

# 1. The Rising Sun Flag As Part Of Japanese Culture

The design of the Rising Sun Flag symbolizes the sun as the Japanese national flag does. This design has been widely used in Japan for a long time.



Today, the design of the Rising Sun Flag is seen in numerous scenes in daily life of Japan, such as in fishermen's banners hoisted to signify large catch of fish, flags to celebrate childbirth, and in flags for seasonal festivities.

## Japanese culture and rising sun flags



*Priest Kiyomori, an old Kabuki story*, by Ginko Adachi, 1885



An ukiyoe print, *Lucky gods Visit Enoshima Palace*, by Yoshiiku Ochiai, 1869

## Daily life and rising sun flags



The return to Ukedo port (2017) of fishing boats that had evacuated due to the Great East Japan Earthquake  
©Kyodo News Images



People celebrating the opening of the Hokkaido Shinkansen with big fishing flags, 2016  
©Kyodo News Images

## Reference

● Press Conference by the Chief Cabinet Secretary KATO, May 18, 2021(AM) (excerpt)

.....As you all know, the design of the Rising Sun Flag models the shape of the sun like the national flag of Japan and is widely used throughout Japan, such as good catch flags used by fishermen and celebratory flags for childbirth and seasonal festivities. Claims that the flag is an expression of political or discriminatory assertions are false. The Government of Japan has explained, and will continue to explain at every opportunity its view that the display Rising Sun Flag is not political promotion, to the international community including the Republic of Korea. ....

<https://nettv.gov-online.go.jp/prg/prg22653.html>



## 2. The Flags of the Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Ground Self-Defense Force As Official Flags of Japan's Self-Defense Forces

The flags of the Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Ground Self-Defense Force employ the design of the Rising Sun, in accordance with the Order for the Enforcement of the Self-Defense Forces Law in 1954.



The flag of the  
Maritime Self-Defense Force

Ever since these flags were officially designated, they have been hoisted on various occasions, both domestically and internationally.

For more than half a century, these flags have been playing an indispensable role to show the presence of the Self-Defense Forces vessels and units, and are widely accepted in the international community.



The flag of the Ground  
Self-Defense Force



**Naval event in Tsingtao 2019**  
(a Maritime Self-Defense Force vessel  
entering in Tsingtao port)



**A parade in Paris in 2018**  
(a Ground Self-Defense Force unit with a  
Singaporean unit)



**Naval event in Busan 1998**  
(a Maritime Self-Defense Force vessel  
entering in Busan port)

## The design of the rising sun is widely used in the world.

The design of the rising sun with beams of lights is not unique to Japan. Similar designs are widely used in the world, as seen in the national flag of Republic of North Macedonia as well as the state flags of Arizona, the U.S. and Lara, Venezuela.



Flag of the Republic of North Macedonia  
(1995-)

<https://www.vlada.mk/?ln=en-gb>



Flag of Arizona State, the U.S.  
(1917-)

<https://az.gov/>



Flag of Lara State, Venezuela  
(1901-)

<https://lara.gob.ve/home/>