

## Nautical Flags and Their Meanings

Signal flags are used to communicate messages, at times because radio silence is required. Here are their names and meanings, both International and/or specific to the Navy, as well as meanings when used in a Sailing Regatta. There is also a signaling system called Semaphore which uses the position of the flags relative to a person to denote the letter.

### International Code Flags

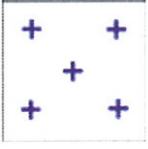


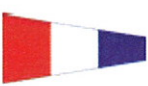







Flag	Name & Phonetic Pronunciation	Meaning
	<b>A</b> lfa AL-fah	I have a diver down; keep well clear at slow speed.
	<b>B</b> ravo BRAH-voh	I am taking in, discharging, or carrying dangerous cargo.
	<b>C</b> harlie CHAR-lee	"Yes" or "affirmative".  Change of Course (Sailing Regatta)
	<b>D</b> elta DELL-tah	I am maneuvering with difficulty; keep clear.
	<b>E</b> cho ECK-oh	I am directing my course to starboard.
	<b>F</b> oxtrot FOKS-trot	I am disabled; communicate with me. On aircraft carriers: Flight Operations underway
	<b>G</b> olf GOLF	I require a pilot.
	<b>H</b> otel hoh-TELL	I have a pilot on board.

	<b>I</b> ndia IN-dee-ah	I am directing my course to port. (International) Coming alongside. (Navy) Round the Ends Starting Rule (Sailing Regatta)
	<b>J</b> uliet JEW-lee-ett	I am on fire and have dangerous cargo; keep clear.
	<b>K</b> ilo KEY-loh	I wish to communicate with you.
	<b>L</b> ima LEE-mah	You should stop your vessel immediately. Come Within Hail or Follow Me (Sailing Regatta)
	<b>M</b> ike MIKE	My vessel is stopped; making no way. Mark Missing (Sailing Regatta)
	<b>N</b> ovember no-VEM-bur	No or negative. Abandonment and Re-sail (Sailing Regatta)
	<b>O</b> scar OSS-kur	Man overboard.
	<b>P</b> apa pah-PAH	All personnel return to ship; proceeding to sea (Inport).
	<b>Q</b> uebec kay-BECK	Ship meets health regs; request clearance into port. (International) Boat recall; all boats return to ship. (Navy)
	<b>R</b> omeo ROH-me-oh	None. (International) Preparing to replenish (At sea). Ready duty ship (In port). (Navy)

	<b>Sierra</b> see-AIR-ah	Moving astern. (International) Conducting flag hoist drill. (Navy) Shorten Course (Sailing Regatta)
	<b>Tango</b> TANG-go	Keep clear; engaged in trawling. (International) Do not pass ahead of me. (Navy)
	<b>Uniform</b> YOU-nee-form	You are running into danger.
	<b>Victor</b> VIK-tah	I require assistance.
	<b>Whiskey</b> WISS-kee	I require medical assistance.
	<b>Xray</b> ECKS-ray	Stop carrying out your intentions and watch for my signals. Individual Recall (Sailing Regatta)
	<b>Yankee</b> YANG-kee	I am dragging anchor. (International) Ship has visual communications duty. (Navy) Wear Life Jackets (Sailing Regatta)
	<b>Zulu</b> ZOO-loo	I require a tug. 20% Scoring Penalty (Sailing Regatta)
	Code/Answer Code or Answer	Message is understood. Also, numeric decimal point. (International) Flag that follows is from the International Code of Signals. (Navy) Postponement (Sailing Regatta)
	First substitute (First Repeater) First sub	Substitute for the first flag in this hoist. (International) Also "repeats" the first flag or series of flags in this hoist Absence of flag officer or unit commander (In port). (Navy) General Recall (Sailing Regatta)



	Second substitute Second sub	Substitute for the second flag in this hoist. (International) Absence of chief of staff (In port). (Navy)
	Third substitute Third sub	Substitute for the third flag in this hoist. (International) Absence of commanding officer (In port). (Navy)
	One WUN	None. (International) Numeral one. (Navy)
	Two TOO	None. (International) Numeral two. (Navy)
	Three TREE	None. (International) Numeral three. (Navy)
	Four FOW-er	None. (International) Numeral four. (Navy)
	Five FIFE	None. (International) Numeral five. (Navy)
	Six SICKS	None. (International) Numeral six. (Navy)
	Seven SEV-en	None. (International) Numeral seven. (Navy)
	Eight ATE	None. (International) Numeral eight. (Navy)
	Nine NIN-er	None. (International) Numeral nine. (Navy)

	Zero ZEE-roh	None. (International) Numeral zero. (Navy)
	Pennant one PEN-ant WUN	Numeral one. (International) Pennant one. (Navy)
	Pennant two PEN-ant TOO	Numeral two. (International) Pennant two. (Navy)
	Pennant three PEN-ant TREE	Numeral three. (International) Pennant three. (Navy)
	Pennant four PEN-ant FOW-er	Numeral four. (International) Pennant four. (Navy) Postponement (Sailing Regatta)
	Pennant five PEN-ant FIFE	Numeral five. (International) Pennant five. (Navy)
	Pennant six PEN-ant SICKS	Numeral six. (International) Pennant six. (Navy)
	Pennant seven PEN-ant SEV-en	Numeral seven. (International) Pennant seven. (Navy)
	Pennant eight PEN-ant ATE	Numeral eight (International) Pennant eight. (Navy)
	Pennant Nine PEN-ant NIN-er	Numeral nine (International) Pennant nine. (Navy)
	Pennant zero PEN-ant ZEE-roh	Numeral zero (International) Pennant zero. (Navy)

## Race Committee Flags

Flag/Shape	Name	Sounds	Meaning
	X	1 when raised	Individual Recall
	First Substitute	2 when raised 1 when lowered	General Recall
	AP	2 when raised 1 when lowered	Postponement
	I	None when raised 1 when lowered	Round the Ends Starting Rule
	C	Repetitive	Change of Course
	L	1 when raised	Come Within Hail or Follow Me
	M	Repetitive	Mark Missing
	N	3 when raised 1 when lowered	Abandonment and Resail
	S	2 when raised	Shorten Course
	Y	1 when raised	Wear Life Jacket

	N over H	3 when raised	Abandonment Return to Shore
	Z	1 when lowered	20% Scoring Penalty
	Black	1 when lowered	Hard Start: Disqualification
Class Flag Raised	Warning	1	5 minutes to start
   	Preparatory (or I or Z or Black Flag) Raised	1	4 minutes to start
	Preparatory (or I or Z or Black Flag) Lowered	1	1 minute to start
Class Flag Lowered	Start	1	Start

## Miscellaneous Flags

 <p>Small Craft Warning Up to 38 mph winds</p>	 <p>Gale Warning 39-54 mph winds</p>	 <p>Storm Warning 55-73 mph winds</p>	 <p>Hurricane Warning 74+ mph winds</p>
 <p>USCG Auxiliary</p>	 <p>US Power Squadron</p>	 <p>Race Committee</p>	 <p><u>Semaphore Flag Signalling System</u></p>
<p><a href="#">World Flag Database</a></p>	<p><a href="#">C.I.A. - Flags of the World</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Flags of All Countries</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Nautical Flag Translator</a></p>