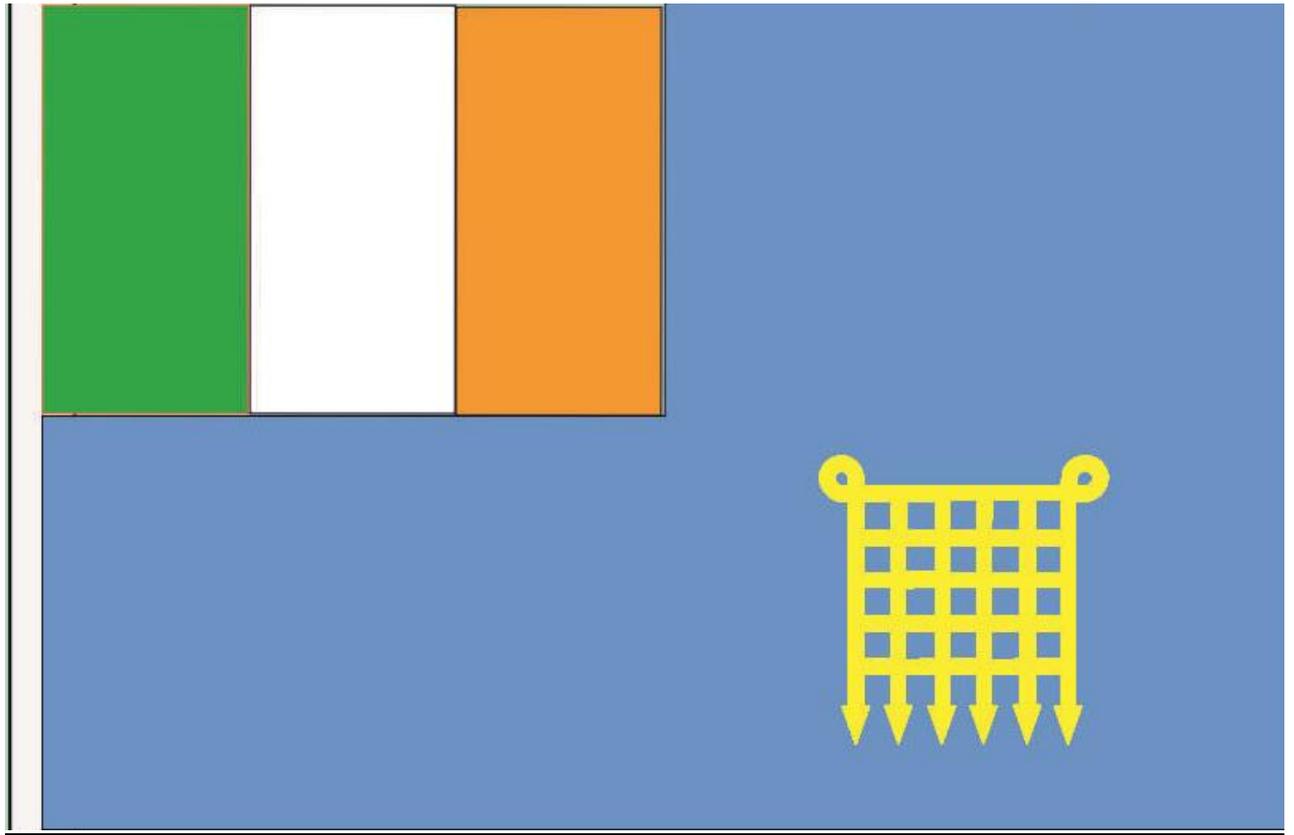


Flag Etiquette







Flag Etiquette, Kinsale Yacht Club.

Flag etiquette is a combination of law (What you must do) and maritime tradition (Expectations of behaviour within the seafaring community).

Being ill informed of your obligations could lead you to cause insult at home or abroad by giving a signal you do not intend to give, or could lead you to a fine for breaking the law.

For many who go to sea, flag etiquette and flag rules are an essential part of the overall sailing process. Only with the right flag, correctly positioned, can you be sure that you are giving the correct message and that any signal you are giving is clear and correct.

The Mercantile Marine Act – relevant part.

PART II. Irish Ships, national Colours and Character.	
Irish ships.	<p>9.—The following ships shall be known as Irish ships and shall, subject to subsection (3) of section 18 of this Act, be entitled to wear the proper national colours and assume national character—</p> <p>(a) State-owned ships;</p> <p>(b) ships which are wholly owned by persons being citizens of Ireland (hereinafter referred to as Irish citizens) or Irish bodies corporate and are not registered under the law of another country;</p> <p>(c) other ships registered or deemed to be registered under this Act.</p>
National colours for Irish ships.	<p>10.—(1) The proper national colours to be worn by Irish ships shall be the national flag or that flag with a white border except that—</p> <p>(a) in the case of State-owned ships for which a special flag is prescribed under subsection (2) of this section, the proper national colours shall be the flag so prescribed, and</p> <p>(b) in the case of ships in respect of which a special flag is authorised by flag warrant under subsection (3) of this section, the proper national colours shall be the flag so authorised.</p> <p>(2) The Minister may prescribe a flag to be worn in lieu of the national flag by State-owned ships or by specified classes of such ships.</p> <p>(3) The Minister may, by flag warrant issued to anybody of persons, authorise the members of the body to use a flag in lieu of the national flag on specified Irish ships, and may by any such warrant impose conditions and restrictions on the exercise of the authority thereby conferred and may revoke any such warrant.</p>

<p>Prohibition on hoisting colours other than national colours.</p>	<p>11.—(1) No flag distinctive of nationality shall be hoisted on an Irish ship other than the proper national colours.</p> <p>(2) The flying of a flag by way of courtesy only, in accordance with accepted international usage, shall not be a contravention of this section.</p> <p>(3) Where there is a contravention of this section, the master of the ship concerned shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds.</p> <p>(4) Any officer on full pay holding commissioned naval rank in the Defence Forces, or a member of the Garda Síochána not below the rank of Inspector, or any officer of customs and excise, or any diplomatic or consular officer may board any ship or boat on which any colours or pendant are hoisted contrary to this Act, and take away the colours or pendant which shall thereupon be forfeited to the State.</p>
<p>Obligation to hoist national colours.</p>	<p>12.—(1) The proper national colours shall be hoisted on an Irish ship—</p> <p>(a) on a signal being made to her by a ship of the Naval Service of the Defence Forces under the command of a commissioned officer of that Service, and</p> <p>(b) on entering or leaving a port outside the State, and</p> <p>(c) if the ship is of fifty tons gross tonnage or upwards, on entering or leaving a port in the State.</p> <p>(2) Subsection (1) of this section shall not apply to a fishing boat duly entered in the fishing boat register and lettered and numbered in accordance with Part IV of the Act of 1894.</p> <p>(3) Where there is a contravention of this section the master of the ship concerned shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable, on summary conviction thereof, to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds.</p>
<p>Penalty for unduly assuming Irish character.</p>	<p>13.—(1) If a person uses the proper national colours or assumes Irish national character on board a ship which is not an Irish ship, for the purpose of making the ship appear to be an Irish ship, the ship shall be subject to forfeiture under this Act, unless the assumption has been made for the purpose of escaping capture by an enemy or by a foreign ship of war in the exercise of some belligerent right.</p> <p>(2) In proceedings to enforce the forfeiture, the burden of proving title to use the proper national colours and assume Irish national character shall be upon the person using or assuming them.</p>

<p>Penalty for concealment of Irish or assumption of foreign character.</p>	<p>14.—If the master or owner of an Irish ship does anything or permits anything to be done, or carries or permits to be carried any papers or documents, with intent—</p> <p>(a) to conceal the Irish national character of the ship from any person entitled by law to enquire into the ship's national character, or</p> <p>(b) to deceive any such person, or</p> <p>(c) to assume a foreign character,</p> <p>the ship shall be subject to forfeiture under this Act, and the master, if he commits or is privy to the commission of the offence shall in respect of each offence be guilty of a misdemeanour.</p>
<p>National character of ship to be declared before clearance.</p>	<p>15.—(1) An officer of customs and excise shall not grant a clearance or transire for a ship until the master has stated the nationality of the ship to the officer, and the officer shall there upon inscribe that nationality on the clearance or transire.</p> <p>(2) A ship which attempts to proceed to sea without having the clearance or transire inscribed under subsection (1) of this section, may be detained until the statement of nationality is made.</p>

KYC Club members.

The proposal is that the KYC Flag etiquette is made an annex to the club rules so that there is no ambiguity as to what the correct protocol is for Kinsale Yacht Club and its members.

Relevant Flags for Kinsale Yacht Club.

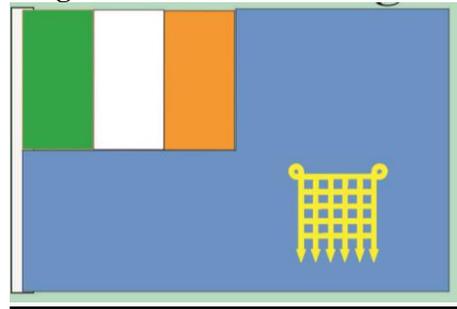
The Club Burgee



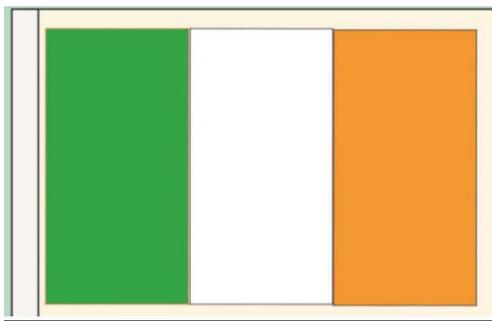
The Irish National Ensign



The Kinsale Yacht Club Defaced Ensign



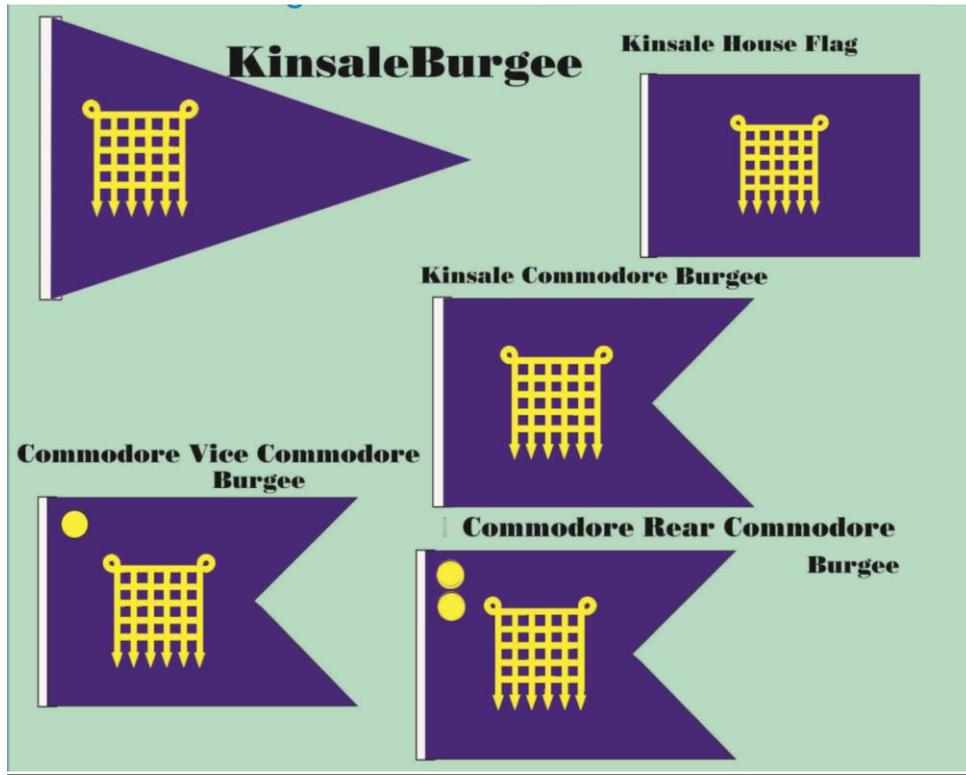
The Irish National Ensign with White border



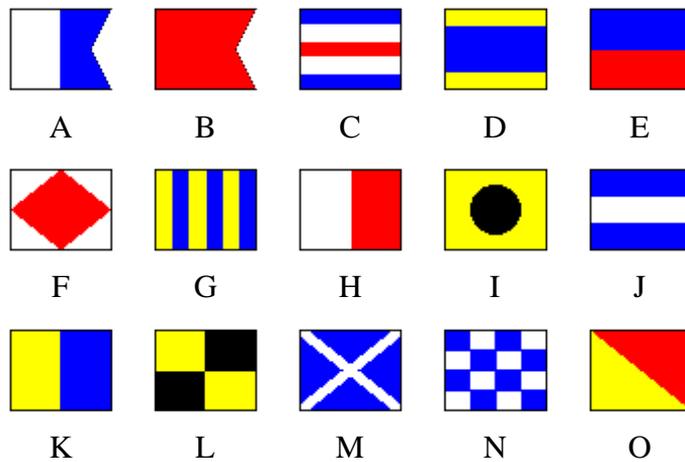
The Standard of The President of Ireland

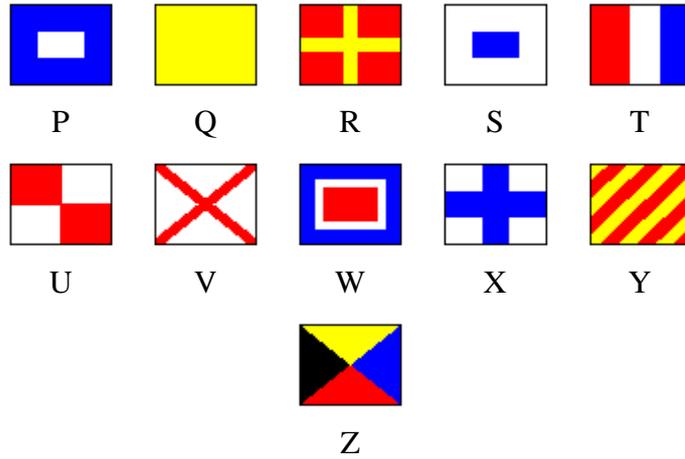


The former Commodores burgee

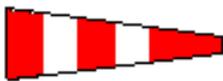


International code of signals with flags





Answering Pennant

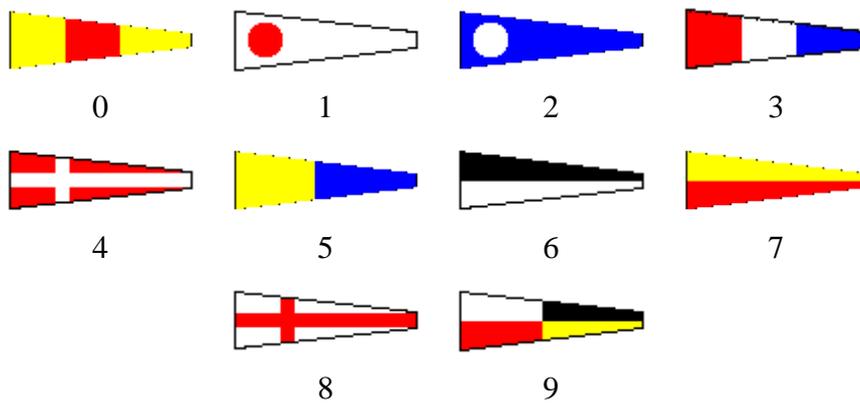


The answering pennant is used as a decimal point when sending numeric data.

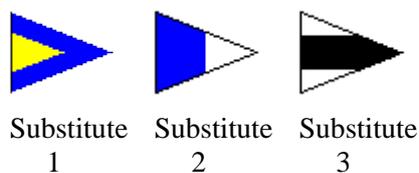
Close up (top of mast), the receiving vessel indicates she understands the hoist.
At the end of the signal it indicates that the message is complete.

At dip (half masted), hoisted by receiving vessel as each hoist of the transmitting ship is seen.

Numeric Pennants



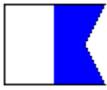
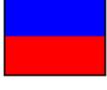
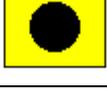
Substitute Pennants

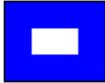
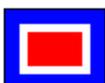


The first substitute repeats the upper flag or pennant of a hoist, the second substitute repeats the second flag or pennant, and so on.

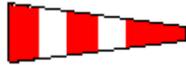
The Navy has different meanings for some signal flags and they use different flags to represent numbers.

Single Flag Codes

A - Diver below (when stationary); Keep Clear; See Divers Flags	
B - Dangerous Cargo	
C - Yes (affirmative)	
D - Keep Clear	
E - I am Altering my Course to Starboard	
F - I am Disabled	
G - I Require a Pilot	
H - I have a Pilot on Board	
I - I am Altering my Course to Port	
J - On Fire; Keep Clear	
K - I Desire to Communicate	
L - You Should Stop Instantly	
M - I am Stopped Not international but commonly used: Doctor on board	
N - No (Negative)	

O - Man Overboard	
P - the <i>Blue Peter</i> - About to Sail	
Q - I Request Pratique	
R -	
S - My Engines are Going Astern	
T - Keep Clear of Me Not international but commonly used: Request for transportation (from club launch)	
U - You are Standing into Danger	
V - I Require Assistance	
W - I Require Medical Assistance	
X - Stop Your Intention	
Y - I am Dragging Anchor	
Z - I Require a Tug	

Answering Pennant



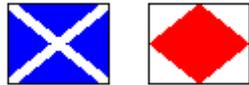
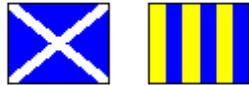
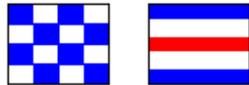
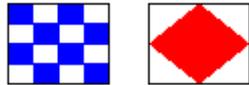
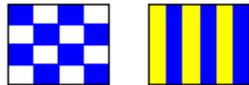
Code and answering pennant.

The answering pennant is used as a decimal point when sending numeric data. Close up (top of mast), the receiving vessel indicates she understands the hoist. At the end of the signal it indicates that the message is complete. At dip (half masted), hoisted by the receiving vessel as each hoist of the transmitting ship is seen.

Multiple Flag codes

Distress

N + C - I am in distress	
A + E - I must abandon my vessel	
C + J - Do you require assistance?	
C + N - I am unable to give assistance	
J + I - Are you aground?	
J + L - You are running the risk of going aground	
J + W - I have sprung a leak	
K + N - I cannot take you in tow	
K + N + 1 - I cannot take you in tow but I will report you and ask for immediate assistance	
Note a numeral is added to general messages to provide variation in meaning, to ask or answer a question, or to supplement the basic message	
L + N - Light (name follows) has been extinguished	

L + O - I am not in my correct position (To be used by a lightship)	
L + R - Bar is not dangerous	
L + S - Bar is dangerous	
M + F - Course to reach me is ...	
M + G - You should steer course ...	
N + C - I am in distress	
N + F - You are running into danger	
N + G - You are in a dangerous position	
Y + Z - Indicates words which follow are in plain language. Use is optional if it is obvious that the words are in plain language	

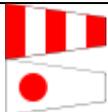
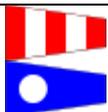
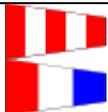
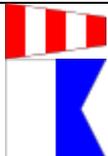
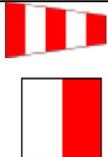
Race signals with Flags and sound.

Sail races are governed with flags and sound signals to indicate flag changes. The flags used are taken from the [International maritime signal flag](#) set. During a race and for any signal concerning the race, these flags are defined in the ISAF Racing Rules of Sailing but the signal can be modified by the Sailing Instructions.

The raising (hoisting) or removing of a visual signal is accompanied by the emission of a sound signal to draw attention to the new signal. The type of the sound signal (one short sound, two short sounds, one long sound, etc.) is described by the rule according to the type of signal. The usual meanings of these flags are as follows:

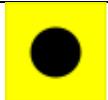
Postponement signal.

The Answering Pennant (**AP**) with or without a numerical pennant is used to indicate a postponed race. A numerical pennant below the AP denotes the time, in hours, of the race postponement.

Flag signal		Number of sound signals when raised	Number of sound signals when lowered	Description
	AP			Races not yet started are postponed.
	AP 1			Races not yet started are postponed 1 hour.
	AP 2			Races not yet started are postponed 2 hours.
	AP 3			Races not yet started are postponed 3 hours.
	AP A			Races not yet started are postponed. No more racing today.
	AP H			Races not yet started are postponed. More information ashore.

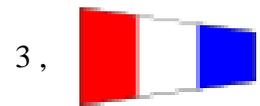
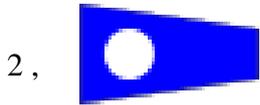
Preparatory signal.

These signal flags are used before a race start and most commonly as part of a start sequence/procedure.

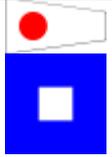
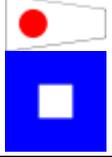
Flag signal		Number of sound signals when raised	Number of sound signals when lowered	Description
	P			Normal preparatory signal - no starting penalties are in effect. A boat over the line at the start can return through the line or round an ends but must keep clear of boats not returning. If they fail to return through the line however they will be scored OCS
	I			The Round-an-End Rule 30.1 will be in effect. A boat over the line during the minute before the start must sail to the pre-start side of the line around either end before starting. If they fail to do this they will be scored OCS
	Z			The 20% Penalty Rule 30.2 will be in effect. A boat within the triangle formed by the ends of the line and the first mark during the minute before the start will receive a 20% scoring penalty
	I Z			Both the I flag rule and the Z flag Rule will be in effect during the minute before the start. If they fail to round and end then they will be scored OCS
				The Black Flag Rule 30.3 will be in effect. A boat within the triangle formed by the ends of the line and the first mark during the minute before the start will be disqualified without a hearing

Start signal.

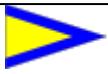
These signal flags are used in the pre-start procedure. Class flags can be numeral pennants



however they can be substituted to avoid confusion with the postponement signals relating to a particular class.

Flag signal	Number of sound signals when raised	Number of sound signals when lowered	Description
	1 ↑		Warning Signal. 5 minutes to race start when class flag raised.
	1 P ↑		Preparatory signal. 4 minutes to start when P flag raised. Flag P used or if a starting penalty applies I, Z, Black flag or I over Z is used in place of P.
	1 P ↓	 Long sound	Preparatory signal. P flag removed 1 minute before start. Flag P used or if a starting penalty applies I, Z, Black flag or I over Z is used in place of P.
	1 ↓		Start Signal. Race start when class flag removed.

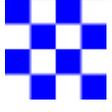
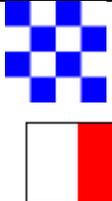
Recall signal.

Flag signal		Number of sound signals when raised	Number of sound signals when lowered	Description
	X			Individual recall. One or more boats did not start correctly and must return and do a proper start. The X flag is displayed until the earliest of the following: all boats over the line early have returned correctly, 4 minutes from the start or until one minute before the next start. (The sound signal is in addition to the start sound signal)
	1st Sub	 		General recall. All boats are to return and then a new start sequence will begin. Signaled when there are unidentified boats over the line or subject to one of the starting penalties, or there has been an error in the starting procedure. The new warning signal for the recalled class will be made 1 minute after the 1st substitute is removed. (The two sound signals when the first substitute is displayed are in addition to the start sound signal)

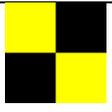
Course change signal.

Flag signal		Number of sound signals when raised	Number of sound signals when lowered	Description
	S	 		Shortened Course. When displayed at a rounding mark the finish is between the nearby mark and the mast displaying the S flag. When displayed at a line that boats are required to cross at the end of each lap the finish is that line. When displayed at a gate the finish is between the gate marks.
	C	 ... 		Course Change. When displayed at a rounding mark, the position of the next mark has been changed. If the direction to the mark has changed it shall be indicated by displaying the new compass bearing or a green triangular flag (or board) for a change to starboard or a red rectangular flag (or board) for a change to port. If the length of the leg has changed then this shall be signalled by displaying a "-" if the leg will shorter or a "+" if the leg will be longer. Repeated sound signals should be made to draw attention to the signal.

Abandonment signal.

Flag signal		Number of sound signals when raised	Number of sound signals when lowered	Description
	N			All races that have started are abandoned. Return to starting area for a new start. The first warning signal will be made 1 minute after N is removed.
	N A			All races are abandoned. No more racing today.
	N H			All races are abandoned. More information ashore.

Other signals.

Flag signal		Number of sound signals when raised	Number of sound signals when lowered	Description
	L			When displayed afloat means: Come within hail or follow this boat. When displayed ashore means: A notice to competitors has been posted.
	M			Indicates a boat or an object displaying this signal replaces a missing mark. Repeated sound signals should be made to draw attention to the signal.
	Y			All people on board should wear a personal life jacket or personal buoyancy.
	BLUE			When displayed the race committee boat is in position at the finishing line.

What to put where?

The Ensign:-

The most senior position for a flag on a vessel is reserved for the Ensign. This is as close to the vessel's stern as possible. The Ensign shows the country of registry of the vessel and indicates its nationality. An Irish flagged vessel must wear her Ensign as required by Maritime Law, which includes when entering or leaving port and on demand.

It is recommended that at all times it is worn in daylight, especially when near to or in sight of land or another vessel. An Irish registered vessel should wear the national maritime flag, the Irish Ensign, unless entitled to wear a special Ensign. Wearing anything other than an authorised Ensign is a violation of Irish and International law.

All members of Kinsale Yacht Club who have an Irish registered vessel should either use the Irish National Ensign, the Irish National Ensign with white border or the Kinsale Yacht Club National Defaced Ensign (Azure Blue with Portculis and Irish Flag in the quarter). Any other variation of this Ensign is not permitted by Club Rules or Irish or International Law.

Positioning of Ensigns:-

Practically all leisure vessels have an aft staff to fly their ensign, however for some vessels which are ketch rigged or gaff rigged it is correct to hoist the Ensign at the outer end of the gaff on the after most mast.

For powerboats the Ensign may be flown at the aft staff but at sea may be flown at the mast gaff if there is one fitted.

Outside of home waters the Defaced Ensign should not be worn but rather the National Ensign.

Club Ensign- The Ensign is flown from the end of the gaff. This is a privileged position and no other flag should be flown from this position at any time.

Hoisting Times.

The Kinsale Yacht Club Ensign should be hoisted at 0900 each day.

For yachts at the Marina or in Harbour the Ensign should be hoisted at 0900 each day if the vessel has crew on board or a soon after that that crew come aboard. If the vessel has no crew on board NO flag is required to be flown.

Lowering Times.

Lowering (Striking) Ensigns and other flags at the Kinsale Yacht Club is to be done at sunset or at 2100 Hours whichever is the earlier as is tradition around the world.

For yachts at the marina or in Harbour Ensigns and other flags should be struck before the crew leaves the vessel prior to sunset or at sunset if remaining on the vessel.

For racing yachts the ensign is struck at the five minute gun and the class racing flag is hoisted. When the race is over, or the yacht has retired, she raises it again to indicate that she is no longer bound by racing rules.

The class racing flag replaces the Ensign.

The burgee (and consequentially club officer's flags):-

Traditionally the burgee is flown from the masthead. This may require a special flag hoist pole to be fitted at the masthead. If the burgee is flown it must be matched by the club's defaced Ensign. The etiquette states that only one burgee is flown at a time however some yachts do fly more than one burgee and this may cause offence to some. The burgee may remain aloft. Some vessels may fly the burgee from beneath the spreaders, however this is not correct etiquette and may cause offence to some club members.

Flag officers are permitted to replace the club burgee with their flag officer's flag for the duration of their time in office. On leaving office those ex flag officers may fly their ex flag officers burgee from the port spreaders and also the club burgee from the masthead.

For mastless vessels the Club Burgee may be flown at the jack staff on the bow.



Other signals:-

The starboard spreaders are used for signalling flags such as courtesy flags and "Q" flag etc. It is incorrect etiquette to fly the Club Burgee from the starboard spreaders as it may interfere with correct signalling procedures.

The port spreaders are used for house flags. A house flag is normally but not always a small rectangular version of the club burgee. More than one house flag may be flown on the port spreaders.

Courtesy flag. These are normally the maritime flag of the country that you are visiting and it is customary to fly these courtesy flags as a mark of respect for that country and that you will abide by their laws and customs.

House Flags. These flags are flown on the port spreaders and serve to indicate membership of associations or membership of another club. Several may be flown from the same halyard and should be flown in order of seniority.

Local Regional Flags. When visiting other countries various regions such as Galicia, Normandy etc it is a nice gesture to fly the local regional flag. They should be flown on the same halyard as the courtesy flag and below the courtesy flag.

Seniority of flag positions

For all vessels it is assumed that they have at least one mast and that this has crosstrees or spreaders. The Ensign is never hoisted on a single mast except on a yard. The masthead is reserved for the Club Burgee. It is never used for signals. There after the seniority is as follows:-

1. Starboard spreader, hoisted up close.
2. Port spreader hoisted close up.
3. Below top flag on the starboard spreader or on starboard inner halyard.
4. Below top flag on the port spreader, or on the port inner halyard.

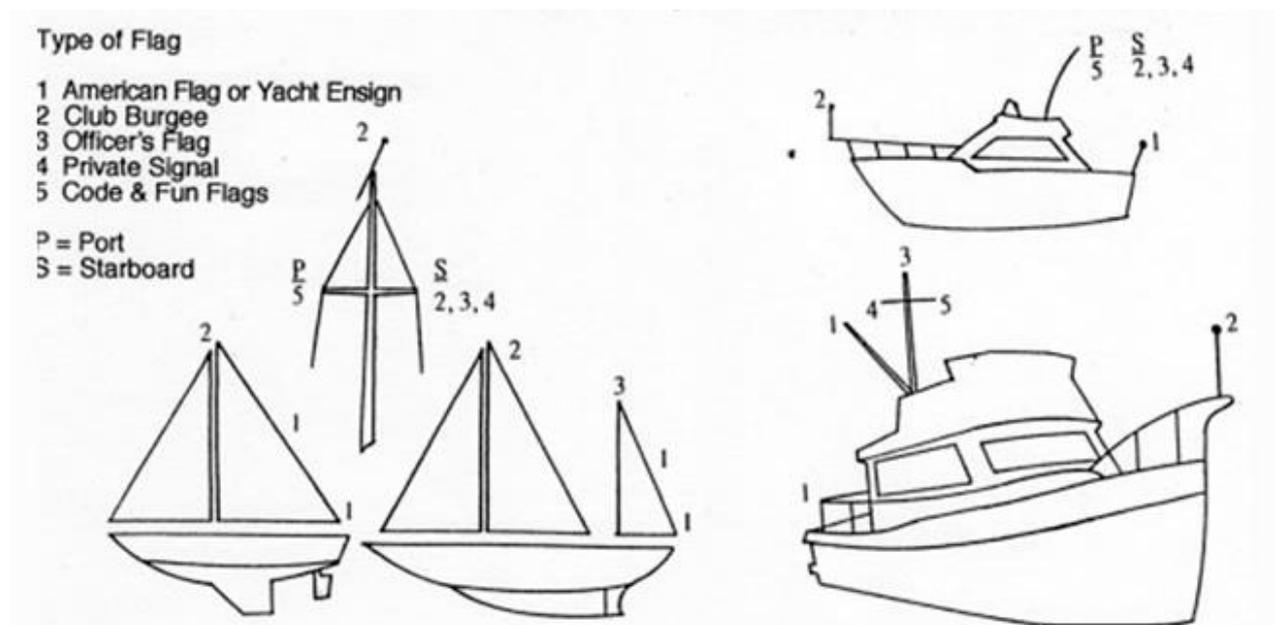
Mourning and Flag Etiquette

Ensigns should be half-masted for the day of the death of a member until the next time of striking colours. The Ensign should not be half-masted again until the day of the funeral when it is raised again at the time of the internment or cremation.

The Flag Officers have discretion as to what occasions will warrant the Club Ensign being “Lowered to half- mast”.

To half-mast the ensign:- – The Ensign is first raised to the peak then lowered to the half-mast position, for KYC approximately three flag widths. It is then raised to the peak before lowering for the day.

Useful diagrams:-



Dressing overall

Yachts may dress overall in Ireland on the following dates:-

The order of the full set of 40 flags (From stem to stern) is as follows:-

E, Q, p3, Z, p4, W, p6, P, p1, 1Code, T, Y, B, X, 1st Sub, H, 3rd Sub, D, F 2nd Sub, U, A, O, M, R, p2, J, p0, N p9, K, p7, V, p5, L, C, S.

It is recommended that the line up to the masthead ends at the 3rd Sub and starts at D from masthead to stern.



At the Club House.

The House Mast:-

The House Mast consists of mast, yardarm and gaff. The gaff should point towards the Clubhouse.

Club Ensign:-

The Ensign is flown from the end of the gaff. This is a privileged position and no other flag should be flown from this position at any time. When handling the Ensign it should not be allowed to touch the ground. The hoisting of the Ensign is the responsibility of the Club Manager who will ensure that a member of staff is detailed to Hoist and strike the Club Ensign daily at the required correct times.

Club Burgee:-

The Club burgee is flown at the masthead of the Club House Mast and at the masthead of the marina mast. The burgee is attached to a pig stick and raised and lowered by halyard. The burgee is attached to swivels top and bottom on the pig stick to allow burgee to fly freely. No Ensign will be flown at the Marina mast.

Yardarm:-(looking at mast from Clubhouse) –

Racing signals should be flown from the port side, all other flags from the starboard side.

Marina Flag Poles:-

The main flag pole on the marina is for the club burgee at its masthead. No other flag will be flown from this mast.

The remaining marina flag poles are for the use of flying national courtesy flags during events and also for flying sponsorship flags as house flags during events. The Irish Flag must not be flown from these poles as the Main Club Mast will have the Ensign hoisted for the Club.

Compiled by Vice Commodore T W Roche Lt Ns (Ret'd)