none of which would be able to remain full-size when they are adapted into ensigns. Referring back to guideline (2), note that none of the designs can be *properly* adapted into all of the required ensigns because of various colour clashes, especially in the case of red civil ships ensigns, and also note the possibility of depicting the Southern Cross twice, a clumsiness in two of the designs below.



(4) The Southern Cross should be included in its current size, shape, and orientation

In its current size, shape, and orientation, in the horizontal and vertical centre of the fly, the New Zealand-style Southern Cross is an iconic symbol of New Zealand. Because it has appeared in the fly of the NZ flag for over 150 years (since 1869), it may well be New Zealand's most internationally-recognised symbol, even surpassing the silver fern and the kiwi silhouette. It is also an essential design element in seven other major New Zealand flags: the government ships ensign, the civil ships ensign, the Navy ensign, the civil aviation ensign, the Customs Service ensign, the Ross Dependency flag, and the Army ensign. Currently, in point of fact, in these ensigns as well as in the current national flag, it is the *only* symbol of New Zealand (see the separate PDF entitled "[The Southern Cross](#)"). For a majority of New Zealanders, moreover, the Southern Cross is also the most-loved element of the flag. There may be some rationale for changing the colours of the Cross or of its field, but there is no valid rationale for its omission or for any change to its basic design. The observance of this guideline will automatically prevent all of the problems discussed for guidelines (2) and (3). Allowing the Cross to continue to appear in the fly of the flag and in major ensigns, as illustrated in the examples below, will allow changes to fly colours as needed, eliminating any requirement to shrink the flag to canton-size. Note that even the narrower fly of the UN ensign can easily accommodate the Cross.



(5) The design should probably have plenty of blue, a fair bit of red, and some white

Arguably the world's most popular colour-scheme for national flags is red-white-and-blue, and there is no doubt that a majority of New Zealanders find the red-white-and-blue colouring of their current national flag to be one of its best qualities, perhaps second only to its Southern Cross. Additional colours are by no means forbidden, but any new flag that totally does away with red-white-and-blue may be unlikely to pass muster. The New Zealand government has specified official Pantone® C (coated) values of red and blue for the current flag, based on what is called the Pantone Matching System (PMS), a proprietary and mostly standardised colour reproduction system that is used in many industries, including flag manufacture. It would therefore make sense to use the official red and blue as a starting point for new flag designs, but the red and blue specified by the government are for use on flag fabrics, not on paper or on computer screens and websites. Sadly there are no official paper or display-screen equivalents for any Pantone colours, so *unofficial* equivalents are necessary. Reasonably good equivalents have been gathered together in the image below. For the official New Zealand Pantone C values of red and blue, close-equivalent RGB, HSL, and Hex values are listed for graphics software. Additional colours are shown with Pantone C values and with their equivalent Hex values. There are no Pantone values for white or black, so they are 'safe'. Flag designers who need more Pantone colours will find hundreds at <http://www.pantone-colours.com/>.

PANTONE 186C	PANTONE 280C	NO PANTONE VALUE	NO PANTONE VALUE	
Red: 198 Hue: 247 Green: 12 Sat: 226 Blue: 48 Light: 105 H1ML Code: #C60C30	Red: 0 Hue: 156 Green: 39 Sat: 255 Blue: 118 Light: 59 H1ML Code: #002776	Red: 255 Hue: 0 Green: 255 Sat: 0 Blue: 255 Light: 255 H1ML Code: #FFFFFF	Red: 0 Hue: 0 Green: 0 Sat: 0 Blue: 0 Light: 0 H1ML Code: #000000	New Zealand and the UK use Pantone red 186C. Australia uses Pantone red 185C (do not use for NZ). All three of these nations use Pantone blue 280C, and all three use Pantone azure blue 549C for civil aviation and AF ensigns.
UNKNOWN PANTONE 'C' VALUE Yellow #FEDF00	123C Deep yellow #FDC82F	165C Orange #FF6319	185C Red #E00034	202C Crimson #822433
281C Royal blue #002664	282C Navy blue #002147	286C Heraldic blue #0039A6	300C Intermediate blue #0065BD	350C Dark green #284E36
357C Tartan green #275937	364C Green #427730	409C Grey #8D817B	477C Red brown #5D3526	549C Azure blue #5E9CAE

(6) Māori symbols, icons, motifs, and art forms should not be included in the design

Māori culture is vibrantly rich with traditional art and craft. It is therefore an abundant source of low hanging fruit for would-be NZ flag designers. Consider the brilliant [Tino Rangatiratanga flag](#). It is perhaps not widely known that the NZ Flag Consideration Panel met with iwi during the 2015/16 flag referendums,

seeking permission to add the Tino Rangatiratanga flag to the offerings. The Panel also sought permission from Linda Munn and from the surviving whenua of Hiraina Marsden and Jan Smith, who were the designers of the flag, circa 1990. The answer from all quarters was a polite but firm 'no', and in retrospect it was actually insensitive to even ask. The Tino Rangatiratanga flag was created to be a symbol of Māori sovereignty, and it is widely regarded to be the Māori national flag. Co-opting its design in any way, whether for the canton of the NZ national flag or otherwise, would be as presumptuous as a Pākehā moko. The same goes for the United Tribes flag, for which the Panel also sought and was denied permission. Māori creations should not be thought of as shared cultural property, free to be used at will by all. Euphemistically calling such usage 'inclusive' is merely an attempt to disguise cultural theft. Any koru-based flag design, in particular, should be out of the question, given that it could not possibly represent the 85% of New Zealanders who are not Māori, nor is the use of koru motifs justified as a way of representing New Zealand's cultural diversity, any more than the use of yin-yang motifs, given that the numbers of oriental Kiwis are about on par with those of Māori. The Tino Rangatiratanga flag does not appropriate one iota of European symbolism, and the NZ national flag should not appropriate one iota of Māori symbolism.

(7) Designers should show the impact of their design on the other major flags of NZ

Contestants should be required to enter their flag designs on [a standard form](#), showing not only their design but its likely impact on civil, Defence Force, and other NZ ensigns, as in the partial suggested form below.

Design name:	Highlight this area to enter a name for your design	DESIGN NUMBER: 000000 ACCEPTANCE COMMITTEE TRACKING NUMBER: A00000
Designed by:	Enter the names(s) or pseudonym(s) of the designer(s)	This area is only for the use of the Flag Design Acceptance Committee

Highlight this area to upload an image of your national flag design. Highlight the areas further below to upload images of your suggested designs for other flags and ensigns. All images must be uploaded in the Portable Network Graphics (.png) image format, and all images must have a pixel density of 100 pixels per centimetre (ppcm). The image of your national flag design must be dimensioned to 2000 x 1000 pixels. The images of your other flag and ensign designs must be dimensioned to 424 x 212 pixels, except for your United Nations flag design, which must be dimensioned to 318 x 212 pixels.

The current Army ensign is identical to the national flag, but the field of a new version could have a dominant black field. The Navy ships ensign must have a dominant white field. The Air Force ensign must accommodate some form of AF roundel on a dominant azure blue field. The UN flag must be a laterally compressed version of the national flag. The current government ships ensign is identical to the national flag, but a new version could include the NZ Coat of Arms. The civil & merchant ships ensign must have a dominant red field. The civil aviation ensign must have a blue & white cross on a dominant azure blue field. The Yacht Squadron ensign must have a white cross on a dominant blue field. The Police Service ensign must accommodate the Police Service emblem. The Fire Service ensign must accommodate the Fire Service emblem, either the old emblem with green fern fronds or the new emblem with white (silver) fern fronds. The Customs Service ensign must accommodate a Customs Service emblem or a label. The RSA flag must accommodate the RSA emblem, centred on at least a partial stripe of gold against a dominant blue field. The Cook Islands flag must accommodate a circle of 15 stars. The Niue flag must have a dominant gold field. The Tokelau flag must include a stylised or a realistic depiction of a Polynesian canoe. The current Ross Dependency flag is identical to the national flag, but a new version could have a dominant field of Antarctic blue.

Army 	Navy ships 	Air Force 	United Nations 
Government ships 	Civil & merchant ships 	Civil aviation 	Yacht Squadron 
Police Service 	Fire Service 	Customs Service 	RSA 

(8) New Zealand national flag candidates should not be obliged to have simple designs

There are many good flags that have simple designs, but it would be nonsense to maintain that *all* good flags have simple designs, or even that *most* good flags have simple designs, when the world has countless flags with complex designs that are both widely recognised and widely loved by the people whom they represent. Any flag design that satisfies those two criteria is by any logical definition 'good', regardless of its complexity, number of colours, or difficulty in being drawn by children. The case for simplicity in flag design is rooted in a nineteenth century mentality, when flags could only be made from simple-to-cut and simple-to-sew pieces of fabric. In view of the sophisticated advancements in twenty-first century flag manufacture, simplicity should never be listed as a criterion for a good flag design, let alone as its *major* criterion. By the same token, flag designs do not need to be limited to those that children can draw from memory. Insisting that designs must be 'child-level' is an insipid holdover from the nationalist sentiments of the 19th and early 20th centuries, when children were compelled to take irrational pride in the locational circumstances of the births or of their upbringings. In those days, mandatory primary school sessions of 'flag drawing' were often regrettably part of the formal curricula, so the simpler the flag the better, but if one at least pretends that we now live in more enlightened times, continuing to assert that children must be able to crayon an accurate facsimile of their national flag will be as ludicrous as claiming that they should be able to produce realistic portraits of their own families rather than stick figures. There is not even a valid argument for *adults* to be able to draw their national flag, whether from memory or not. For a broader perspective see the PDFs entitled "[*The Complexities of Simplicity*](#)" and "[*Good Flag, Bad Flag is Rubbish*](#)".

(9) The process of deciding whether New Zealand will adopt a new national flag should be based upon, yet improve upon, New Zealand's 2015/2016 flag referendum process

A wheel can always be made better, but it should not be reinvented. The details of the 2015/2016 NZ flag referendum process have been archived at <http://www.dPMC.govt.nz/dPMC/publications/nzflag-process>, providing a reasonable starting point for structuring any future flag referendum. Granted, several [mistakes](#) were made along the way, but as long as any new flag referendum process has learned from those mistakes, it should do well. Particular attention should be paid to the [post-referendum observations of the Flag Consideration Panel](#). However, there should not even *be* a future flag referendum unless a well-structured, full-nation [survey](#) has revealed majority public receptiveness to the idea of flag change. Only after that prerequisite should the specifics of a new flag referendum be hashed out, although some revisions to the 2015/2016 process should be obvious. For example, the authority to select the flag design candidates and to winnow them down to one or more final alternatives to the current flag should not be vested in a panel or in a committee but in the full New Zealand populace, through an online rating process. A committee should only have the authority to reject designs that are overtly absurd, offensive, political, religious, or amateurish, as well as those that do not meet clearly established entry criteria. If the entries number in the thousands, there may be a need to allow a committee to do more extensive filtering, but ideally all of the acceptable designs will be simultaneously presented online, with every New Zealand elector afforded the opportunity to rate each design for a certain period of time. However, in order to prevent public outcry, the current flag should be included in the online rating process. If the current flag garners the highest rating amongst all of the initial contenders, the matter should be at an end. If not, then from the initial pool of submissions, perhaps fifty designs with the highest ratings should once more be presented to the public, again including the current flag. If at this point the current flag scores the highest rating, again no further action should be taken. If not, then one binding formal vote should be held between the single most popular alternative flag and the current flag. If the current flag receives more than fifty percent of the vote, the referendum should end, with the result to be binding for a minimum duration, also to be determined by a public vote. If the current flag receives less than fifty percent of the vote, the alternative should become the new national flag. A clean, fair process, with a total cost that is already known: roughly \$6 per capita.

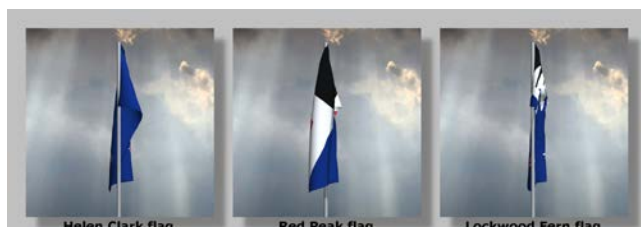
(10) Preferable features of a design submission website and a design ratings website

Flag manufacturers prefer that designs be in a 'vector' graphics format like '.svg' (Scalable Vector Graphics), but for purposes of a design contest only 'raster' graphics images should be required. Rather than dealing with multiple raster graphics formats of widely varying quality, the contest should be standardised to the lossless image format '.png' (Portable Network Graphics). The design submission website should present a standard, two-page entry form as a ['fillable' PDF form](#). Logged-in contestants would upload their national flag designs directly into the first page of the online fillable form, including at a minimum their suggested designs for civil and Defence Force ensigns, the ensigns for various national services, and the United Nations ensign, and they would fill out all text fields, saving interim versions of the form as needed. All uploaded PNG images should be required to have a pixel density of 100 pixels per centimetre, as well as uniform pixel dimensions to suit the requirements of the entry form. For example, if the suggested entry

form in this Precepts PDF is used as a guide, the upload dimensions for the national flag design might be 2000 x 1000 pixels, whilst the upload dimensions for the civil and Defence Force ensign designs might be 424 x 212 pixels. These references to graphics formats and to their particulars may seem burdensome, but the reality is that the majority of designs will be submitted by entrants who are conversant with graphics software. They need not be professional graphics designers, but if they cannot work with PNG files they should not be suffered. Again, the first page of the online fillable entry form would include the designer's title for the design, the designer's name or alias, the required flag images, and the designer's description of the design, all of which would fit on a single A4 sheet, as exemplified by the PDFs that are linked to [from this web page](#). The second page of the online fillable entry form, which would only be privy to the referendum committee, would contain the designer's full contact details, assurance of copyright surrender, acknowledgement of the designer's understanding of the official flag design guidelines and of the official terms and conditions for flag design submissions, and any other needed details or tracking information. Only fully completed forms would be capable of being submitted to the committee, which would notify entrants of acceptance or rejection of their design forms. Once the submission period ends, all accepted flag designs would be simultaneously posted online for public rating. They could be presented in grids of [numbered thumbnail images](#), which when selected could lead to downloadable PDFs of the first pages of the entry forms. Additional provisions could let the public observe the designs either waving in the wind or hanging limply, as at the website <https://krikenoid.github.io/flagwaver/>.



Consider the flag design above, for example. If it were a new design for the New Zealand national flag, one that you had never seen before, what might you learn from the simulation above? You might observe that the waving flag has attractive colours and that it presents two easily identifiable symbols, one for the UK and one for New Zealand, and that the limp flag shows only a bit of the UK symbol, although it is still identifiable. The New Zealand symbol, however, is mostly obscured in the folds of the draped flag. The flag could be a British blue ensign, or possibly the Australian flag with its own obscured stars. You might further observe that most of the total area of the flag is blue, such that the flag becomes almost totally blue when it is limp, seemingly the flag of no nation at all. You might wonder why the designer did not put a symbol of New Zealand in the canton as well as in the fly, or even a symbol spanning the entire hoist, so that the limp flag would still be as likely as the waving flag to identify the nation that it is intended to represent.



The insights that the public could gain from being able to observe a given flag design in this way are so valuable that the flag design rating website should have this feature *built in*, so that visitors can simply select a link to immediately see how a given flag design will actually appear when it is waving in the wind or when it is draped

in windless conditions, revealing virtues and flaws that would otherwise be difficult or even impossible to anticipate. The complete coding for the 'online flag waver' shown on the previous page is freely available at <https://github.com/krikenoid/flagwaver>, so any competent website designer should be able to easily [embed a flag waving feature](#) for every displayed flag design.

(11) Designers and committees should be sceptical of all the 'rules' of good flag design

Care has been taken in this PDF to characterise the advice that it offers as guidelines rather than rules, because the word 'rule' implies a certain inviolability. Lest you think this point trivial, consider that the official flag design guidelines for the 2015/2016 New Zealand flag referendums flatly stated, “Flag designs that include...complex objects will not be considered.” This illustrates that what is typically listed as the first rule of good flag design, namely simplicity, can be taken far too literally and to detrimental effect, as in the case of NZ's referendums, notwithstanding that 'simplicity' and 'complexity' are completely subjective terms, and thus are open to widely disparate interpretation. Guideline (8) has already explained why a good flag does not need to be simple, but many other typical flag design rules are begging to be broken. One such rule posits that a flag design should be limited to only two or three colours. For example, some will claim that flags of two or three highly-contrasting colours are always 'bolder', but it is equally valid to dismiss such flags as being 'starker'. Given that subjective adjectives can always be chosen to have either positive or negative connotations, they can never serve as objective arguments, one way or the other. What is objectively true is that some of the world's greatest flags contain a dozen colours or more, so it would be mindless to limit New Zealand's flag to only three. Additional arguments for limited colours tend to be either specious or simply false. One such assertion is that more than four colours are hard to distinguish, which is absurd. Another premise is that flag fabrics come in only a limited number of colours, but a simple Internet search will reveal that such fabrics are available in a full spectrum of over 70 shades, which means that there is no reason to limit even a sewn-together flag to three colours, much less a printed flag, for which hundreds of colours of ink are available. You may also hear a last-ditch argument about limited colours reproducing better in greyscale, as though this should be a critical concern in an age when virtually every remaining newspaper and magazine on earth is published in full colour. Even if this were not the case, choosing colours that maintain a high contrast in both colour and greyscale can be virtually impossible, as is easily demonstrated by reproducing the the colour palette from guideline (5) in greyscale:

PANTONE 185C	NO PANTONE VALUE	PANTONE 280C	PANTONE 348C	PANTONE 116C
Red: 224 Hue: 245 Green: 0 Sat: 255 Blue: 52 Light: 112 HTML Code: #E00034 RED	Red: 255 Hue: 0 Green: 255 Sat: 0 Blue: 255 Light: 255 HTML Code: #FFFFFF WHITE	Red: 0 Hue: 156 Green: 39 Sat: 255 Blue: 118 Light: 59 HTML Code: #002776 BLUE	Red: 0 Hue: 111 Green: 135 Sat: 255 Blue: 81 Light: 68 HTML Code: #008751 GREEN	Red: 252 Hue: 35 Green: 209 Sat: 249 Blue: 22 Light: 137 HTML Code: #FDCD16 GOLD
UNKNOWN PANTONE VALUE DARK GOLD #BC8000	123C Deep yellow #FDC82F	165C Orange #FF6319	NO PANTONE VALUE BLACK #000000	202C Crimson #822433
281C Royal blue #002664	282C Navy blue #002147	286C Heraldic blue #0039A6	300C Intermediate blue #0065BD	350C Dark green #284E36
357C Tartan green #275937	364C Green #427730	409C Grey #8D817B	477C Red brown #5D3526	549C Azure blue #5E9CAE

Highly-contrasting colours such as red-and-green, orange-and-azure blue, gold-and-grey, and other combinations do become harder to distinguish in greyscale, but that is perfectly alright, because none of the shades are *exactly* the same, and the human eye can still distinguish between them. This tends to mean that no matter how many colours a flag design has, [its greyscale representation will not become unrecognisable](#). Lastly, it may be true that a limited number of colours can make the manufacture of a flag slightly easier, quicker, and less expensive, but these should not be primary design concerns. Modern flag production methods are simply not greatly affected by flag designs with many colours, whether in difficulty of manufacture, speed of production, or pricing, so [flag designers should make their designs fab, not drab](#).

A remaining assortment of typical flag design rules also do not stand up well to scrutiny. Like simplicity and limited colours they are really only suitable as suggestions, and they should never be thought of as criteria for rejection. It is true that flags tend to wear out from their fly edges, but anyone who says that the patterns of a flag design should never extend to the fly edge must be oblivious to the UK's Union Jack and to any number of other famous flags. If a flag fabric has been subjected to heat, cold, wind, rain, and the sun's radiation long enough to deteriorate at its fly, then the rest of it will not be far behind. Although it may be theoretically easier to hem a fly edge that has a solid colour with no patterns, it will probably be better in most cases to heed the biblical admonition of not mending old garments with new cloth, and to instead

simply replace flags when they have worn out. Usually, of course, that is exactly what is done, at least by anyone with actual respect for the flag that they are flying. Should a flag design not include curves because those can be harder to sew? Oh, do me a favour. Should lettering, seals, and coats of arms be forbidden? Rubbish, because there are any number of well-known and well-loved flags that have all of these things. Go tell Mexico that the fabulous coat of arms on their flag violates a heap of rules and has to go, but you'd better be ready to run for your life, gringo.



Additional resources for NZ flag designers and for NZ flag referendum committees:

(You may find it convenient to visit the Web pages that are located [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).)

Those who are unfamiliar with flag nomenclature may want to review the PDF entitled “*Flag Terminology*”. New Zealand symbolism is explored in the PDF entitled “*Symbols*”. Several other 'resource' PDFs have been gathered [here](#). Sadly, the most prominent flag design PDF of the last two decades has been an insipid pamphlet entitled “*Good Flag, Bad Flag*”, which the author of these guidelines considers to be [rubbish](#), due to its dogmatic emphasis on flag design simplicity and to its unwarranted insults of many current and historical flags. Far better is “*The Commission's Report on the Guiding Principles of Flag Design*”. Unlike *Good Flag, Bad Flag*, it sets forth useful flag design generalities without stooping to the pretence of criticising existing flags. A website in support of Roman Mars' insightful statement, “Loving your flag is the only rule that really matters”, can be found at <http://ideas.ted.com/7-fantastic-flags-that-break-every-design-rule/>. Designers and committees will benefit from a survey of the history of the New Zealand flag debate, starting with one by Kiwi John Moody <http://www.flaginstitute.org/pdfs/John%20Moody.pdf>. Also: http://www.silverfernflag.org/uploads/1/0/2/2/10222610/nz_flag_facts_malcolm_mulholland.pdf. Wikipedia weighs in at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Zealand_flag_debate. A good chart of national flags is at http://www.wpmap.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/All_Flags_of_the_World_5024x3757.jpg. Flag designers navigating the website at <http://www.greenstone.org/nz-flag-design/index.html> will find that they can upload their flag designs to the website and then watch them waving atop the Beehive in a 3D simulation, not unlike that of the Flag Waver website. Limited zoom, tilt, and rotational controls are provided. Graphics software novices may find other uses for this website, although much better raster graphics software is freely available from <https://www.gimp.org/> and from <https://www.getpaint.net/>. Free vector graphics software is available at <https://inkscape.org/en/>. The online [Scratch's Flag Designer](#) is very basic, but it can nevertheless provide some insights, and it allows designs to be saved in a vector graphics format. **Every would-be flag designer in the world should ponder all of the charts that are shown on the website [Flag Stories](#).** If you download this 'Precepts' PDF and view it with [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#), you can use the 'selection tool' (arrow icon) to highlight any of the images that it contains. You can then right click the images for copying and pasting into graphics programs for possible further use. For example, the Pantone colour chart may prove especially handy for designers with graphics programs that feature a 'colour picker' tool, generally depicted as an eyedropper icon. The suggested flag design contest entry form could also prove useful. When using Acrobat Reader to view this PDF on a discrete computing device, all of its Web links can be opened with a click. When viewing this PDF on the Internet, right-clicking its Web links will allow them to be opened in new tabs or windows.

Parting thoughts:

The flag of the United Kingdom is an amalgam of the flags of England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. If Scotland and/or Northern Ireland leave the UK in the wake of Brexit, the Union Jack will become anachronistic, effectively a flag without a future. New Zealanders and Australians fought and died in two world wars, largely on behalf of the UK, yet afterwards they were left holding the wrong end of the economic stick, when in 1973 the UK secured the EU membership that it had sought since the early 1960s, drastically reducing its imports from Down Under. By then, in concerted protest, most of the 53 Commonwealth nations had freed their flags of the symbolic shackle of the Union Jack, so that nowadays only two major nations and former colonies obstinately retain the Jack in the cantons of their national flags. Given that the Union Jack may soon cease to exist, one wonders how much longer, in life and even in death, that its echoes of colonialism and of antipodean empire will be allowed to continue to dominate New Zealanders and Australians.

