

HOW TO CREATE
A MINIMALISTIC
FLAG FOR YOUR
FANTASY/SCI-FI NATION,
PLANET, COMPANY, ETC.

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INTRODUCTION:

GREETINGS, Fantasy and Sci-Fi fanatics and lovers everywhere! Are you an aspiring author, artist, or designer that has just finished creating an imaginary world of your very own, but have no idea of how to visually represent the values and ideals of the nations, governments, corporations, or other entities or organizations found within that next story or idea of yours? Do you struggle with building up a credible and believable antagonist that spearheads a much larger collective, united under a single cause? Do you aspire seeing one day your medieval lands or your interstellar alliances brought to life in the “big screen” or in the minds of your readers? If so, this step-by-step guide will show you how you can effortlessly (and efficiently) create a fantastic logo or flag that can represent your chosen government, company, or otherwise significant organization in your stories and works. Just as we now recognize the iconic Starfleet Command insignia from the *Star Trek* franchise, or the crests from the houses found in everyone’s favorite popular fantasy TV and book series *Game of Thrones*, I will show you how you can create a symbol that is just as recognizable and relatable to the ideas you are trying to represent.

For this guide, you’ll need the following digital materials:

- Adobe Illustrator downloaded into your computer.
- A printer connected to your computer.

And so, without further ado, let us begin.

STEP 1: KNOW THE 5 RULES OF FLAG DESIGN

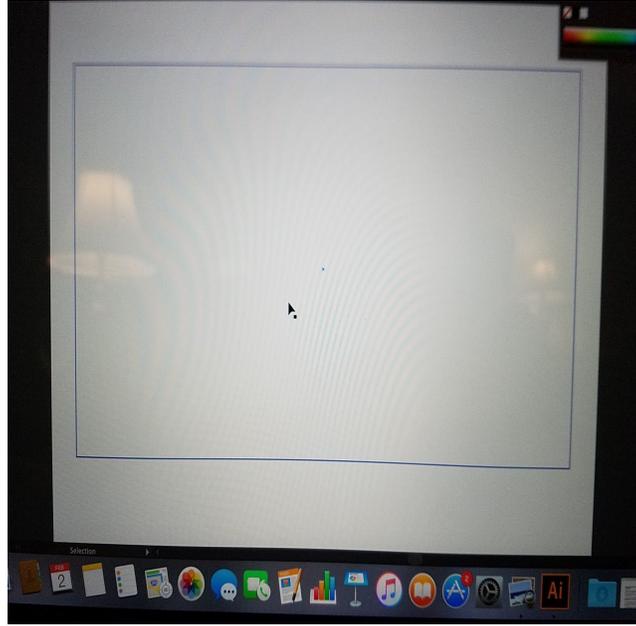
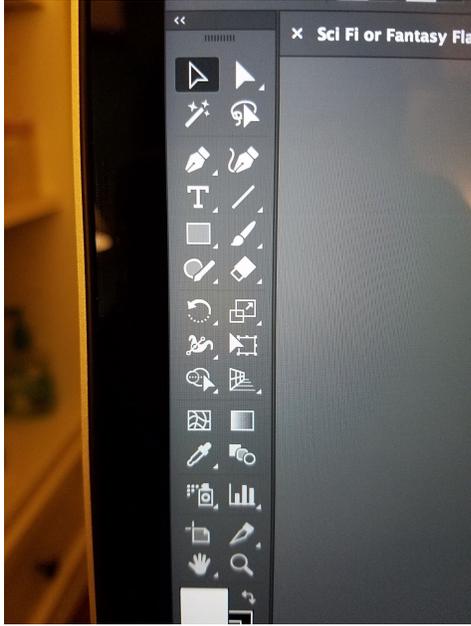
Before you can even begin designing your awesome sci-fi or fantasy flag, you're going to have to know and generally want to follow the 5 rules of flag design established by various national and international vexillological associations so that your flag is simple, but at the same time meaningful, memorable, and communicative in regards to the ideals it conveys.

1. Keep it simple (so simple that a child could draw it).
2. Use meaningful, and relevant symbolism (that conveys your government's, corporation's, or entity's ideals).
3. Only use two to three basic colors (some flags break this rule and manage to look nice even with five, six, seven, or even eight colors).
4. No text nor seals (the flag or symbol should explain itself-- text and any additional seals make the your flag seem too crowded and unfocused).
5. Be distinct, related, and/or UNIQUE-- don't copy other flags (besides being unoriginal, in some cases, flags that rip off other flags in terms of design may be liable to copyright law. As designers and artists, copyright should be something important to keep in mind).

Also, though this is technically a 6th rule, you'll want to make sure your flag can be seen when smaller (shrink it down to simulate it being seen at a distance) or in black and white.

STEP 2: ON ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR, CREATE A RECTANGLE ON YOUR LANDSCAPE LETTER FORMAT DOCUMENT

- Open Adobe Illustrator and create a new document in landscape letter format/orientation (11 x 8.5 as opposed to 8.5 x 11 inches).
- Go over to the **Rectangle Tool** and click on it. Hold and drag your cursor across your landscape format document until it forms a rectangle, preferably of a height of 6 inches and width of 10 inches. Below is what you should get when you are done, as well as visuals.



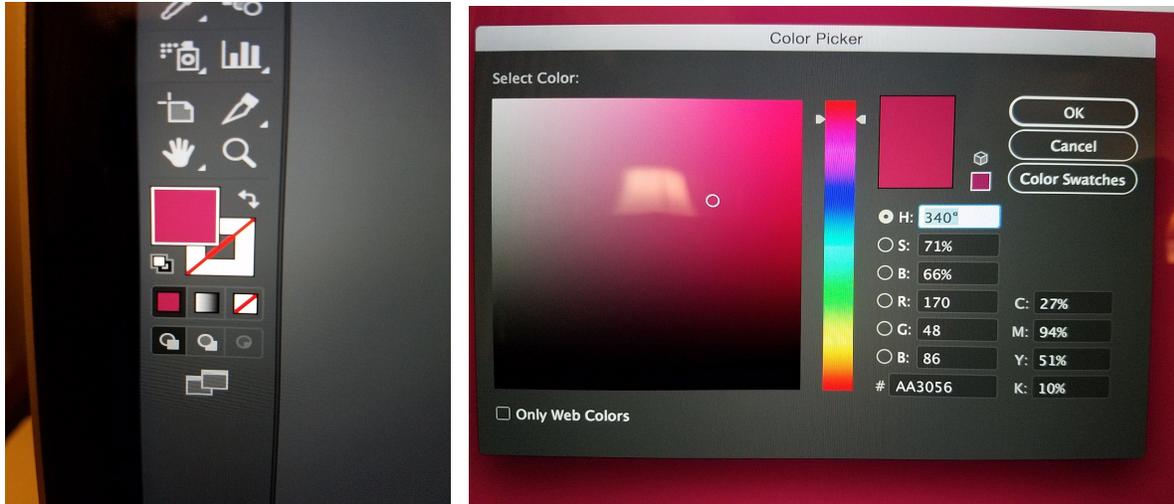
STEP 3: COLOR YOUR FLAG USING ILLUSTRATOR'S SWATCHES, COLOR PICKER AND FILL FEATURE!

To actually color your flag:

- Go to the lower left of the tool menu and drag your cursor over to the two squares that say Fill and Stroke. You'll want to have selected your rectangle by clicking on it by this point. Double click on the Fill square to access the **Color Picker** and choose a color as well as a shade for the color of your flag. Press OK. Regarding stroke, you'll want to choose "None" to make your flag look more polished.

Alternatively, if the above method seems to complicated and hassling, you can always go to the top right corner of the Illustrator window, click "Color" (the painter's palette icon), and drag your color pen cursor over a shade of color you like, then click on that shade to instantly change the color of your selected rectangle.

Below there are pictures for reference (I decided to color my "flag" a dark pinkish red):



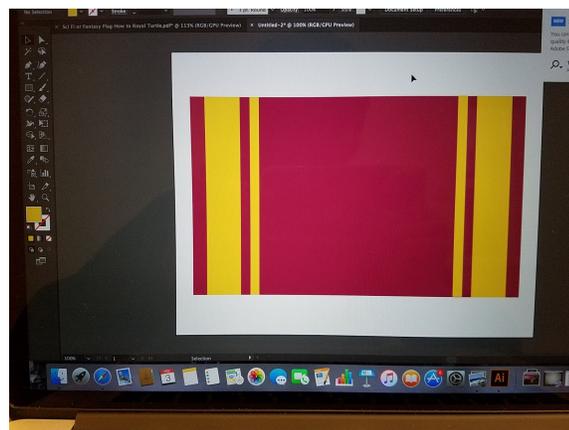
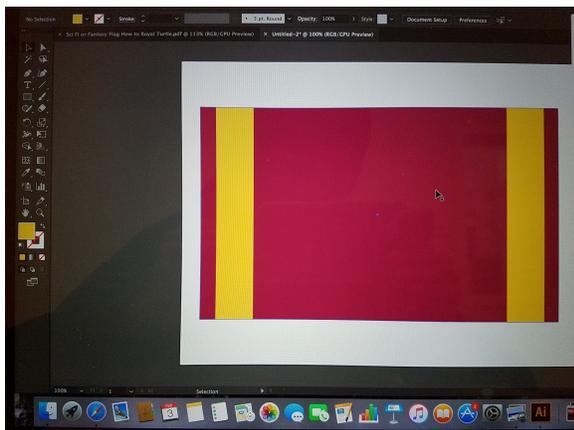
STEP 4: ADD MORE COLORS (VERTICALLY, HORIZONTALLY, OR DIAGONALLY), AND PRODUCE BASIC SHAPES

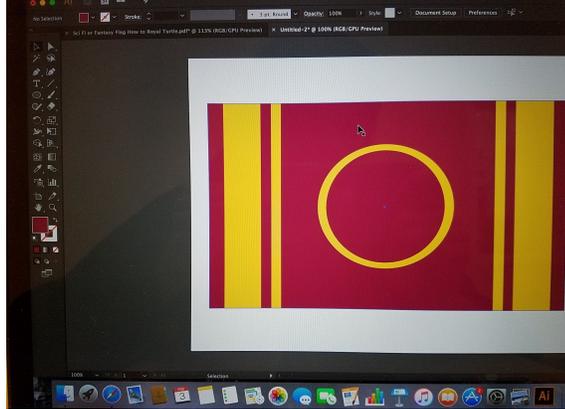
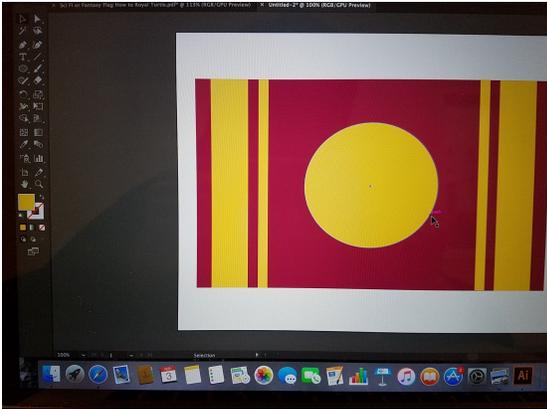
Begin adding more basic colors and shapes that represent near universal concepts to your already colored flag. Be original but at the same time simple with your approach-- depending on the world you've built you'll want to use animals or objects of nature like trees (if you're in a fantasy medieval land), or circles, stars, crescents, and related symbols to represent some sort of interstellar organization or body in your science fiction universe. (Stars, in this case, may represent provinces, sovereign planets, or military victories). It's only fitting considering the contexts and meanings certain shapes hold due to how we as humans, throughout history, have perceived them culturally, religiously, and even philosophically.

To add more colors to your flag:

- Repeat Step 3 but this time create smaller rectangles first to form vertical, horizontal, or diagonal stripes, or use the **Pen Tool** in the upper left of the tool menu to trace your own unique shapes.
- You can also absolutely overlap some shapes over other shapes and create some really unique designs by going to **Object** at the menu of your Illustrator window, scrolling down to **Arrange**, then moving your cursor over the arrow next to the option to send your chosen shape (or “object”) forwards or backwards within the same layer.

If you need to find more shapes to use besides rectangles and squares, simply go to the **Rectangle Tool**, look for the tiny arrow in the bottom right of the icon and click and hold on it to reveal a short list of other shapes you can use and manipulate onto your flag, including stars and circles.





STEP 5: PRINT OUT AND GIVE A NAME TO YOUR FLAG!

You're done creating your amazing flag on Adobe Illustrator. Now simply print it after saving it as a pdf or a jpg file. Make sure the resolution is set to high that way the flag doesn't come out pixelated.

- Go to "File", then "Print" to print out your flag. You are now officially done creating your flag for your sci-fi or fantasy universe! Congrats!
- If you want, before your flag prints, you can name your flag as if it were pertinent towards an imaginary empire, confederacy, corporation, or some other form of political or economic entity using Illustrator's **Type Tool**. I gave my flag the name:

"TETRADOS EMPIRE OF THE SPEARHEAD NEBULA"



TETRADOS EMPIRE OF THE SPEARHEAD NEBULA

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