

Wisconsin



On 29 May 1848, Wisconsin became the 30th state.

In 1863 Wisconsin had not yet adopted an official State flag and the Civil War regiments in the field were requesting an official banner to fly. The legislature formed a five-member joint select committee to respond to these requests and, as a result 1863 Joint Resolution No. 4 was adopted. This resolution essentially adopted a design that was already in use by the Wisconsin regimental troops.

In 1913, this resolution finally made it into the official state statutes of the state of Wisconsin. Chapter 111, Laws of 1913 specifying a dark blue flag with the state coat of arms centered on each side, evolved into Chapter 1, section 1.08 of the Wisconsin statutes.

As with other states who chose to display the state coat of arms or seal on the official state flag, Wisconsin found that their flag was difficult to distinguish from others. After years of effort to distinguish the Wisconsin flag in some more noticeable way, the enactment of Chapter 286, Laws of 1979 responded with the addition of the word "WISCONSIN" in white letters above the state coat of arms and the date that Wisconsin was admitted to the union, "1848" in white letters below the state coat of arms.

The great seal of Wisconsin, created in 1851, features the state coat of arms. The banner above the shield has Wisconsin's [state motto](#): "Forward." Directly below this is a badger (the [state animal](#)). Supporting the shield are a sailor and a miner (the two most important industries of the state at the time it was founded).

On the shield itself are displayed:

- A **plough** to represent the farmers and agriculture of Wisconsin.
- A **pick and shovel** as a symbol of the early lead mining industry - galena ore (lead sulfide) is the [state mineral](#) of Wisconsin.
The mining of lead ore was the principal occupation of the settlers of early Wisconsin, concentrated in the southwest corner of the state (in what are now the counties of Iowa, LaFayette and Grant - in the 1820's and 1830's, the population of these 3 counties was greater than that of Milwaukee or the east coast of Wisconsin).

- An **arm and hammer** to represent Wisconsin's artisans and laborers.

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- An **anchor** as a symbol for the sailing and shipping industry.

The western edge of Wisconsin is the Mississippi river (the chief shipping lane of mid-America during the early 1800's) and the upper part of Wisconsin is bounded by Lake Superior (source of the shipping trade for eastern Wisconsin).

The center of the shield is the United States shield with the motto *E Pluribus Unum*. Below the shield are a cornucopia (a symbol for the plenty of the state), bars of lead to represent Wisconsin's mineral wealth, and 13 stars which symbolize the thirteen original states. The coat of arms also appears on both sides of the Wisconsin [state flag](#).

Sources:

http://www.netstate.com/states/symb/flags/wi_flag.htm

<http://www.statesymbolsusa.org/Wisconsin/stateSEAL.html>