

A black and white photograph of a male deer with large antlers standing in a forest. The deer is positioned in the center-right of the frame, facing slightly left but looking towards the camera. It has a thick coat and large, multi-tined antlers. To its left is a large, textured tree trunk. The background is a dense forest with various trees and foliage. The ground is covered with dry grass and pine needles. The text "STATE SYMBOLS" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image.

STATE SYMBOLS



GREAT SEAL

The State Seal has been in use since Mississippi became a state in 1817. It is described in the Laws of the State of Mississippi, First Session, First General Assembly, 1817-1818: “The seal of this state, the inscription of which shall be ‘the great seal of the state of Mississippi’ around the margin, and in the center an eagle, with the olive branch and quiver of arrows in his claws.”

to be in gold; below the shield two (2) branches of the cotton stalk, saltier wise, and a scroll below extending upward and on each side three-fourths (3/4) of the length of the shield; upon the scroll, which is to be red, the motto to be printed in gold letters upon white spaces, the motto to be “Virtute et Armis”; this being the same Coat-of-Arms adopted by the Legislature in Chapter 37, Laws of the Extraordinary Session of 1894.”

This design was declared the official state Coat-of-Arms by the 1894 Legislature, but the original law was not brought forward in the 1906 revision of the Mississippi Code. The Mississippi Supreme Court ruled in May 2000 that Mississippi did not have an official Coat-of-Arms. A 17-member commission appointed by Governor Ronnie Musgrove to study the issue

STATE SYMBOLS



STATE COAT-OF-ARMS

On February 7, 2001, Governor Ronnie Musgrove signed into law Senate Bill No. 2285 designating the above design as the official Mississippi Coat of Arms:

“... a shield, blue in color, with an eagle upon it with extended pinions, holding in the right talon a palm branch and bundle of arrows in the left, with the word “Mississippi” above the eagle; the lettering on the shield and the eagle

recommended to the Legislature the re-adoption of the Coat-of-Arms.



STATE FLAG

By majority vote on April 17, 2001, the citizens of Mississippi adopted the following as Section 3-3-16 of the Mississippi Code:

“The official flag of the State of Mississippi shall have the following design: with width two-thirds (2/3) of its length; with the union (canton) to

be square, in width two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the width of the flag; the ground of the union to be red and a broad blue saltire thereon, bordered with white and emblazoned with thirteen (13) mullets or five-pointed stars, corresponding with the number of the original States of the Union; the field to be divided into three (3) bars of equal width, the upper one blue, the center one white, and the lower one, extending the whole length of the flag, red (the national colors); this being the flag adopted by the Mississippi Legislature in the 1894 Special Session.”

Although, the 1894 Mississippi Legislature had adopted the flag described above, during the 1906 revision of the Mississippi State Code, the law designating an official state flag was not brought forward. On May 4, 2000, the Mississippi Supreme Court ruled that Mississippi did not have an official state flag. The election to select the official state flag was the recommendation of a 17-member commission appointed to study the issue by Governor Ronnie Musgrove. The 2001 Legislature passed a law setting the date for the special election. Voters chose between two designs. For more information about the Official State Flag Special Election, see page 656.



STATE FLOWER AND TREE

An election was held in November 1900 to select a State Flower. Votes were submitted by

23,278 school children. The magnolia received 12,745 votes, the cotton blossom 4,171, and the cape jasmine 2,484. A few votes were for other flowers. The magnolia was officially designated as the State Flower by the 1952 Legislature. In 1935, the Director of Forestry started a movement to select a State Tree for Mississippi. The tree was to be nominated and elected by school children of the State. Four nominations were made—the magnolia, oak, pine, and dogwood. The magnolia received the majority. On April 1, 1938, the Mississippi Legislature officially designated the magnolia as the State Tree. Chapter 365, Laws of Mississippi 1938.



STATE BIRD

Found in all sections of Mississippi, the cheerful Mockingbird was selected as the official State Bird by the Women’s Federated Clubs and by the State Legislature in 1944.

STATE MOTTO

The state motto of Mississippi, *Virtute et Armis*, meaning “by valor and arms,” was suggested by the Honorable James Rhea Preston, a native of Virginia, who was at the time Superintendent of Education in the State of Mississippi.

STATE STONE

A Senate Concurrent Resolution designating petrified wood as the State Stone was adopted May 14, 1976.

STATE BEVERAGE

An act to designate milk as the State Beverage was adopted by the Mississippi Legislature during the 1984 Regular Session. Chapter 394, General Laws of Mississippi 1984.

STATE FOSSIL

A Senate concurrent resolution designating the pre-historic whale as the State Fossil was adopted March 26, 1981.

STATE LAND MAMMALS

The white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) was designated the State Land Mammal of Mississippi by Senate Bill No. 2324, General Laws of Mississippi of 1974. The Red Fox was also named State Land Mammal in the 1997 Legislative Session.

STATE WATERFOWL

The wood duck (*Aix sponsa*) was designated the State Waterfowl of Mississippi, Chapter 551, General Laws of Mississippi of 1974.

STATE FISH

The largemouth or black bass (*Micropterus salmoides*) was designated the State Fish of Mississippi, Chapter 551, General Laws of Mississippi of 1974.

STATE INSECT

The honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) was designated the State Insect of Mississippi, Chapter 317, General Laws of Mississippi of 1980.

STATE SHELL

An act designating the oyster shell (*Crassostrea virginica*) as the State Shell was approved April 12, 1974, Chapter 551, General Laws of Mississippi of 1974.

STATE WATER MAMMAL

An act designating the bottlenosed dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), commonly called the porpoise, as the State Water Mammal was approved April 12, 1974, Chapter 551, General Laws of Mississippi of 1974.

STATE BUTTERFLY

An act designating the spicebush swallowtail (*Pterourus troilus*) as the State Butterfly of Mississippi was approved in 1991. Chapter 315, General Laws of Mississippi of 1991.

STATE WILDFLOWER

The Coreopsis was designated the State Wildflower in 1991, Chapter 332 of the General Laws of Mississippi.

STATE DANCE

The square dance was adopted as the American folk dance of Mississippi, Chapter 303 of the General Laws of Mississippi in 1995.

STATE LANGUAGE

English was designated the official language of the state, Chapter 439 of the General Laws of Mississippi in 1987.

STATE GRAND OPERA HOUSE

The Grand Opera House of Meridian was designated the State Grand Opera House, Chapter 313 of the General Laws of Mississippi of 1993.

STATE SONG

“Go, Mississippi” words and music by Houston Davis.

The Jackson Board of Realtors undertook the task of finding a satisfactory song to represent the State of Mississippi. They selected through an advisory committee a song entitled, “Go, Mississippi” by Houston Davis. On May 17, 1962, the Mississippi Legislature officially designated “Go, Mississippi” as the official song of the State of Mississippi. General Laws of Mississippi of 1962, Chapter 654.

GO, MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi Official State Song—Adopted by Legislature 1962

Words and Music by
HOUSTON DAVIS

INTRO.

Brightly



VERSE



CHORUS



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Verse 1

States may sing their songs of praise,
With waving flags and hip-hoo-rays,
Let cymbals crash and let bells ring
'Cause here's one song I'm proud to sing.

Chorus

Go, Mississippi, keep rolling along,
Go, Mississippi, you cannot go wrong,
Go, Mississippi, we're singing your song
M-I-S-S-I-S-S-I-P-P-I

Go, MIS - SIS - SIP - PI, you can - not go wrong, —
Go, MIS - SIS - SIP - PI, and this is a fact, —
Go, MIS - SIS - SIP - PI, ev - 'ry - things fine —

Go, MIS - SIS - SIP - PI, we're sing - ing your song —
Go, MIS - SIS - SIP - PI, you'll nev - er look back —
Go, MIS - SIS - SIP - PI, It's your state and mine —

M - I - S - S - I - P - P - I
M - I - S - S - I - P - P - I
M - I - S - S - I - P - P - I

Verse 2

Go, Mississippi, you're on the right track,
Go, Mississippi, and this is a fact,
Go, Mississippi, you'll never look back
M-I-S-S-I-S-S-I-P-P-I

Verse 3

Go, Mississippi, straight down the line,
Go, Mississippi, ev'rything's fine,
Go, Mississippi, It's your state and mine
M-I-S-S-I-S-S-I-P-P-I

Verse 4

Go, Mississippi, continue to roll,
Go, Mississippi, the top is the goal.
Go, Mississippi, you'll have and you'll hold
M-I-S-S-I-S-S-I-P-P-I

Verse 5

Go, Mississippi, get up and go,
Go, Mississippi, let the world know
That our Mississippi is leading the show
M-I-S-S-I-S-S-I-P-P-I

Flag Etiquette

THE UNITED STATES FLAG

The following flag laws and regulations are contained in the Public Law as amended July 7, 1976, by the 94th Congress of the United States. They set forth the existing rules, customs, and etiquette pertaining to the display and use of the flag of the United States of America.

Section 1

The following codification of existing rules and customs pertaining to the display and use of the flag of the United States of America shall be and is hereby established for the use of such civilians or civilian groups or organizations as may not be required to conform with regulations promulgated by one or more executive departments of the Government of the United States.

The flag of the United States, for purposes of this chapter, shall be defined according to Title 4, United States Code, chapter 1, section 1 and section 2, and Executive Order 10834 issued pursuant thereto.

Section 2

(a) It is the universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaves in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed twenty-four hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.

(b) The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered cautiously.

(c) The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is inclement, except when an all weather flag is displayed.

(d) The flag should be displayed on all days, especially on New Year's Day, January 1;

Inauguration Day, January 20; Lincoln's Birthday, February 12; Washington's Birthday, third Monday in February; Easter Sunday (variable); Mother's Day, second Sunday in May; Armed Forces Day, third Saturday in May; Memorial Day (half-staff until noon), the last Monday in May; Flag Day, June 14; Independence Day, July 4; Labor Day, first Monday in September; Constitution Day, September 17; Columbus Day, second Monday in October; Navy Day, October 27; Veterans Day, November 11; Thanksgiving Day, fourth Thursday in November; Christmas Day, December 25; and such other days as may be proclaimed by the President of the United States; the birthdays of States (date of admission); and on State holidays.

(e) The flag should be displayed daily, on or near the main administration building of every public institution.

(f) The flag should be displayed in or near every polling place on election days.

(g) The flag should be displayed during school days in or near every schoolhouse.

Section 3

That the flag, when carried in a procession with another flag or flags, should be either on the marching right; that is, the flag's own right, or, if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.

(a) The flag should not be displayed on a float in a parade except from a staff, or as provided in subsection (i).

(b) The flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides or back of a vehicle or of a railroad train or boat. When the flag is displayed on a motor car, the staff shall be fixed firmly to the chassis or clamped to the right fender.

(c) No other flag or pennant should be placed above or, if on the same level, to the right of the flag of the United States of America, except during church services conducted by naval chaplains at sea, when the church pennant may be flown above the flag during church services for the personnel of the Navy.

(d) The flag of the United States of America, when it is displayed with another flag against a wall from crossed staffs, should be on the right, the flag's own right, and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.

(e) The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of States or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.

(f) When flags of States, cities or localities, or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the flag of the United States, the latter should always be at the peak. When the flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the flag of the United States should be hoisted first and lowered last. No such flag or pennant may be placed above the flag of the United States or to the United States flag's right.

(g) When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace.

(h) When the flag of the United States is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from a windowsill, balcony, or front of a building, the union of the flag should be placed at the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff. When the flag is suspended over a sidewalk from a rope extending from a house to a pole at the edge

of the sidewalk, the flag should be hoisted out, union first, from the building.

(i) When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window, the flag should be displayed in the same way, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.

(j) When the flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.

(k) When used on a speaker's platform, the flag, if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker. When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, the flag of the United States of America should hold the position of superior prominence, in advance of the audience, and in the position of honor at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he faces the audience. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the clergyman or speaker or to the right of the audience.

(l) The flag should form a distinctive feature of the ceremony of unveiling a statue or monument, but it should never be used as the covering for the statue or monument.

(m) The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. On Memorial Day the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff. By order of the President, the flag shall be flown at half-staff upon the death of principal figures of the United States Government and the Governor of a State, territory or possession, as

a mark of respect to their memory. In the event of the death of other officials or foreign dignitaries, the flag is to be displayed at half-staff according to presidential instructions or orders, or in accordance with recognized customs or practices not inconsistent with the law. In the event of the death of a present or former official of the government of any State, territory or possession of the United States, the Governor of that State, territory or possession may proclaim that the National flag shall be flown at half-staff. The flag shall be flown at half-staff thirty days from the death of the President or a former President; ten days from the death of a Vice President, the Chief Justice or a retired Chief Justice of the United States, or the Speaker of the House of Representatives: from the day of death until interment of an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, a Secretary of an executive or military department, a former Vice President, or the Governor of a State, territory or possession; and on the day of death and the following day for a Member of Congress. As used in this subsection:

1. the term "half-staff" means the position of the flag when it is one half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff;
2. the term "executive or military department" means any agency listed under sections 101 and 102 of Title 5, United States Code; and,
3. the term "Member of Congress" means a Senator, a Representative, a Delegate, or the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico.

(n) When the flag is used to cover a casket, it should be so placed that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The flag should not be lowered in the grave or allowed to touch the ground.

(o) When the flag is suspended across a corridor or lobby in a building with only one main entrance, it should be suspended vertically

with the union of the flag to the observer's left upon entering. If the building has more than one main entrance, the flag should be suspended vertically near the center of the corridor or lobby with the union to the north, when entrances are to the east and west, or to the east when entrances are to the north and south. If there are entrances in more than two directions, the union should be to the east.

Section 4

That no disrespect should be shown to the flag of the United States of America, the flag should not be dipped to any person or thing. Regimental colors, State flags, and organization or institutional flags are to be dipped as a mark of honor.

(a) The flag should never be displayed with the union down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.

(b) The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water or merchandise.

(c) The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.

(d) The flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding, or drapery. It should never be festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds, but always allowed to fall free. Bunting of blue, white and red, always arranged with the blue above, the white in the middle, and the red below, should be used for covering a speaker's desk, draping the front of the platform, and for decoration in general.

(e) The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used or stored in such manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.

(f) The flag should never be used as a covering for a ceiling.

(g) The flag should never have placed upon it, nor on any part of it, nor attached to it any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture or drawing of any nature.

(h) The flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying or delivering anything.

(i) The flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discard.

Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the flag is flown.

(j) No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen, and members of patriotic organizations. The flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing. Therefore, the lapel flag pin being a replica, should be worn on the left lapel near the heart.

(k) The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

Section 5

During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the flag or when the flag is passing in a parade or in review, all persons present except those in uniform should face the flag and stand at attention with the right hand over the heart. Those present in uniform should render the military salute. When not in uniform, men should remove the headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Aliens should stand at

attention. The salute to the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes.

Section 6

During rendition of the national anthem when the flag is displayed, all present except those in uniform shall stand at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. Men not in uniform should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should render the military salute at the first note of the anthem and retain this position until the last note. When the flag is not displayed, those present should face toward the music and act in the same manner they would if the flag were displayed there.

Section 7

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag:

“I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all,” should be rendered by standing at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. When not in uniform men should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute.

Section 8

Any rule or custom pertaining to the display of the flag of the United States of America, set forth herein, may be altered, modified or repealed, or additional rules with respect thereto may be prescribed, by the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, whenever he deems it to be appropriate or desirable; and, any such alteration or additional rule shall be set forth in a proclamation.

No person shall display the flag of the United Nations or any other national or international flag equal, above, or in a position of superior prominence or honor to, or in place of, the flag of the United States at any place within the United States or any Territory or possession thereof: Provided, That nothing in this section shall make unlawful the continuance of the practice heretofore followed of displaying the flag of the United Nations in a position of superior prominence or honor, and other national flags in positions of equal prominence or honor, with that of the flag of the United States at the headquarters of the United Nations.

THE MISSISSIPPI STATE FLAG

The state flag may be displayed from all public buildings from sunrise to sunset; however, the state flag may be displayed from all public

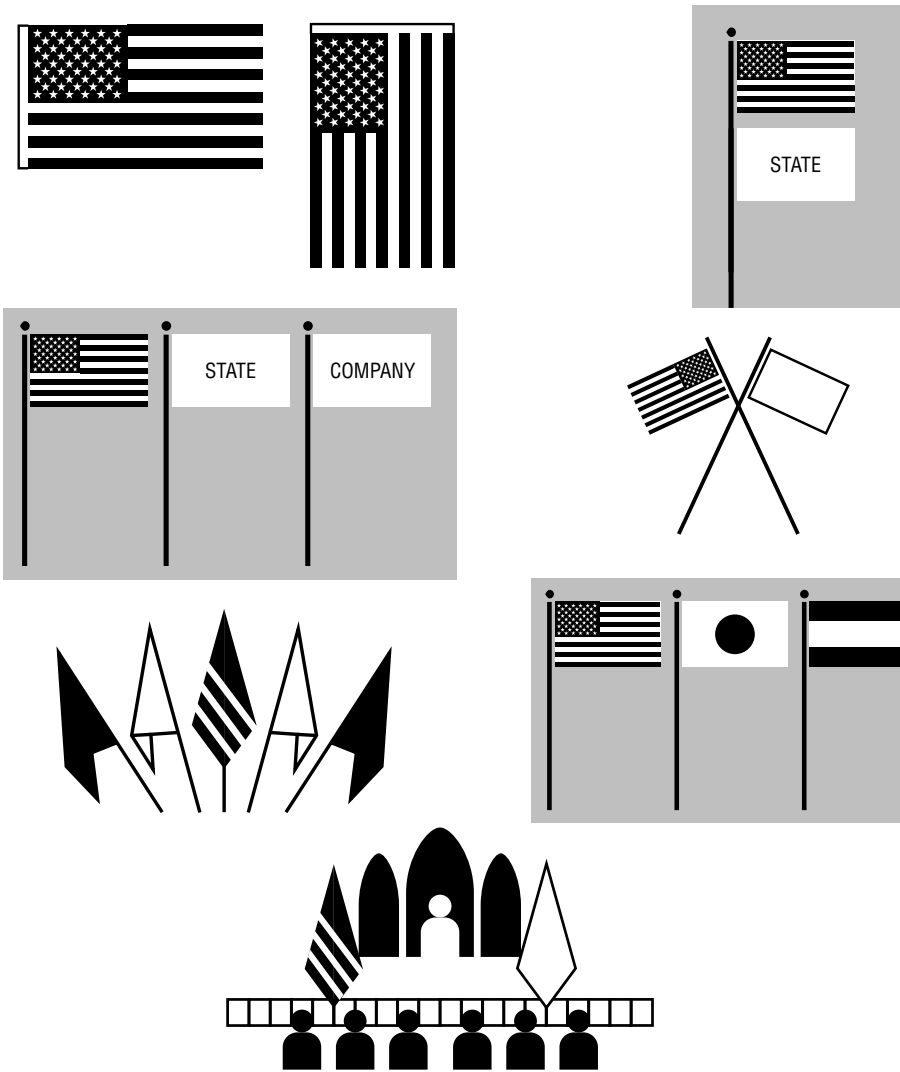
buildings twenty-four (24) hours a day if properly illuminated. The state flag should not be displayed when the weather is inclement, except when an all-weather flag is displayed. The state flag shall receive all of the respect and ceremonious etiquette given the American flag. Provided, however, nothing in this section shall be construed so as to affect the precedence given to the flag of the United States of America. Miss. Code Ann., § 3-3-15 (1972).

PLEDGE TO THE MISSISSIPPI FLAG

“I salute the flag of Mississippi and the sovereign state for which it stands with pride in her history and achievements and with confidence in her future under the guidance of Almighty God.”

Miss. Code Ann., § 37-13-7 (1972).

PROPER FLAG DISPLAY



Sources: www.niceflag.com, United States Code, Miss. Code Ann. (1972).