

Fun With Flags

Celebrate this year's Syttende Mai—and the bicentennial of Norway's constitution—with flag arts and crafts fit for all ages. BY LUCY CASALE

A symbol of national pride, the Norwegian flag will fly high and bright for this year's Syttende Mai, also the 200th anniversary of the Norwegian constitution, at celebrations in Norway and around the world. Norwegians wave flags in Syttende Mai parades, fly them above their homes and wear decorative ribbons bearing the flag's colors.

Daniel Håbesland, a native of Kolbotn, Norway, says "everyone along the parade route [will be] wearing their nicest clothes or their traditional costumes, waving Norwegian flags and saying 'Hurra, Hurra' (hooray, hooray) and wishing each other 'Gratulerer med dagen!' (Congratulations on this day!)"

Join in the fun this Syttende Mai with flag-themed projects the whole family can make!



Activities for Young People

PRESCHOOL

Coloring Time

Do you have crayons, markers or colored pencils? Just add paper and you're ready to create a Norwegian flag. Help your preschooler tape on a straw or wooden craft stick so their flag is ready for waving. While your child is coloring, incorporate a language lesson by teaching them the Norwegian words for red (*rød*), white (*hvit*) and blue (*blå*). For language lessons, go to sonsofnorway.com, then click Norwegian Culture and select Learn Norwegian. **EXPAND IT:** Create several small flags, punch holes in the top corners, and string yarn through them to make a flag banner.

Fun Fact

The three colors of Norway's flag represent peace and honesty (white), loyalty and justice (blue) and strength and bravery (red).

ELEMENTARY AGES

Collage Art

Help children gather and tear bits of red, white and blue scrap paper. Older children can search for red, white and blue images in old magazines. Adults can help younger children outline the flag on backing paper, then start gluing your paper bits to fill in the color blocks. Hang your finished flag in a prominent place in your home as part of your Syttende Mai decorations. While you're working, talk to children about your Syttende Mai experiences. **EXPAND IT:** Create a ribbon badge for Syttende Mai in patriotic colors.

TEENAGERS

Trivia

Create a trivia game the whole family can play! Search online for trivia that relates to Norway's flag history, evolution, symbolism and etiquette. Write down questions on one side of an index card and the answer on the other side. Example: In what year did Fredrick Meltzer design the current Norwegian flag? Take turns asking questions and put your knowledge to the test. **EXPAND IT:** Make a game board using a large piece of poster board and markers. For each question answered correctly, move along the board from start to finish.

RESOURCES

Ribbon Badge: craft-craft.net/crafts-tutorial-patriotic-ribbon-badge.html

Sløyfe Syttende Mai Ribbons: ingebretsens.com/celebrations/syttende-mai

Norwegian Trivia: sonsofnorway.com/norwegian_culture/RelatedSites.jsp

LEARN MORE!

For more on how Norway's flag has evolved throughout the years, see the May 2011 issue of *Viking*.