

FLAG DESIGN TIPS & TEMPLATES

Size

The general rule of thumb when designing a traditional rectangular or curved rectangular flag is to make the pole sleeve half the length of the pole, and the width of the flag 1.5 times the sleeve. For example:

- 5.5' pole = 33" x 49"
- 6' pole = 36" x 54"
- 7' pole = 42" x 63"

There can be variances on an inch on the pole sleeve and two to four inches on the width of the flag, depending on the preference of the designer or the design effect desired.

Swing and oversized flags are available in any imaginable size. The most widely used dimension for impact swing or double flags is 44" x 70", which would be used on a 4' pole.

Color

The use of color is the most important element when designing your flag. When choosing colors, you determine what type of mood or feeling do you want to project. The choice of colors and different combinations of color will bring your vision to life.

Elements to consider when choosing colors:

- **Guard Uniforms:** Do you wish to match the colors of the guard uniform, creating a fuller effect on the field? Or do you wish the flag to stand on its own as a separate color palette, creating a sense of visual diversity?
- **Band Uniforms:** Do you wish to blend in with the uniform to create the illusion of a mass effect? Or do you want to intentionally stand out from the band to create a separation of the elements?
- **Mood of Music:** Is the music soft, pretty, loud, energetic, angry, industrial, bright or some other easily identifiable style? The trick is to find the color that will showcase the sound and style of the music.

Pattern

There are some limits to the design that can be sewn into a flag. When coming up with a pattern, ask yourself if more colors and pieces are better than just a few, and vice versa. Generally speaking, if you have a costume that is plain and perhaps monochromatic in style, a flag with more patterning and color may be more effective than a flag with a simplistic pattern and few colors. The opposite may be true if you have an elaborate costume; in this case, a flag with more basic construction would help create a less cluttered look. When coming up with a pattern, keep these general rules of design in mind:

- Intricate patterning or small blocks of color near the sleeve may easily get lost if it doesn't extend into the flag.
- There is typically some fold over at the top right edge of the flag, and it is a good idea in general to keep important elements of the design out of that corner. It is also advisable to avoid having seams at that part of the flag.
- Floating objects in the center of the flag are hard to make unison when spinning
- When designing theme flags, use just a piece of an object (i.e. clocks, animals, airplanes, etc.). One small element blown up works better than the whole object when viewed from a distance.

Templates

Shown below are some commonly-used flag shapes. These templates are drawn to scale, so we highly recommend using these drawings when designing your own custom flag. If you see a different flag shape in our catalog that you would prefer to use, please let us know and we can get that scaled flag shape to you.

If you have questions during the design process, please don't hesitate to call Alan Spaeth, our Guard Products Manager and in-house designer, at **1-800-323-5201**. Once you have your design all drawn up, you can e-mail it to guard@mccormicksnet.com or fax it to **1-800-324-3884**.

Construction time for a custom sewn flag during the off-peak period of May–mid July and October–December is generally between 2 and four weeks. Peak times in late July–September and January–February can run as much as 8 weeks.

Fabric, intricacies of the design, number of pieces, curved pieces and circular designs all have an impact on the price of a custom sewn flag. Long diagonal and curved pieces take much more fabric, creating lots of waste. In order to save money, you could consider using a square of fabric in each color so that the excess fabric can be used elsewhere in the flag. Custom patterned flags can run anywhere from \$25–\$80 depending on pattern and fabric.



