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ARTICLE FIVE: CREATING A COMPANY STANDARD OR BANNER BY LESLIE PRATT

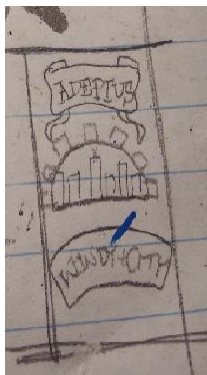
You're getting ready for AdeptiCon, and maybe your team has chosen to create a custom Space Marine Chapter. Or perhaps you're playing an existing chapter and you have decided to fly your colors. Maybe you are playing an army from another codex and you want to add some visual appeal to your force. Or is it that your Empire Spearman's standard-bearer is waving a blank plastic flag? In all of these situations, a company standard would be a great addition to your army.

Part of the fun of the hobby is the visual appeal of a well-painted force on the battlefield. A custom-crafted standard can really enhance the appearance of your army. A brightly-colored standard can brighten up a dark-colored army even if the design is simple by bringing in a lighter accent color from your models. Complex heraldry could tie in to your army's theme and battle history, or could depict (either literally or figuratively) a great conquest by your chapter, or your individual company. Standards can be any shape, from square or rectangular to long streaming banners that float in the wind. You can add interest to your design by starting with a square banner and then trimming part of the edges to follow your emblem. Regardless of how simple or complex, if you put a little thought into it, your standard can really help your army's eye appeal.

:: THE EASY WAY: USING PRE-EXISTING STANDARDS ::

If you're playing an existing Space Marine chapter, then it's likely that pre-printed banners may already exist for your army. Games Workshop used to sell them in blister packs – these may still be available from your local game shop or through the Games Workshop online catalog. In addition, there may be banners printed in your codex, such as the Ultramarines banners printed in the new Space Marine codex. Occasionally, there are articles in *White Dwarf* that include pre-printed banners, like the Daemonhunters banners available in WD280. (There's also a great article on creating your own banners from scratch). If you do find a banner you like in a codex or *White Dwarf* I wouldn't recommend removing the pages – just head on down to your local copy shop and run off a color copy. And, of course, you can download them from the internet. The Games Workshop e-zine *Black Gobbo* published an article in BG15 about Banners of the Adeptus Mechanicus and included banners to download in two sizes. Check <http://us.games-workshop.com/games/40k/gaming/banners/adeptus/default.htm> to go to the download page for those banners. If you search around, it's pretty easy to find standards that are ready to use.

:: THE FUN WAY: CREATING YOUR OWN FROM SCRATCH ::



Sketching your design on paper will help determine scale.

Creating a custom banner is just another way to show off your hobbyist skills. It's also about your only option if you created a custom Space Marines chapter, or if you're making a banner for an army that doesn't usually carry one. Here's how to go about starting a banner from scratch:

Create Your Design: First you will need to decide what you want to appear on the banner. This means you need an icon or symbol, and maybe some text, such as a company motto. It should reflect the theme and colors of your army.

There are many sources of heraldry that you can use to help get your creative juices flowing. Check out your local library for book on heraldry, or even an encyclopedia so you can look at flags of other countries to get some ideas.

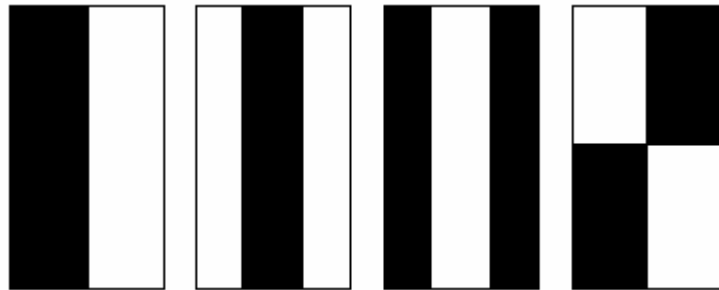
Keep in mind that you need to be able to draw/paint your design, so it must be within your artistic ability. ☺ Also, the design must be scalable to fit on something as small as a banner, so teeny tiny details and intricate symbols might not turn out with good detail.

When you've come up with your idea, draw a sketch to determine where you will lay out all the elements of the heraldry. This can be any size. Once that is finished, then either re-draw it the size that you want your banner to be, or shrink the design to the required size on a photocopier.

Here are some ideas to get you started with your design:

Shape: Your banner does not have to be rectangular. It's a good place to start, if you're a first-timer, but if you want to try something different – give it a shot. Try cutting around one edge of your design and letting that shape give the banner a neat silhouette. Be sure to leave a slight border around the edge so the details don't get lost in the background.

Background: Use simple geometric shapes. Get creative. Combine shapes, or vary the way shapes are divided by using double lines, dashed lines, or repeated patterns. Horizontal lines, vertical lines, or a solid background will complement different types of designs.



Designs: Chapter Symbols, Company motto (or other word or phrase that fits the theme of your army), Animals, Skulls, Purity Seals, Chalice, Mailed Fist, Weapons (bolter, sword, other), Add Wings to any of the above, Scrolls (to hold motto or phrases mentioned above).

Pick your colors: Now that you have your design, you'll need to choose colors. The colors of your army should probably appear in there somewhere, but your banner doesn't necessarily have to be comprised of only those colors. In fact, this is a great opportunity to get some additional contrast into your army for some visual zing. Try something new, and pick 2-3 colors that aren't in your army to work into your banner somewhere, even if it's just a tiny detail or two. It will make your banner stand out, and add interest to your overall appearance.

Choose your materials: This is where you decide what your banner will be made from. If this is your first try, you might want to stick to one of the simpler options such as paper or an existing banner. If you're a veteran banner-painter, branch out and try something a little less conventional.

Paper – draw it, paint it, cut it out, and glue it on.

Existing plastic or metal banner – raid the bitz box, prime, and paint as normal.

Heavy foil – form to shape, prime it, and paint it.

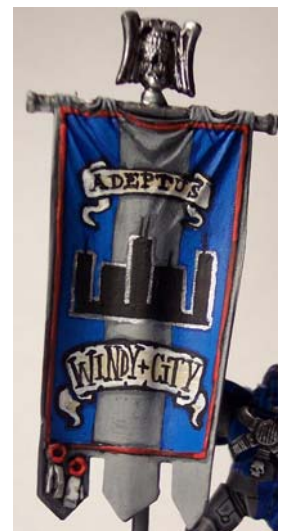
Green stuff – sculpt to shape, prime it, and paint it.

Bitz – raid the bitz box, and glue a bunch of stuff to a stick. Fun!

Fabric – cut to size, apply fabric stiffener and allow to dry, then paint.

Other – just about anything you can think of – just make sure it's not too heavy, too delicate, and you can paint it. Be creative!

Embellish it with bitz: This is your big chance to create something really spectacular. Embellish your banner with the skulls of your enemies, purity seals or litanies of hatred, extra streamers, gems, pendants, icons, small woodland critters, or anything else you think will look good.



This banner was created using the plastic standard in the Space Marines Command Squad box set.

Paint it: Once you've got the banner assembled you'll need to add your design. Prime your banner (in most cases – see the materials section above) and use a pencil to draw the basic outlines of your designs onto the banner. Don't

use a pen or the ink will bleed up through the paint. Paint the basic shapes, then go back and add highlighting and details. Use a fine paintbrush or micron pen for text.

Attach it: If you are using a paper banner, paint and seal the model before applying the banner. For all other banners, paint and seal the banner at the same time you paint the model. Make sure that the banner is attached securely, and that the banner pole is sturdy enough to hold it up without bending. You might need to replace plastic banner poles with metal rod for durability. Gluing a washer or other weight to the bottom of the model's base to keep it from tipping over is also a good idea. If you think the banner will get destroyed trying to store it in your figure case, find a way to make it removable to protect your hard work!

:: A LITTLE SOMETHING TO GET YOU STARTED... ::

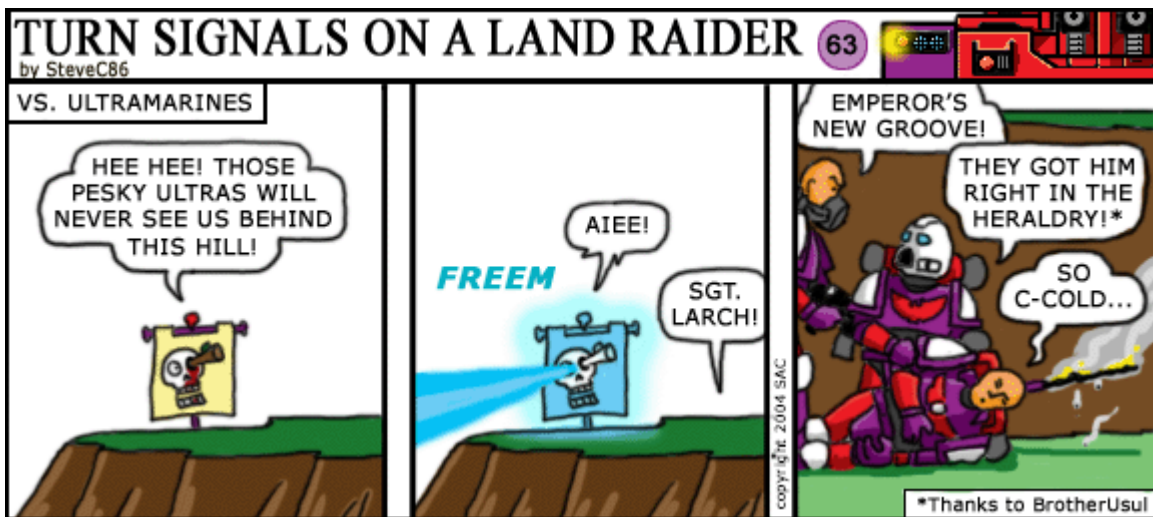


This paper banner adds some color to a Grey Knights army!

Here's a list of keywords from the Games Workshop online store that you can search to give you some ideas. Link to the Games Workshop Online Store search engine: <http://store.us.games-workshop.com/storefront/store.us>

- Banner – poles and flag-style standards of all kinds
- Standard – more of the same
- Icon – all kinds of non-flag standard ideas
- Backpack – many with standard poles, or tattered standards already attached.
- Staff – poles and other things that could be used to support your standard.
- Cloth – fabric things in various shapes and sizes
- Tabard – more of the same

Hopefully by now you're inspired to create a spectacular company standard. Once your creative juices are flowing, keep up the momentum! Add backpack banners to your squad leaders, or commemorative plaques to the sides of your vehicles. The possibilities are endless. No go forth and create!



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