

The Union Jack

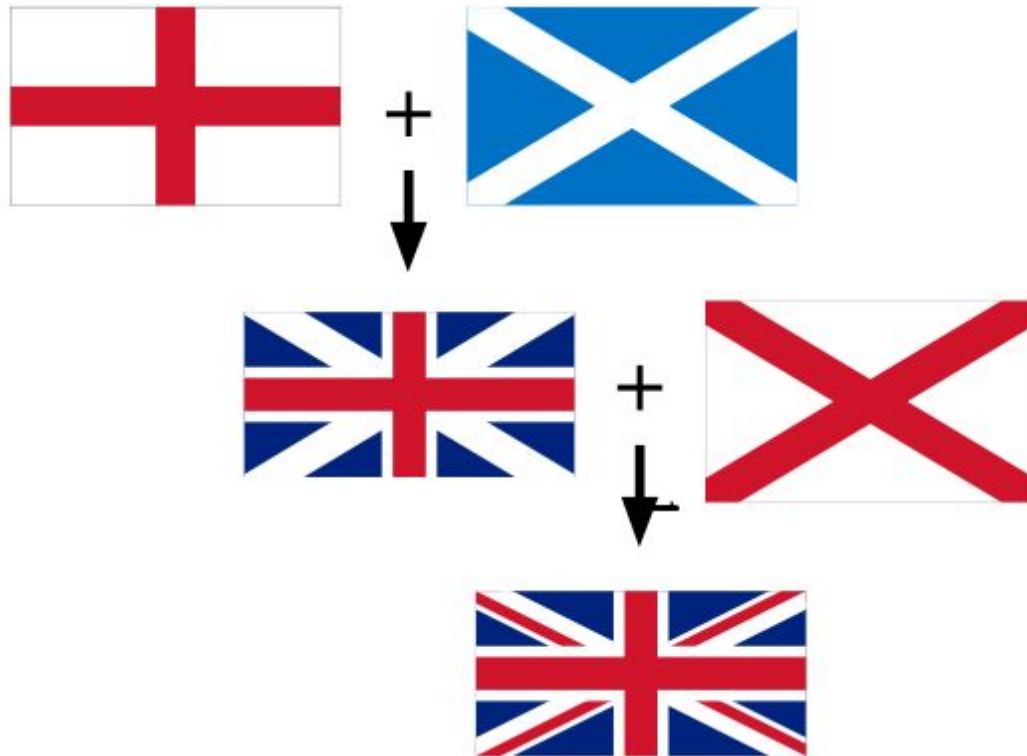
The history of British flag.



- The Union Flag, popularly known as the *Union Jack, is the national flag of the United Kingdom. It is the British flag.
- It is called the Union Flag because it symbolises the administrative union of the countries of the United Kingdom. It is made up of the individual Flags of three of the Kingdom's countries all united under one Sovereign - the countries of 'England, of 'Scotland' and of 'Northern Ireland' (since 1921 only Northern Ireland has been part of the United Kingdom). As Wales was not a Kingdom but a Principality it could not be included on the flag.

- In 1606, the first Union Jack flag was created by merging the English flag with the Scottish flag. Then, in 1801, the addition of Ireland to the United Kingdom added the Irish flag to the flag. An image of the merger of the flags can be found online.

How the flag was created?



- The term "Union Jack" is attributed to various origins. The "union" is thought to come from the union of the three flags into one and "jack" has for many centuries referred to a small flag flown from a boat or ship. The Union Jack is most properly called the Union Flag, but that term is not as commonly used as Union Jack.
- Today, Union Jack flag is the flag of the independent country that has absorbed England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland - the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Union Jack is also incorporated into the flags of four independent countries of the British Commonwealth - Australia, Fiji, Tuvalu, and New Zealand.

The flag of Australia



The flag of New Zealand



- The Union Flag can be flown by any individual or organisation in Great Britain on any day of their choice. Legal regulations restrict the use of the Union Flag on Government buildings in Northern Ireland.
- The Union Jack is used to represent the UK, but in case when English, Scottish or Northern Irish sport teams compete the Union Jack is separated.