

The Kwanzaa Symbols



Kwanzaa has seven basic symbols and two added ones. Each represents values and concepts reflective of African culture and promote community cohesion:

- **The Crops** (Mazao) These are symbolic of African harvest celebrations and of the rewards of productive and collective labour.
- **The Mat** (Mkeka) This is symbolic of our tradition and history and therefore, the foundation on which we build.
- **The Candle Holder** (Kinara) This is symbolic of our roots, our parent people — continental Africans.
- **The Corn** (Muhindi) This is symbolic of our children and our future which they embody.
- **The Seven Candles** (Mishumaa Saba) These are symbolic of the Nguzo Saba, the Seven Principles, the minimum set of values which African people are urged to live by in order to rescue and reconstruct their lives in their own image and according to their own needs.

- **The Unity Cup** (Kikombe cha Umoja) This is symbolic of the foundational principle and practice of unity which makes all else possible.
- **The Gifts** (Zawadi) These are symbolic of the labour and love of parents and the commitments made and kept by the children.

The two supplemental symbols are:

- **The Flag** (Bendera) The colours of the Kwanzaa flag are the colours of the Organization Us, black, red and green; black for the people, red for their struggle, and green for the future and hope that comes from their struggle. It is based on the colours given by the Hon. Marcus Garvey as national colours for African people throughout the world. Poster of The Seven Principles (Nguzo Saba Poster)

[Source - <http://nottinghamblackarchive.wordpress.com/2011/12/29/the-kwanzaa-symbols/>]