

FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

The Living Symbol of Our Great Republic

HOW TO DISPLAY IT
HOW TO RESPECT IT



On Flag Day, June 14, 1923, representatives of over 68 organizations met in Washington for a conference, called by and conducted under the auspices of the National Americanism Commission of The American Legion, to draft an authentic code of flag etiquette. The code drafted by that conference was printed by the national organization of The American Legion and given nation-wide distribution. Millions of copies have been placed in the hands of interested citizens since 1923-24. The 77th Congress of the United States (Second Session) passed Public Law 623, which is a codification of the Flag Code. This law was later amended, and the Flag Code has now been changed to comply with the law. Since the original Flag Conferences, in 1923-24, the code has been adopted for use by 45 other organizations. American Legion Posts should bring the rules and diagrams contained in this revised edition of the code to the attention of schools and citizens generally.



PRINTED IN U.S.A.

THE AMERICAN'S CREED WM. TYLER PAGE

I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a republic; a sovereign nation of many sovereign states; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies.

RESPECT THE FLAG

WHEN you see the Stars and Stripes displayed, son, stand up and take off your hat. Somebody may titter. It is in the blood of some to deride all expression of noble sentiment. You may blaspheme in the street and stagger drunken in public places, and the bystanders will not pay much attention to you; but if you should get down on your knees and pray to Almighty God, or if you should stand bareheaded while a company of old soldiers marches by with flags to the breeze, some people will think you are showing off.

But don't you mind! When Old Glory comes along, salute, and let them think what they please! When you hear the band play "The Star-Spangled Banner" while you are in a restaurant or hotel dining room, get up even if you rise alone; stand there and don't be ashamed of it, either!

For of all the signs and symbols since the world began there is none other so full of meaning as the flag of this country. That piece of red, white and blue bunting means five thousand years of struggle upward. It is the full-grown flower of ages of fighting for liberty. It is the century plant of human hope in bloom.

Your flag stands for humanity, for an equal opportunity to all the sons of men. Of course we haven't arrived yet at that goal; there are many injustices yet among us, many senseless and cruel customs of the past still clinging to us, but the only hope of righting the wrongs of men lies in the feeling produced in our bosoms by the sight of that flag.

Other flags mean a glorious past, this flag a glorious future. It is not so much the flag of our fathers as it is the flag of our children, and of all children's children yet unborn. It is the flag of tomorrow. It is the signal of the "Good Time Coming." It is not the flag of your king—it is the flag of yourself and of all your neighbors.

Don't be ashamed when your throat chokes and the tears come, as you see it flying from the masts of our ships on all the seas or floating from every flagstaff of the Republic. You will never have a worthier emotion. Reverence it as you would reverence the signature of the Deity.

Listen, son! The band is playing the national anthem—"The Star-Spangled Banner!" They have let loose Old Glory yonder. Stand up—and others will stand with you.

This tribute to the flag is offered to the country in appeal to all men and women of all races, colors and tongues, that they may come to understand that our flag is the symbol of liberty and learn to love it.

ALVIN M. OWSLEY,

Past National Commander, The American Legion.



THE FLAG CODE



As Adopted by the National Flag Conference, Washington, D.C., June 14-15, 1923, and Revised and Endorsed by the Second National Flag Conference, Washington, May 15, 1924. Revised, March 1943, to Comply with P. L. 623, 77th Congress, Second Session, and as Amended by H. J. Res. 359, Dec. 1942, and by P. L. 396, 83rd Congress, June 14, 1954.

NATIONAL AMERICANISM COMMISSION

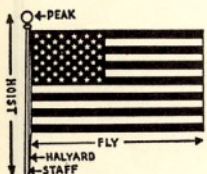
THE AMERICAN LEGION

INDIANAPOLIS, IND., U. S. A.

How to Display the Flag of the United States of America

DESCRIPTION OF THE FLAG

The Flag of the United States of America has 13 horizontal stripes—7 red and 6 white—the red and white stripes alternating, and a union which consists of white stars of five points on a blue field placed in the upper quarter next to the staff and extending to the lower edge of the fourth red stripe from the top. The number of stars is the same as the number of States in the Union.



Effective July 4, 1960*, the canton or union contains 50 stars arranged as indicated in the above reproduction. On the admission of a State into the Union a star will be added to the union of the Flag, and such addition will take effect on the 4th day of July next succeeding such admission. The proportions of the Flag as prescribed by Executive Order of President Taft, October 29, 1912*, are as follows:

- Hoist (width) of Flag... 1.
- Fly (length) of Flag... 1.9
- Hoist (width) of union... 7/13
- Fly (length) of union... 0.76
- Width of each stripe... 1/13
- Diameter of each star... .0616

*Executive Order 10834, approved on August 21, 1959, established the new design for the 50 star Flag, effective July 4, 1960; however, those proportions indicated above were left unchanged.)

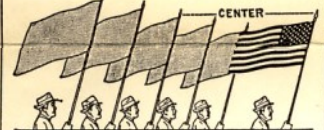
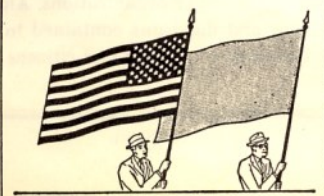
PROPER MANNER OF DISPLAYING THE FLAG

There are certain fundamental rules of heraldry, which if understood generally, would indicate the proper method of displaying the Flag of the United States of America. The matter becomes a very simple one if it is kept in mind that the Flag represents the living country and is itself considered as a living thing. The union of the Flag is the honor point; the right arm is the sword arm and therefore the point of danger and hence the place of honor.

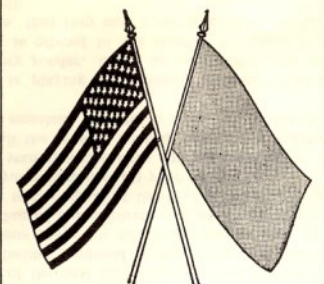
1. The Flag should be displayed only from sunrise to sunset, or between such hours as may be designated by proper authority. However, the Flag may be displayed at night upon special occasions when it is desired to produce a patriotic effect. It should be hoisted briskly, but should be lowered slowly and ceremoniously. The Flag should be displayed on all National and State holidays and on historic and special occasions. (However, being the emblem of our country, it ought to fly from every flagpole every day throughout the year, weather permitting.) Special care should be taken to see that the Flag is displayed on the following days: New Year's Day, January 1; Inauguration Day, January 20; Lincoln's Birthday, February 12; Washington's Birthday, February 22; Easter

Sunday (variable); Mother's Day, second Sunday in May; Armed Forces Day, third Saturday in May; Memorial Day (half staff until noon), May 30; Flag Day, June 14; Independence Day, July 4; Labor Day, first Monday in September; Citizenship Day, September 17; Columbus Day, October 12; Veterans Day, November 11; Thanksgiving Day, fourth Thursday of November; Christmas Day, December 25; such other days as may be proclaimed by the President of the United States; the birthdays of States (dates of admission); and on State holidays. The Flag should be displayed daily, weather permitting, on or near the main administration building of every public institution. The Flag should be displayed in or near every polling place on election days and, during school days, in or near every schoolhouse.

2. When carried in a procession with another flag or flags, the Flag of the United States of America should be either on the marching right, i.e., the Flag's own right, or when there is a line of other flags, the Flag of the United States of America may be in front of the center of that line.



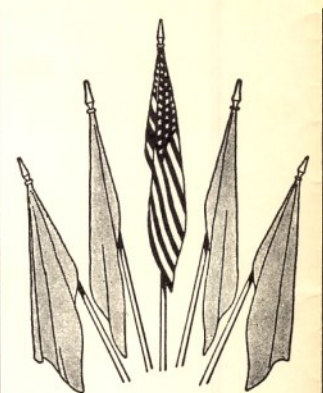
3. When displayed with another flag against a wall from crossed staffs, the Flag of the United States of America should



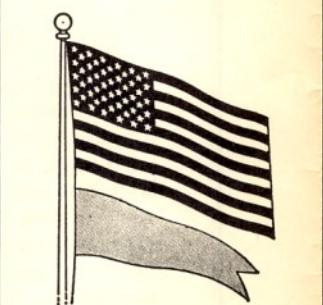
be on the right, the Flag's own right, and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.

4. When a number of flags of States or cities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs with the Flag of the United States of America, the latter should be at the center or at the highest point of the group.

5. When flags of States or cities or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the Flag of the United States of America



should be hoisted first and lowered last. No such flag or pennant flown in the former position should be placed above, or in the latter position to the right of the Flag of the United States

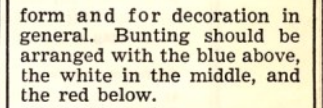


of America, i.e., to the observer's left, except during church services conducted by naval chaplains at sea, when the church pennant may be flown above the Flag during church services for the personnel of the Navy.

6. When flags of two or more nations are displayed they should be flown from separate staffs of the same height and the flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids

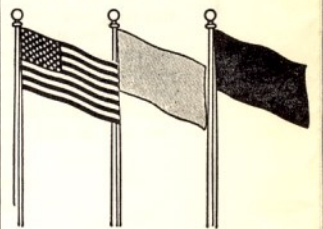
PROPER USE OF BUNTING

Bunting of the National colors should be used for covering a speaker's desk, draping over the front of a platform and for decoration in general. Bunting should be arranged with the blue above, the white in the middle, and the red below.



the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace.

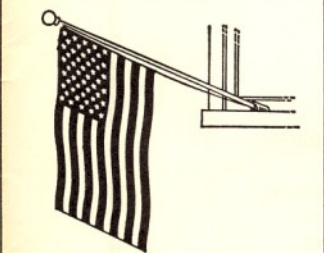
7. When the Flag is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from the window sill, balcony or front of



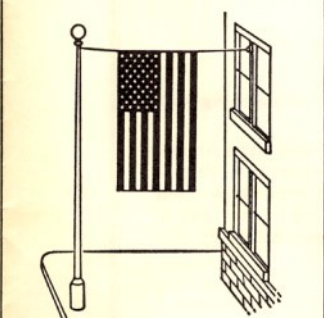
building, the union of the Flag should go clear to the peak of the staff unless the Flag is at half-staff. (When the Flag is suspended over a sidewalk from

a rope, extending from a house to a pole at the edge of the sidewalk, the Flag should be hoisted out from the building towards the pole, union first.)

8. When the Flag is displayed otherwise than by being flown from a staff, it should be displayed flat, whether indoors or

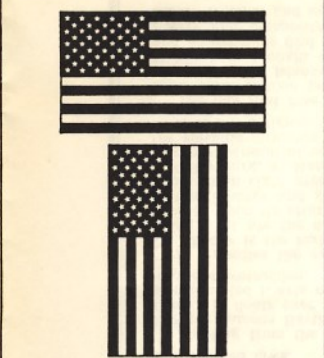


out, or so suspended that its folds fall as free as though the Flag were staffed. When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the Flag's own right; that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in



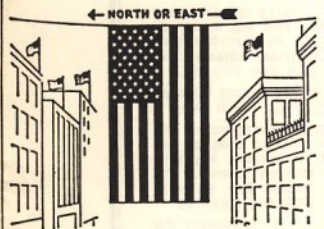
a window, the Flag should be displayed in the same way; that is, with the union, or blue field, to the left of the observer in the street.

9. When displayed over the middle of the street, the Flag should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.



10. When used on a speaker's platform, the Flag, if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker.

When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, if it is displayed in the chancel



of a church, or on the speaker's platform in a public auditorium, the flag should occupy the posi-

tion of honor and be placed at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he faces the congregation or audience. Any other flag so displayed in the chancel or on



the platform should be placed at the clergyman's or speaker's left as he faces the congregation or audience. But when the flag is displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium

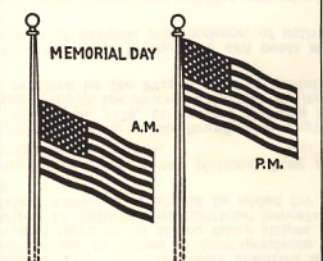


elsewhere than in the chancel or on the platform it should be placed in the position of honor at the right of the congregation or audience as they face the chancel or platform. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the congregation or audience as they face the chancel or platform.

11. When used in connection with the unveiling of a statue or monument, the Flag should form a distinctive feature during the ceremony, but the Flag itself should never be used as the covering for the statue.



12. When flown at half-staff, the Flag should be hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position; but before lowering the Flag for the day it should be raised again to the peak. By half-staff is meant lowering down the Flag to one-half the

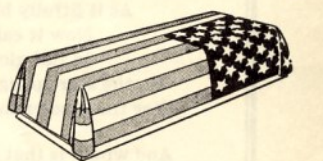


distance between the top and the bottom of the staff. On Memorial Day, May 30th, the Flag is displayed at half-staff from sunrise until noon and at full staff from noon until sunset; for the Nation lives and the Flag is the symbol of the living Nation. Crepe is used on the flagstaff only by order of the President.

13. When used to cover a casket, the Flag should be placed so that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The Flag should not be lowered into the grave nor allowed to touch the ground. The casket should be carried foot first.

14. When the Flag is in such a condition that it is no longer a

fitting emblem for display, it should not be cast aside or used in any way that might be viewed as disrespectful to the National colors, but should be destroyed as a whole privately, preferably



by burning or by some other method in harmony with the reverence and respect we owe to the emblem representing our Country.

15. Any rule or custom pertaining to the display of the Flag of the United States of America, set forth herein, may be altered, modified, or repealed, or additional rules with respect thereto may be prescribed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States whenever he deems it to be appropriate or desirable; and any such alteration or additional rule shall be set forth in a proclamation.

CAUTIONS

1. Do not permit disrespect to be shown to the Flag of the United States of America.
2. Do not dip the Flag of the United States of America to any person or any thing. The regimental color, State flag, organization or institutional flag will render this honor.
3. Do not display the Flag with the union down except as a signal of distress.
4. Do not place any other flag or pennant above or, if on the same level, to the right of the Flag of the United States of America.
5. Do not let the Flag touch the ground or the floor, or trail in the water.
6. Do not place any object or emblem of any kind on or above the Flag of the United States of America.
7. The Flag should never be used as drapery of any sort whatsoever, never festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds, but always allowed to fall free. Bunting of blue, white and red, always arranged with the blue above, the white in the middle, and the red below, should be used for covering a speaker's desk, draping the front of a platform, and for decoration in general.
8. Do not fasten the Flag in such manner as will permit it to be easily torn.
9. Do not drape the Flag over the hood, top, sides or back of a vehicle, or of a railway train or boat. When the Flag is displayed on a motor car, the staff should be affixed firmly to the chassis, or clamped to the radiator cap.
10. Do not display the Flag on a float in a parade except from a staff.
11. Do not use the Flag as a covering for a ceiling.
12. Do not carry the Flag flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.
13. Do not use the Flag as a portion of a costume or an athletic uniform. Do not embroider it upon cushions or handkerchiefs nor print it on paper napkins or boxes.
14. Do not put lettering of any kind upon the Flag.
15. Do not use the Flag in any form of advertising nor fasten an advertising sign to a pole from which the Flag is flown.
16. Do not display, use or store the Flag in such a manner as will permit it to be easily soiled or damaged.
17. The Flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.

Cautions and Suggestions: Additional Points to Bear in Mind in Paying Homage to the Flag

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the Flag, or when the Flag is



passing in a parade or in a review, all persons present should face the Flag,

stand at attention, and salute. Those present in uniform should render the military salute. When not in uniform, men should remove the headdress with the right hand, holding it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Men without hats should salute in the same manner. Aliens should stand at attention. Women should salute by placing the right hand over the heart. The salute to the Flag in the moving column should be rendered at the moment the Flag passes.

SALUTE TO NATIONAL ANTHEM

When the National Anthem is played and the Flag is not displayed, all pres-

ent should stand and face toward the music. Those in uniform should salute at the first note of the Anthem, retaining this position until the last note. All others should stand at attention, men removing the headdress. When the Flag is displayed, all present should face the Flag and salute.

The "Star-Spangled Banner" is now the National Anthem of the United States of America. It was made such by Act of Congress, March 3, 1931.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

In pledging allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, the approved practice in schools, which is suitable also for civilian adults, is as follows:

"I 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." is rendered by standing with the right hand over the heart. However, civilians will always show full respect to the Flag when the pledge is given by merely standing at attention, men removing the headdress. Persons in uniform should render the military salute.

THE SHIELD

The shield of the United States of America has 13 vertical stripes, 7 white and 6 red, with a blue chief without stars.

"I 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."

HISTORY OF THE FLAG

The United States Flag is the third oldest of the National Standards of the world; older than the Union Jack of Britain or the Tricolor of France.

The flag was first authorized by Congress June 14, 1777. This date is now observed as Flag Day throughout America.

The flag was first flown from Fort Stanwix, on the site of the present city of Rome, New York, on August 3, 1777. It was first under fire three days later in the Battle of Oriskany, August 6, 1777.

It was first decreed that there should be a star and a stripe for each state, making thirteen of both; for the states at that time had just been erected from the original thirteen colonies.

The colors of the Flag may be thus explained: The red is for valor, zeal and fervency; the white for hope, purity, cleanliness of life, and rectitude of conduct; the blue, the color of heaven, for reverence to God, loyalty, sincerity, justice and truth.

The star (an ancient symbol of India, Persia and Egypt) symbolizes dominion and sovereignty, as well as lofty aspirations. The constellation of the stars within the union, one star for each state, is emblematic of our Federal Constitution, which reserves to the States their individual sovereignty except as to rights delegated by them to the Federal Government.

The symbolism of the Flag was thus interpreted by Washington: "We take the stars from Heaven, the red from our mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity representing Liberty."

In 1791, Vermont, and in 1792, Kentucky were admitted to the Union and the number of stars and stripes was raised to fifteen in correspondence. As other states came into the Union it became evident there would be too many stripes. So in 1818 Congress enacted that the number of stripes be reduced and restricted henceforth to thirteen, representing the thirteen original states; while a star should be added for each succeeding state. That law is the law of today.

The name "Old Glory" was given to our National Flag August 10, 1831, by Captain William Driver of the brig Charles Doggett.

The flag was first carried in battle at the Brandywine, September 11, 1777. It first flew over foreign territory January 28, 1778, at Nassau, Bahama Islands; Fort Nassau having been captured by the Americans in the course of the war for independence. The first foreign salute to the flag was rendered by the French admiral LaMotte Piquet, off Quiberon Bay, February 13, 1778.

The United States Flag is unique in the deep and noble significance of its message to the entire world, a message of national independence, of individual liberty, of idealism, of patriotism.

It symbolizes national independence and popular sovereignty. It is not the Flag of a reigning family or royal house, but of 180 million free people welded into a Nation, one and inseparable, united not only by community of interest, but by vital unity of sentiment and purpose; a Nation distinguished for the clear individual conception of its citizens alike of their duties and their privileges, their obligations and their rights.

It incarnates for all mankind the spirit of Liberty and the glorious ideal of human Freedom; not the freedom of unrestraint or the liberty of license, but an unique ideal of equal opportunity for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, safeguarded by the stern and lofty principles of duty, of righteousness and of justice, and attainable by obedience to self-imposed laws.

Floating from the lofty pinnacle of American idealism, it is a beacon of enduring hope, like the famous Bartholdi Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World to the oppressed of all lands. It floats over a wondrous assemblage of people from every racial stock of the earth whose united hearts constitute an indivisible and invincible force for the defense and succor of the downtrodden.

It embodies the essence of patriotism. Its spirit is the spirit of the American nation. Its history is the history of the American people. Emblazoned upon its folds in letters of living light are the names and fame of our heroic dead, the Fathers of the Republic who devoted upon its altars their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor. Twice told tales of National honor and glory cluster thickly about it. Ever victorious, it has emerged triumphant from eight great National conflicts. It flew at Saratoga, at Yorktown, at Palo Alto, at Gettysburg, at Manila Bay, at Chateau-Thierry, at Iwo Jima. It bears witness to the immense expansion of our national boundaries, the development of our natural resources, and the splendid structure of our civilization. It prophesies the triumph of popular government, of civic and religious liberty and of national righteousness throughout the world.

The flag first rose over thirteen states along the Atlantic seaboard, with a population of some three million people. Today it flies over fifty states, extending across the continent, and over great islands of the two oceans; and one hundred eighty millions owe it allegiance. It has been brought to this proud position by love and sacrifice. Citizens have advanced it and heroes have died for it. It is the sign made visible of the strong spirit that has brought liberty and prosperity to the people of America. It is the flag of all of us alike. Let us accord it honor and loyalty.

STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

O say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore, dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines in the stream;
'Tis the star-spangled banner—O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

And where is that band, who so valiantly swore,
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion,
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution;
No refuge could save the hireling or slave
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave,
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

O, thus be it ever when freemen shall stand
Between their lov'd homes and the war's desolation!
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land
Praise the power that hath made and preserved us a nation!
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto: "In God is our trust."
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

"I would like to go a step further and insist upon Americans being able to sing 'The Star-Spangled Banner.'"

"I have noted audiences singing—I should say trying to sing—the American national air, but outside of about 2 per cent they are only mumbling or pretending to sing. I would like to have the spirit of America show itself in song. I hope you will insist upon some suitable provision to that end in your code."—President Harding to National Flag Conference called by The American Legion.