

# Displaying AND Honoring THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



## Displaying THE FLAG PROPERLY

*The U.S. Flag should always be displayed in the most prominent, most honored position. No other flag should ever appear more important.\**

- A. On a Wall:** The U.S. flag should be displayed with the union uppermost and to the observer's left.
- B. In Multi-National Flag Displays:** The U.S. flag is to be displayed first—to "its own right"—followed by the flags of all other countries (at equal height and in alphabetical order) to the left (observer's right) of the U.S. flag.
- C. Among Subordinate Flags:** The U.S. flag should be at the center and the highest point—the position of prominence.
- D. Displayed From a Staff:** The U.S. flag should hold the position of superior prominence, in advance of the audience, and to the speaker's right (facing the audience). Other flags should be displayed to the speaker's left.
- E. On a Pole:** When several flags are flown from the same pole, the U.S. flag should always be at the top—except during church services by naval chaplains at sea when the church pennant may be flown above the U.S. flag on the ship's mast.
- F. At Night:** When the flag is displayed twenty-four hours a day, it must be properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.
- G. On a Lapel:** When the flag is displayed as a lapel pin, it should be worn on the left lapel—near the heart.
- H. Among Peers:** When flags from two or more nations are displayed, the U.S. flag should hold the position of superior prominence in time of peace. Each flag should be of equal size and flown at the same height.

\* The United Nations Headquarters Building in New York City, where the U.S. flag holds the most prominent position, is the only U.S. location exempt from this provision.

## FORMAL Occasions

**Parades and Reviews:** In parades or reviews, at the moment the flag passes, non-uniformed persons should stand at attention facing the flag with their right hands over their hearts. Persons in uniform and veterans should face the flag and render the military salute.

**Processions:** In processions, the flag should be to the right of the marchers. When other flags are included, the U.S. flag should be centered in front of the others or carried to their right.

**Memorials, Burials, and Funerals:** During these services, the flag should lay over the casket with the blue field covering the head and left shoulder. The flag must not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground at any time.

## National ANTHEM

The "Star Spangled Banner" was written in 1814 by Francis Scott Key and declared the national anthem in 1931. When the anthem is played or sung, citizens should stand and face the flag to show their respect for the United States. A non-uniformed person wearing a hat must remove it with the right hand and hold it against the left shoulder, right hand resting over the heart. Those in uniform and veterans should stand at attention and salute the flag. (Note: If flag is not displayed, face the music instead.)

## Pledge OF Allegiance

*"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."*

Whenever the **Pledge of Allegiance** is recited, non-uniformed persons should stand at attention facing the flag with their right hands over their hearts. Persons in uniform and veterans should remain silent, face the flag and render the military salute.

## Folding THE FLAG

To properly fold the U.S. flag, follow these steps:

1. Two people face each other, each holding one end of the flag. Stretch it horizontally at waist height and fold in half lengthwise.
2. Fold the flag in half lengthwise again; the union (blue field) should be on the outside with edges held together.
3. One person holds the flag by the union while the other starts at the opposite end by making a triangular fold.
4. Continue to fold in triangles until the flag resembles a cocked hat with only the blue field showing.



1a.



1b.



2.



3.



4.



## Flying AT HALF-STAFF

Flying the U.S. flag at half-staff, or on a ship at half-mast, is an honored tradition which signifies that the nation is in mourning due to the death of a prominent citizen. In 1976, when the flag code was amended, changes were incorporated concerning whose death meets the criteria befitting a half-staff display. These changes make it difficult to define the half-staff criteria clearly and concisely.

However, generally speaking, the flag code dictates that the U.S. flag be flown at half-staff only upon the death of principal figures of the U.S. government and the governor of a state, territory, or possession, as a mark of respect to their memory. (Note: For specific information concerning the limited additions to this general provision, please refer to the flag code.)

When desiring to honor someone who has died but for whom a half-staff display is not appropriate, the National Flag Foundation recommends adhering to the flag code by lowering private flags to half-staff (e.g., corporate, fraternal, military, etc.). This substitution of flags preserves the integrity of the "nation in mourning" distinction while allowing appropriate mourning for the deceased.

To position the flag at half-staff, first hoist the flag to the peak of the staff for an instant before lowering it to the half-staff position — roughly halfway between the top and bottom of the staff. Before lowering it for the day, raise the flag again to the peak for an instant.



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## FLAG FLYING DAYS

January 1 – New Year's Day  
 Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
*3rd Monday in January*  
 February 12 – Lincoln's Birthday  
 Presidents' Day  
*3rd Monday in February*  
 February 22 – Washington's Birthday  
 Easter Sunday  
*Variable*  
 Patriots' Day  
*3rd Monday in April*  
 May 4 – International Firefighters Day  
 May 8 – V-E Day  
 Mother's Day  
*2nd Sunday in May*  
 May 15 – Peace Officers Memorial Day  
*Half Staff (sunrise until sunset)*  
 Armed Forces Day  
*3rd Saturday in May*  
 Memorial Day  
*Last Monday in May - Half Staff (sunrise until noon)*  
 June 14 – Flag Day  
 Father's Day  
*3rd Sunday in June*  
 July 4 – Independence Day  
 July 27 – Korean War Veterans Armistice Day  
*Half Staff (sunrise until sunset)*  
 August 7 – Purple Heart Day  
 August 14 – V-J Day  
 August 19 – National Aviation Day  
 Labor Day  
*1st Monday in September*  
 September 11 – Patriot Day  
*Half Staff (sunrise until sunset)*  
 September 17 – Constitution Day  
 National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Day  
*First Sunday in October - Half Staff (sunrise until sunset)*  
 Columbus Day  
*2nd Monday in October*  
 October 27 – Navy Day  
 Election Day  
*1st Tuesday after 1st Monday in November*  
 November 11 – Veterans Day  
 Thanksgiving Day  
*4th Thursday in November*  
 December 7 – Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day  
*Half Staff (sunrise until sunset)*  
 December 25 – Christmas Day



# OUR Flag

HOW TO HONOR & DISPLAY IT

The Essential  
 Poster/Guide  
 for Proper Care  
 and Treatment  
 of the United  
 States Flag



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## U.S. Flag CODE



The United States Flag Code, first adopted in 1923, and later amended, prescribes flag etiquette for a variety of circumstances ensuring that our national symbol is treated properly.

This handbook reflects the National Flag Foundation's explanation of the U.S. Flag Code in layman's language. NFF has not endeavored to restate the flag code, but rather to explain it in understandable terms. This handbook is an authoritative guide containing up-to-date recommendations for displaying, honoring and caring for the Flag of the United States of America.

Readers should always remember that the flag code is designed for "the use of such civilian groups or organizations as may not be required to conform to regulations promulgated by one or more executive departments [of the U.S. Government.]"

Thus, the flag code does not contain any penalties or enforcement provisions for noncompliance. Quite simply, it is a guide for civilians and civilian groups who wish to properly honor the United States of America's principal emblem.

It should also be noted that each military branch has its own flag code; therefore, on matters concerning military flag etiquette, we recommend that you consult the specific branch code.

**"NO DISRESPECT SHOULD BE  
 SHOWN TO THE FLAG OF THE  
 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA."**

– U.S. FLAG CODE

**"THE FLAG STANDS FOR ALL  
 THAT WE HOLD DEAR —  
 FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY,  
 GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE,  
 BY THE PEOPLE, AND FOR  
 THE PEOPLE."**

– HENRY CABOT LODGE, 1915

## Care AND RESPECT

*The U.S. flag should always be treated with the utmost care and respect. Remember, the flag represents a living country and, as such, is considered a living thing.*

1. Always display the flag with the blue union field up — never display the flag upside down, except as a distress signal.
2. Always hold the flag carefully — never let it touch anything beneath it: the ground, the floor, water or merchandise.
3. Always keep the flag aloft and free — never carry it flat or horizontally.
4. Always keep the flag clean and safe — never let it become torn, soiled or damaged.
5. Always dispose of a worn flag properly, preferably by burning it.
6. Always treat the flag with respect. Never use it for advertising purposes. Never embroider it on household items or pieces of clothing. Never use it as part of a costume or athletic uniform. However, it is proper to attach a flag patch to the uniform of military personnel, fire fighters, police officers and members of other patriotic organizations — provided the patch is properly affixed. (Note: "Properly affixed" is best understood by referring to the flag code.)



## Flag FACTS

*The U.S. Flag, adopted on June 14, 1777, is the fourth oldest national flag in the world. Denmark's flag, adopted in 1219, is the oldest.*

- A flag expert is called a "vexillologist."
- The blue field on the U.S. Flag is called the "union."
- On Memorial Day (the last Monday in May), to honor all who died in battle, the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff for the remainder of the day.
- Since 1834, the U.S. Flag has flown continuously next to the grave of the Revolutionary War hero, the Marquis de Lafayette, near Paris, France.
- June 14 was proclaimed Flag Day by President Woodrow Wilson in 1916. While Flag Day was a popular celebration in scores of communities for many years after Wilson's proclamation, it didn't receive its official Congressional designation until 1949.

## About

### ANNIN FLAGMAKERS

#### American Flags ~ American Made

We are a family-owned business that has been making our country's symbol since 1847. We are very proud to have members of the 6th generation of the Annin family at the helm. Over the years, we've learned a bit about making flags - from the creation of long lasting fabrics and inks to the dense embroidery of our rich star fields. Our flags have flown over the White House and on foreign fields of battle. We were there at the Argonne Offensive and the Battle of Guadalcanal. From the top of Mt. Suribachi on Iwo Jima to the surface of the moon, Annin flags have been there to represent the core ideals of our great country.

*"A thoughtful mind, when it sees a nation's flag, sees not the flag only but the nation itself." Henry Ward Beecher, 1861*

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