

Maryland State Tartan

What is tartan?

What most people in America call "plaid" or a "plaid pattern" is more properly called a tartan.

According to the [Scottish Register of Tartans](#) 'A tartan is a design which is capable of being woven consisting of two or more alternating coloured stripes which combine vertically and horizontally to form a repeated chequered pattern.'

The basis of any tartan is a simple two-colour check to which the designer adds over-checks, bands and stripes in contrasting colours. Where two stripes of the same colour cross, a block of solid colour is formed. Where different colours cross, the two colours are mixed in equal proportions to create a new colour.

A tartan pattern is a geometric design, made up of blocks of solid colour which join on the diagonal, radiating across the fabric like spokes, and with each block of solid colour surrounded by blocks of mixed colours.

Nowadays tartan is worn all over the world (not just by Scots), and is regularly seen on catwalks and in designer collections.

What is the sett of a tartan?

The design of a tartan (called the sett) is specified by its threadcount.

The threadcount over half a sett with a full count at the pivot points for *Maryland State* is

Y/16 K16 Y16 K16 R40 W8 R8 W/40
(where Y=Yellow; K=Black; R=Red; W=White).



Doesn't Maryland already have too many state symbols?

The short answer is no. Even conservatively looking only at official government web sites, we are still below average.

Maryland has 22 official [state symbols](#) to which you can add the flag, seal, and song for 25 and to which [State Symbols USA](#) adds the capital, motto, name origin, and nickname to arrive at a total of 29. Even on the basis of 29 state symbols we are below the average of 33.

Counting only those state symbols which have been officially designated by the Texas Legislature, Texas has 73 [state symbols](#). Texas its own air force, aquarium (my daughter works there), bread, pastry, native pepper, pollinator, and hashtag, to name but a few. And, of course, a state tartan, the [Texas Bluebonnet](#) approved by the legislature in 1989 and currently registered with the [Scottish Register of Tartans](#).

Here is the number of state symbols for most of the other states. The first number is based on official state government or historical society web sites. The number after the slash, e.g. "/34" indicates a higher number counted by [State Symbols USA](#). Those states marked with an "*" have a [tartan](#) listed amongst the symbols and emblems:

Some States with More State Symbols than Maryland

[Alabama](#) has 42/50. [Arkansas*](#) has 30/33. [California*](#) has 41/46. [Connecticut*](#) has 27/32. [Georgia](#) has 18/48. [Kentucky](#) has 33/41. [Louisiana](#) has 13 or maybe just 6, or by State Symbols USA 46. [Massachusetts*](#) has 61. [Missouri*](#) has 29 plus a newly approved [state tartan](#). [New Mexico*](#) has 29/34, including a [state question](#) and was recently thought to have adopted a [state tartan](#). [Oklahoma*](#) has 55. [Oregon](#) has 23/34. [Tennessee*](#) has 26 plus 10 State Songs but State Symbols USA says 64. [Virginia](#) has 42. [Utah*](#) has 27/33. [North Carolina*](#) has 36/50. [South Carolina*](#) has 57. Interestingly, North and South Carolina share the same state tartan, the [Carolina Tartan](#).

States with About the Same Number of State Symbols as Maryland

[Alaska](#) has 20/23. [Colorado*](#) has 23/28. [Delaware](#) has 23/32. [Florida](#) has 21/31. [Illinois](#) has 13/31. [Maine](#) has 19+/28. [Mississippi](#) has 13/26. [Nebraska](#) has 26/24. [Nevada*](#) has 22 state emblems /27. [New Hampshire*](#) has 16 state symbols, including a [tartan](#), plus a Motto, State Seal, flag, and State Emblem. State Symbols USA says 39. [Ohio](#) has 22/25. [Pennsylvania](#), the Keystone State has 3 emblems, 8 symbols, and 16 State Inventions, State Symbols USA says 30. [South Dakota](#) has 22/25. [West Virginia](#) has 16/32. [Washington*](#) has 22 official and 3 more unofficial /29. [Wisconsin](#) has 22/30.

Some States with Fewer State Symbols than Maryland

[Idaho](#) has 15 state emblems/21. [Indiana](#) has 12 emblems and symbols/20. [Iowa](#) has 7/14. [Hawaii](#) has between 16 and 31 depending on how you count, State Symbols USA says 34. [Kansas](#) has 23/21. [Michigan](#) has 12/21. [Montana](#) has 15/ 25. [New Jersey](#) has 16/21. [North Dakota](#) has 22/23. [Wyoming](#) has 18/27. [Minnesota](#) has 19/22. [New York](#) has 16 emblems and "I Love New York" slogan and logo, and song. State Symbols USA says 27. [Arizona](#) has 16/24. [Rhode Island*](#) has 18/22.

How come the colors don't quite match those on the [State Flag](#)?

Actually, the colors on the state flag vary. Although the Secretary of State suggests specific [Pantone Marking System](#) colors on coated and uncoated stock for the [state flag](#), flag makers vary the shade of color that they use.

In the tartan world, the same tartan is made in a variety of [color schemes](#) such as "modern", "antique", and "muted", or "weathered." Each looks different and different tartans look better in different schemes. It would be up to the buyer and weaver to pick the color scheme that they like best.



Can't you just make any tartan pattern that you like?

Sure, unless it is protected by US or International copyright, then you would need a license from the copyright holder. When people register their sett with the Scottish Register of Tartans, they often include desired restriction on weaving the tartan, *e.g.*, "only woven or worn by family members", or "must be woven at a Scottish mill." But these restrictions rely on the good will of others.

Aren't all the tartans already taken?

No. Actually, dozens of [new tartans](#) are registered each year.

What is the Scottish Register of Tartans?

The [Scottish Register of Tartans](#) was established by an act of the Scottish Parliament in November 2008. Members of the Scottish Parliament voted to establish a single, independent Scottish register of tartans which promotes and preserves information about historic and contemporary tartans from Scotland and throughout the world.

The Register was launched on 5 February 2009 and the first tartan to be registered on that day was the Scottish Register of Tartans' Tartan (STR #10000). Once the governor signs the bill making the Maryland State Tartan an official symbol of our state, we'll register the design.

Prior to the establishment of the Register, tartans were recorded by the Scottish Tartans Society, the Scottish Tartans World Register and the [Scottish Tartans Authority](#).

What is the Scottish Tartans Authority?

The [Scottish Tartans Authority](#) is a private enterprise that recorded tartans as a courtesy. Their entries have been grandfathered in to the Scottish Register of Tartans.

What tartans are associated with Maryland and Anne Arundel County?

These are the tartans I'm aware of with regard to Maryland and Anne Arundel County. The only one of these tartans currently in production is the Maryland State Seal tartan.

The Maryland tartan – classified as a District Tartan:

<http://www.tartanregister.gov.uk/tartanDetails.aspx?ref=2847>

This tartan was designed in 2003 by Cynthis Balfour-Trail as a tartan for Maryland and registered with the Scottish Tartans Authority (STA ref 5920) as a district tartan, which required nothing official. [This tartan](#) was created to commemorate the centennial, in 2004, of the adoption of the Maryland state flag. Red, White, Black, and Gold for the Crossland and Calvert arms, which appear quartered in the Maryland state flag. Navy Blue for the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. Blue and Azure (Light Blue) for the waters of the Chesapeake Bay. This tartan was recorded prior to the launch of The Scottish Register of Tartans and is no way official.

Maryland State Seal tartan – classified as a Fashion Tartan (indicating no official sanction), not yet appearing on the Register of Tartans (and may never be), just went into production within the last few years: <http://www.tartansauthority.com/tartan-ferret/display/8634/state-seal-of-maryland-fashion>

Anne Arundel County – classified as a District Tartan:

<http://www.tartanregister.gov.uk/tartanDetails.aspx?ref=93>

This tartan is an official tartan in the county code.

Arundel County – classified as a District Tartan, basically the Anne Arundel with some changes the weaver made, probably to ease production:

<http://www.tartanregister.gov.uk/tartanDetails.aspx?ref=120>

What are some items that are or could be made in tartan?



What is a district tartan?

Tartans are registered in one of nine [categories](#). These categories are:

Category	Description
Clan/Family	A tartan to be worn by members of a Scottish clan or family as recognized by the Court of the Lord Lyon.
Name	A tartan named for an individual or family.
District	A tartan associated with a particular geographical area, including towns, parishes, counties or countries.
Corporate	A tartan for a company or organization.
Commemorative	A tartan created to commemorate a specific public event or person.
Military	A tartan associated with any branch of the armed forces, including volunteer regiments.
Royal	A tartan with a direct connection to British or Foreign royalty.
Fashion	A tartan created for fashion or retail, usually without any particular personal association.
Other	For tartans which do not meet the criteria for any of the other categories.

Note: Where a tartan is named after a country, a state, a district, a town or a city, giving the impression of an association with any central or local authority, public or private initiative, an application must be accompanied by a letter of authority from a prominent office-bearer in the appropriate body. In other words, registration as a district tartan for Maryland will require a letter from our governor.

What's with the white stripe?

Tartans with white stripes are often [Dress](#) (as opposed to Hunting)[Tartans](#) (commonly used for highland dancing) or are referred to as Arisaid Tartans after a type of women's attire. The white stripe in the proposed Maryland State tartan is from the Crossland Arms and creates a tartan that looks like a Dress or Arisaid tartan.

Here are Some State Tartans



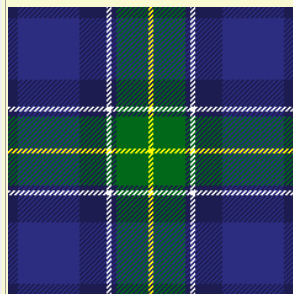
California



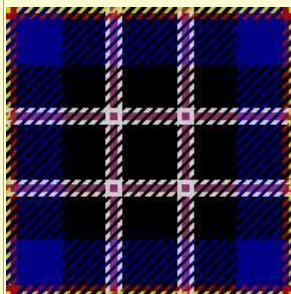
New Mexico



Carolina



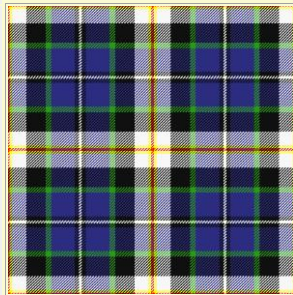
Rhode Island



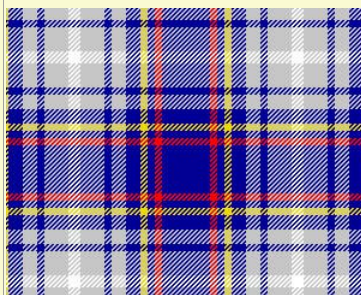
Colorado



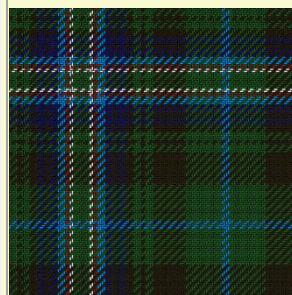
Connecticut



Iowa State Dress
Tartan



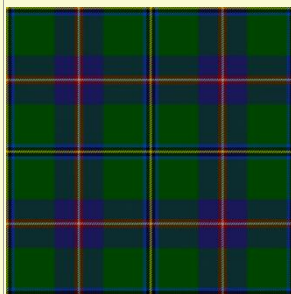
Nevada



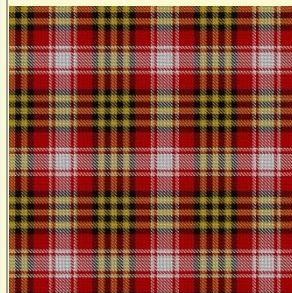
Missouri



Tennessee



Washington State



proposed Maryland
State