**Building blocks**

**Common symbols**

The [American National Standards Institute](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_National_Standards_Institute) (ANSI) set standards for flowcharts and their symbols in the 1960s. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) adopted the ANSI symbols. Generally, flowcharts flow from top to bottom and left to right.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ANSI/ISO Shape** | **Name** | **Description** |
| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | Flowline | Shows the process's order of operation. A line coming from one symbol and pointing at another. |
| A picture containing object  Description automatically generated | Terminal | Indicates the beginning and ending of a program or sub-process. Represented as a stadium, oval or rounded (fillet) rectangle. They usually contain the word "Start" or "End", or another phrase signalling the start or end of a process, such as "submit inquiry" or "save". |
| A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated | Process | Represents a set of operations that changes value, form, or location of data. Represented as a rectangle. |
|  | Decision | Shows a conditional operation that determines which one of the two paths the program will take. The operation is commonly a yes/no question or true/false test. Represented as a diamond. |
|  | Input/Output | Indicates the process of inputting and outputting data, as in entering data or displaying results. Represented as a [parallelogram](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parallelogram). |
|  | Annotation[]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flowchart#cite_note-ShellyVermaat2011-14)(Comment) | Indicating additional information about a step in the program. Represented as an open rectangle with a dashed or solid line connecting it to the corresponding symbol in the flowchart . |
|  | Predefined Process | Shows named process which is defined elsewhere. Represented as a rectangle with double-struck vertical edges. |
| [A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Flowchart_Connector.svg) | On-page Connector | Pairs of labelled connectors replace long or confusing lines on a flowchart page. Represented by a small circle with a letter inside. |
|  | Off-page Connector | A labelled connector for use when the target is on another page. Represented as a home plate-shaped pentagon. |

**Other symbols**

The ANSI/ISO standards include symbols beyond the basic shapes. Some are:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shape** | **Name** | **Description** |
| [Flowchart database](https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Flowchart_database.svg) | Data File or Database | Data represented by a cylinder (disk drive). |
| [Flowchart Document](https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Flowchart_Document.svg) | Document | Single documents represented a rectangle with a wavy base. |
| [Flowchart Document multiple](https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Flowchart_Document_multiple.svg) | Multiple documents represented stacked rectangle with a wavy base. |
| [Flowchar Manual input](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Flowchar_Manual_input.svg) | Manual operation | represented by a trapezoid with the longest parallel side at the top, to represent an operation or adjustment to process that can only be made manually. |
| [Flowchart manual input](https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Flowchart_manual_input.svg) | Manual input | Represented by quadrilateral, with the top irregularly sloping up from left to right, like the side view of a keyboard. |
| [Flowchart Preparation](https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Flowchart_Preparation.svg) | Preparation or Initialization | Represented by an elongated hexagon, originally used for steps like setting a switch or initializing a routine. |

**Links**

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flowchart>  
<https://the9000store.com/articles/iso-9000-tips-iso-9001-flowchart-basics/>

<https://www.smartdraw.com/flowchart/>

<https://products.office.com/en-za/visio/flowchart-software>