

How to Fold the U.S. Flag



Begin by holding the flag waist-high with another person so its surface is parallel to the ground.



Fold lengthwise. Bring the striped half up over the blue field.



Fold lengthwise, again bringing the blue field back on top of the stripes.



Fold the lower right hand corner to the upper edge to form a triangle.



Now fold the triangle toward the blue field.



Keep folding until you have a triangle with only the blue field showing. There should be 12 folds in all if you did it right. It should end up in a triangle shape like the revolutionaries' hats.

Caring for the Flag

- If soiled, the flag may be washed or dry cleaned.
- When torn or frayed but not faded, the flag may be mended.
- A worn or faded flag should be retired with respect. Fold the flag and place it on a fire. The ashes should then be buried.
- Some VFW Posts and other community groups collect worn flags and conduct a retirement ceremony. Check in your community for who conducts the ceremony.

Source: U.S. Flag Code, 1976 (updated 2001)

When to Fly the U.S. Flag

The U.S. flag can be flown everyday of the year. If it is flown for 24 hours, it should be illuminated so the flag is not in complete darkness. The flag should especially be flown on the following days:

New Year's Day, Jan. 1; **Inauguration Day**, Jan. 20;
Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday, third Monday in January;
Lincoln's Birthday, Feb. 12; **Washington's Birthday**, third Monday in February; **Easter Sunday**, varies yearly; **Mother's Day**, second Sunday in May; **Armed Forces Day**, third Saturday in May; **Memorial Day** (half-staff until noon), last Monday in May; **Flag Day**, June 14; **Independence Day**, July 4; **Labor Day**, first Monday in September; **Constitution Day**, Sept. 17;
Columbus Day, second Monday in October; **Navy Day**, Oct. 27; **Veterans Day**, Nov. 11; **Thanksgiving Day**, fourth Thursday in November; **Christmas Day**, Dec. 25; and any other days proclaimed by the President, i.e. birthdays of states (date of admission) and state holidays.

The flag is half-staffed (sunrise to sunset) on the following days:

Peace Officers Memorial Day, May 15; **National Korean War Armistice Day**, July 27; **Patriot Day**, Sept. 11; and **National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day**, Dec. 7.

Source: U.S. Flag Code, 1976 (updated 2001)

For additional information, visit the VFW Web site www.vfw.org then go to "Your Town" then to "Flag Etiquette."

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Our Flag

Things You
Should Know

Flag Etiquette

Here are some of the rules for proper display and use of the U.S. flag, as established by generally accepted custom and by *Public Law 94-344* approved by Congress and signed by the President in 1976. The Flag Code does not impose penalties for the misuse of the flag. Such penalties are determined by the individual states and the District of Columbia.

Bunting



The U.S. flag should never be used as drapery, never festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds. It should always be allowed to fall free. Bunting should be used for decoration: First blue, then white, then red.

Behind a Speaker



When used on a speaker's platform, the flag, if displayed flat, should be above and behind the speaker. Use bunting to decorate a speaker's desk or the front of the platform.

Over a Street



When the U.S. flag is displayed other than from a staff, it should be displayed flat, or suspended so its folds fall free. When displayed over a street, place the union so it faces north or east, depending on the direction of the street.



From a Building

When the flag is displayed from a staff projecting from a windowsill, balcony or building front, the union of the flag should always be at the peak of the staff unless the flag is half-staff.



On a Wall

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. In a window, the union should be to the flag's right when viewed from outside.



On a Staff

When the U.S. flag is flown with flags or pennants of states, cities or societies, it should always be at the peak. When flown from adjacent staffs, the U.S. flag should be hoisted first and lowered last.



National Flags

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



In a Parade

When carried in a parade front with other flags, the U.S. flag should always be to the marching right of the other flags, or to the front and center of the flag line.



Showing Respect

When the flag is raised, lowered or is passing in a parade or review, everyone present, except military personnel, should face the flag and place his or her hand over their heart. Men remove their hats. Military personnel salute.



Memorial Day

The flag should be briskly raised in the morning to the top, then lowered slowly to half-staff. At noon, the flag should be raised to the top again.



On a Casket

When the flag is used on a casket, its union should be over the deceased's left shoulder. Carry the casket foot first. The flag should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.