

# Flag of Armenia

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<b>Use</b>	National flag. ֊֊֊
<b>Proportion</b>	1:2
<b>Adopted</b>	August 24, 1990
<b>Design</b>	A horizontal tricolour of red, blue, and orange

The national **flag of Armenia**, the **Armenian Tricolour** (known in Armenian as երանույն, *erraguyn*), consists of three horizontal bands of equal width, red on the top, blue in the middle, and orange on the bottom. The Armenian Supreme Soviet adopted the current flag on August 24, 1990. On June 15, 2006, the Law on the National Flag of Armenia, governing its usage, was passed by the National Assembly of Armenia.

Throughout history, there have been many variations of the Armenian flag. In ancient times, Armenian dynasties were represented by different symbolic animals displayed on their flags.<sup>[1]</sup> In the twentieth century, various Soviet flags represented the Armenian nation.

## Symbolism



The meanings of the colors have been interpreted in many different ways. For example, red has stood for the blood shed by Armenian soldiers in war, blue for the Armenian sky, and orange represents the fertile lands of Armenia and the workers who work them.<sup>[2]</sup>

The official definition of the colors, as stated in the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, is:

“ Red symbolizes the Armenian Highland, the Armenian people's continued struggle for survival, maintenance of the Christian faith, Armenia's independence and freedom. Blue symbolizes the will of the people of Armenia to live beneath peaceful skies. Orange symbolizes the creative talent and hard-working nature of the people of Armenia.<sup>[3]</sup> ”

## Design

Since the Armenian government does not specify the exact shades of red, blue, and orange, two different versions of the flag are in common use. The more common version consists of brighter shades, whereas the colors of the less common version are more muted. The following table gives the approximate RGB values of the colors used in those two versions:<sup>[4]</sup>

	More common version	Less common version
		
Red	255-0-0	216-28-63
Blue	0-0-170	85-117-196
Orange	255-153-0	239-107-0

## History

### List of Armenian flags

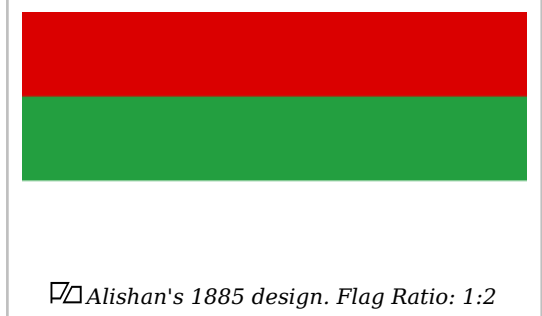
Today's tricolor flag bears little resemblance to the earliest Armenian 'flags'; in ancient times, armies went into battle behind carvings mounted on poles. The carvings might represent a dragon, an eagle, a lion or "some mysterious object of the gods."<sup>[5]</sup> With the advent of Christianity, the Armenian empire adopted many different flags representing various dynasties. The Artaxiad Dynasty's flag, for instance, consisted of a red cloth displaying two eagles gazing at each other, separated by a flower.



☐☐ Artaxiad Dynasty 189 BC - 1 AD

### 19th century

After Armenia was split between the Persian and Ottoman Empires, the idea of an Armenian flag ceased to exist for some time. The Armenian Catholic priest Father Ghevont Alishan created a new flag for Armenia in 1885, after the Armenian Students Association of Paris requested one for the funeral of the French writer Victor Hugo. Alishan's first design was very similar to today's Armenian flag: a horizontal tricolor. However, it looks more like an upside-down variation of the current flag of Bulgaria. The top band was red, symbolizing the first Sunday of Easter (called "Red" Sunday), followed by a green band to represent the "Green" Sunday of Easter, and finally an arbitrary color, white, was chosen to complete the combination.<sup>[6]</sup>



☐☐ Alishan's 1885 design. Flag Ratio: 1:2

While in France, Alishan also designed a second flag, identified today as the "Nationalist Armenian Flag." It too was a tricolor, but unlike the previous design, this one was a vertical tricolor similar to the French flag. Its colors were red, green, and blue, from left to right, representing the rainbow that Noah saw after landing on Mount Ararat.<sup>[7]</sup>

## Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic

In 1828, Persian Armenia was annexed to the Russian Empire after the last Russo-Persian War, and became known as Russian Armenia. When the Russian Empire collapsed, Russian Armenia declared its independence and joined the short-lived Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic, together with Georgia and Azerbaijan.

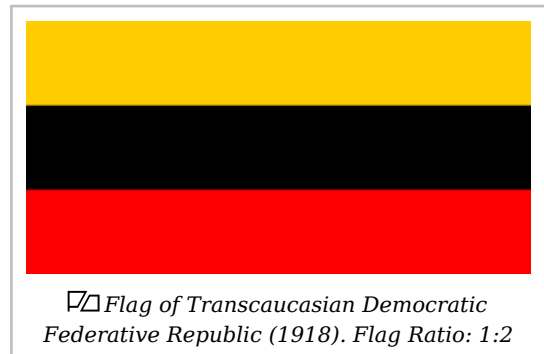
This unified state hardly lasted a year and was soon dissolved. Since the Republic was short-lived, it did

not use any flags or symbols. Nevertheless, some historians consider a horizontal gold,

black, and red tricolor, similar to that of the German flag but arranged differently, to have been flag of Transcaucasia.<sup>[8]</sup> The federation was dissolved on May 26, 1918, when Georgia

declared its independence as the Democratic Republic of Georgia. Both Armenia and

Azerbaijan declared their independence two days later, on May 28, 1918, as the Democratic Republic of Armenia (DRA) and the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR), respectively.



## Democratic Republic of Armenia

After gaining independence, the Democratic Republic of Armenia adopted the modern Armenian tricolor. Upon Stepan Malkhasyan's appearance in the Armenian National Council,<sup>[9]</sup> the independent Armenian government selected the colors used during the last period of Rubenid Dynasty, red, blue and yellow. They chose to replace the yellow with orange "because it merged better with the other two colors, presenting a more pleasing composition."<sup>[10]</sup> The flag of independent Armenia then had a ratio of 2:3, but on August 24, 1990, when the Armenian Supreme Soviet adopted it as the flag of the Republic of Armenia, the ratio was changed to 1:2.<sup>[11]</sup> An earlier prototype, which was eventually rejected, was a rainbow flag. This prototype can be seen at the Martiros Saryan House Museum in Yerevan, Armenia.



## Early Soviet Armenia and the Transcaucasian SFSR

