

Oklahoma



On 16 Nov 1907, Oklahoma was admitted to the union as the 46th state.

The first Oklahoma State Flag adopted in 1911 was a simple affair, its color palette modeled after the red, white and blue of the Stars and Stripes. The 1911 flag displayed a white star, edged in blue, centered on a field of red. Inside the star, the number "46" was shown; reference to Oklahoma as the 46th state to enter the union in 1907.

The first Oklahoma State Flag flew from 1911 - 1925. It is said that the flag began to fall into disfavor after the Russian Revolution in 1917. The Red flag and single white star began to be too closely associated with symbols of Communism.



In 1924, a contest was announced to create a new design for the flag, one that more uniquely represented the diversity of cultures in the state of Oklahoma. For the state with the largest Native American population, it is easy to see why the design submitted by Mrs. George Fluke, Jr. was chosen and officially adopted by the State Legislature on April 2, 1925.

The 1925 flag, essentially the same as today's state flag, prominently displays an Osage warrior's shield made from buffalo hide and decorated with seven eagle feathers hanging from the lower edge. The shield is centered on a field of blue borrowed from the blue flag that Choctaw soldiers carried during the Civil War. This flag honors more than 60 groups of Native Americans and their ancestors.

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The shield is decorated with six white crosses (stars) representing high ideals. Superimposed over the shield are symbols of peace and unity from the cultures of the Native American and European-American settlers in the territory; the calumet or ceremonial peace pipe and the olive branch.

The flag design was revisited in 1941. The state name "OKLAHOMA" was amended to the 1925 design and is displayed in white letters below the shield. This change was not popular in some circles as it was felt that the design of the Oklahoma State Flag was significantly unique without this reminder.

In 1988, the Oklahoma State Legislature again addressed the design of the state flag. Variations in color among manufacturers did not properly align with the spirit of the design and the 41st Oklahoma Legislature voted to rectify this:

"... it is truly fitting that the Oklahoma flag uniting the ancient lore of the Indian and the white man and symbolizing the peace of a united people should be standardized in color as an example of the solidarity and patriotism of such people; and

WHEREAS, Oklahoma is entering into its 100th year and the cultural and historic integrity of the Oklahoma state flag as designed by Mrs. George Fluke, Jr., and subsequently approved by the Oklahoma Legislature should be preserved and maintained."

Source: http://www.netstate.com/states/symb/flags/ok_flag.htm