

Flag Ceremony commands

"Color guard, attention."

Used to announce that the flag ceremony is to begin.

"Color guard, advance."

This signals the color guard to advance with the flags, or advance to pick up the flags.

"Color guard, post the colors."

This directs the color guard to place the flag in flag stands.

"Color guard, honor your flag."

The color guard salutes the American flag.

"Please join us in saying the Pledge of Allegiance."

Color Guard does not say the pledge.

"Please join us in saying the Girl Scout Promise."

Color Guard does not say the Girl Scout Promise.

"Color guard, dismissed."

The color guard leaves in formation, with or without the flag.

OR

"Color guard, honor your flag." The color guard salutes the American flag.

"Color guard, retire the colors." This asks the color guard to remove the flag from standards, or to lower the flag, detach from the rope, and fold prior to being dismissed.

"Color guard, dismissed." The color guard leaves in formation, with or without the flag.

"Girl Scouts, dismissed." Girls may leave in formation or be at ease where they have been standing.

Handling the American Flag

Display of the American flag is governed by law to ensure that it will be treated with the respect due the flag of a great nation. This is known as the United States Flag Code. Some of the rules most useful for Girl Scouts are:

- The American flag must be placed in the center, and higher, when displayed with a group of state, local, or organizational flags flown from staffs. It may also be positioned to the right of other flags. (If girls were to hold the flag while facing their audience, their right side would be the flag's own right.)
- When displayed from a staff in a house of worship or public auditorium, the flag of the United States must hold the position of superior prominence, in advance of the audience, and in the position of honor at the clergy's or speaker's right as he or she faces the audience. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the clergy or speaker or to the right of the audience.
- The flag is to be hoisted briskly and lowered slowly with dignity.
- The flag should never be allowed to touch anything beneath it, nor should it ever be carried flat or horizontally—always aloft and free.
- Never use the flag as a cover or place anything on top of it.
- No disrespect of any kind should be shown to the flag of the United States. It should be kept clean.
- The flag, when carried in a procession with other flags, should be either on the marching right or, if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.
- When you display the flag on a wall or in a window where people see it from the street, it should be displayed flat with the blue part at the top and on the flag's own right (which is the observer's left).
- When displayed after dark, the flag should be illuminated.

Symbolism

Children are curious about the meaning behind the stars, stripes and colors. The stripes represent the 13 original colonies, and the stars represent the 50 states. According to PBS.org, red stands for hardiness and valor, white symbolizes purity and innocence, and blue represents vigilance, perseverance and justice. Those facts teach children that the flag was constructed with purpose -- the colors and symbols represent important principles. When kids see the flag waving on flag poles, being saluted at sporting events or decorating the band shell at fireworks displays, they'll know what it stands for.

Last Star

The 50th and final star on the American flag was added on July 4, 1960, and represents the day Hawaii became a state. Young children often think that the flag has always had 50 stars and don't realize that its design changed during the growth and development of the United States. Some children have parents who were alive in 1960, so the age difference offers some perspective as to the date and time when the final star was added. Children might want to look at photos of the flag to see its progression through time.

Moon's Surface

Six U.S. flags are planted on the surface of the moon. Crews from the Apollo 11, 12, 14, 15, 16 and 17 lunar missions placed them there, according to the ABC News website. This fact shows kids that the American flag represents the nation as a whole. It was the one symbolic and patriotic artifact that was left on the surface of the moon when astronauts ventured to the face of the moon.

Betsy Who?

She may have sewn quite a few flags in her day but there is no actual evidence that Betsy Ross was the person responsible for the design of the US Flag. In fact, Betsy's name did not even come up in conjunction with the deed until 1876, forty years after her death the first person to have made claim publicly was New Jersey Congressman Francis Hopkinson in 1780.

The 50-Star Pattern was Created by a High School Student

When Alaska and Hawaii became states 49 and 50, President Eisenhower received thousands of ideas for an updated flag. Almost of them were of a 50-star flag, including one from Robert G. Heft, a 17 year old student at Lancaster (Ohio) High, who created the design for a class project. He was one of three to submit the version that was accepted and remains in use today. Roberts got a B- on his project.

The Actual Flag that Inspired "The Star Spangled Banner" Still Exists

The flag that flew at Ft. McHenry during the war of 1812, immortalized in Francis Scott Key's tune, is one of the few remaining specimens of a 15 star , 15 bar flag. What is left of it is on permanent display at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History in Washington DC.

Folding the American Flag and what the Folds Represent

The traditional method of folding the flag is as follows:

(A) Straighten out the flag to full length and fold lengthwise once.



A)



(B) Fold it lengthwise a second time to meet the open edge, making sure that the union of stars on the blue field remains outward in full view. (A large flag may have to be folded lengthwise a third time.)

B)



(C) A triangular fold is then started by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to the open edge.

C)



(D) The outer point is then turned inward, parallel with the open edge, to form a second triangle.

D)



(E) The diagonal or triangular folding is continued toward the blue union until the end is reached, with only the blue showing and the form being that of a cocked (three-corner) hat.

E)



Meaning of Flag-Folding Program

The flag-folding ceremony represents the same religious principles on which our great country was originally founded. The portion of the flag denoting honor is the canton of blue containing the stars representing states our veterans served in uniform. The canton field of blue dresses from left to right and is inverted only when draped as a pall on the casket of a veteran who has served our country honorably in uniform.

In the U.S. Armed Forces, at the ceremony of retreat, the flag is lowered, folded in a triangle fold and kept under watch throughout the night as a tribute to our nation's honored dead. The next morning it is brought out and, at the ceremony of reveille, run aloft as a symbol of our belief in the resurrection of the body.

Symbols for the Folds of the Flag

1. The **first** fold of our flag is a symbol of life.
2. The **second** fold is a symbol of our belief in eternal life.
3. The **third** fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veteran departing our ranks, and who gave a portion of his or her life for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.
4. The **fourth** fold represents our weaker nature; as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace, as well as in times of war, for His divine guidance.
5. The **fifth** fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right, but it is still our country, right or wrong."
6. The **sixth** fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.
7. The **seventh** fold is a tribute to our armed forces, for it is through the armed forces that we protect our country and our flag against all enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.
8. The **eighth** fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor our mother, for whom it flies on Mother's Day.
9. The **ninth** fold is a tribute to womanhood, for it has been through their faith, love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great have been molded.
10. The **10th** fold is a tribute to father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since he or she was first born.
11. The **11th** fold, in the eyes of Hebrew citizens, represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies, in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
12. The **12th** fold, in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost.

When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, "In God We Trust."

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it has the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under Gen. George Washington and the sailors and Marines who served under Capt. John Paul Jones and

were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the U.S. Armed Forces, preserving for us the rights, privileges and freedoms we enjoy today.

The source and the date of origin of this Flag Folding Procedure is unknown, however some sources attribute it to the Gold Star Mothers of America while others to an Air Force chaplain stationed at the United States Air Force Academy. Others consider it to be an urban legend. It is provided as a patriotic service to all.

Read more: http://www.flagandbanner.com/flags/how_to_fold_american_flag.asp#ixzz3n8yP6qsa