

Missouri



Missouri became the 24th state to join the union on 10 August 1821.

A design by Marie Elizabeth Watkins Oliver was adopted as the official Missouri State Flag on March 22, 1913; almost 92 years after Missouri became the 24th State to join the union.

This design was for a rectangular flag, consisting of three horizontal red, white and blue stripes. These stripes represent valor, purity and vigilance and justice. A circle is centered on the flag surrounded by a band of blue enclosing the Missouri Coat of Arms on a white background. The blue band displays 24 white five-pointed stars representing Missouri as the 24th State.

The shield of the Missouri Coat of Arms shows, on the right, a Bald Eagle grasping the olive branches of peace and the arrows of war in its talons. This represents the strength and powers of the Federal Government. On the left side of the shield (the state side) are a grizzly bear and a crescent moon. The grizzly bear symbolizes the strength and bravery of the citizens of the State. The crescent moon symbolizes the State of Missouri at the time of its induction into the union; a State with a small population and wealth and huge potential. The crescent moon also symbolizes the "second son." Missouri was the second State to be carved from the territory acquired with the Louisiana Purchase. The shield is encircled by a belt inscribed "United we stand, divided we fall" indicating the advantage of the union of the United States.

Two more grizzly bears, one on each side of the shield, echo the bravery and strength of the State's citizens. They are standing on a scroll displaying the Missouri State Motto, *Salus Populi Suprema Lex Esto* (Let the welfare of the people be the supreme law). Below the scroll are the Roman Numerals for 1820, the year that Missouri became a member of the United States.

Above the shield a helmet is depicted, representing Missouri as a sovereign State. A large star surrounded by 23 smaller stars signifies Missouri's status as the 24th State. A cloud around the large star represents the difficulties that Missouri endured on its way to Statehood.

Source: www.netstate.com/states/symb/flags/mo_flag.htm