

## Betsy Ross - Did She or Didn't She?

A fourth generation American, Elizabeth (Betsy) Griscom, was born January 1, 1752. She was the eighth of seventeen children born into a strict Pennsylvania Quaker family. When Betsy finished her schooling she was apprenticed to a man who ran an upholstery shop. This was where she met John Ross, the son of an Episcopal assistant rector of Christ Church. John also was working for the upholsterer. John and Betsy fell in love and wanted to marry, but because he was not a member of the Friends Church, she was cut off emotionally and financially from all her family and friends. From then on she never existed to them.

One night in November, 1773 when Betsy was 21, John and Betsy were ferried across the Delaware River to Hugg's Tavern in New Jersey. They were married by William Franklin, the Governor of New Jersey at that time. William was Benjamin Franklin's son. This was just three years before the Franklin family split, with William staying a Loyalist against the Revolution.

Two years after they were married John and Betsy started their own upholstery business. Then because of the war it became harder and harder for them to obtain the fabric they needed so while Betsy continued to do sewing John joined the Pennsylvania Militia. In 1776 he was mortally wounded while guarding an ammunition cache. Betsy tried to nurse him back to health but he died January 21st.

Betsy was married three times. Her second husband, Joseph Ashburn, a sea captain drowned at sea. Her third husband, John Claypoole was also lost at sea. Betsy had seven children but only five lived to adulthood. She had no children with John Ross. Betsy (Ross) Claypoole died at age 84 on January 30, 1836.

There is much controversy over whether Betsy Ross really designed and or made the first United States flag. In 1870 one of Betsy Ross's grandsons, William J. Canby, told the story at a meeting of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, about her creating the flag after George Washington and two representatives of Congress came to her home asking her to make a flag from their rough drawing. Research into government records and minutes, personal diaries and writings of George Washington and others of that time has not been able to verify Canby's statement. It has been verified that Francis Hopkinson is credited with designing the first American flag. He is one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and a member of Continental Congress.

The May 29, 1777 minutes of the State Navy Board of Pennsylvania do record that Elizabeth Ross was paid fourteen pounds twelve shillings and two pence for making ship's colors for the Pennsylvania state ships. And it wasn't until 1779 that George Washington made it known that he wanted a national flag made for the army.

So with no proof positive about Betsy Ross making our first flag how did the story get so engrained in our lives? Three things possibly were the leading factors. First, a book published in 1909 after William Canby's death by his brother George and nephew Lloyd Balderson went into more detail about William's claims about Betsy making the flag. Second, The Betsy Ross Memorial Association was formed and a painting named The Birth of Our Nation's Flag was reproduced by Charles H. Weisgerber showing the committee of Congress that was supposed to have met with Betsy while she sewed the flag. The artist took artistic license with history by putting the 13 stars in a circle. Actually, the Grand Union flag with 13 alternating red and white stripes and the British Union Jack in the upper left-hand corner was flown January 1, 1776 over George Washington's base at Prospect Hill while the Continental Army laid siege to Boston after it was taken over by the British Army. When the painting was first exhibited in 1893, at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, it aroused a lot of public interest.

And third, to raise money to purchase the Betsy Ross house in Philadelphia subscriptions were sold to the American Flag House and the Betsy Ross Memorial Association, which was incorporated in 1898. By contributing ten-cents each person received a certificate of membership with pictures of her house, her grave in Mt. Moriah Cemetery and a reproduction of the Weisberger painting. After that, many schools displayed a copy of the painting.

So if we look back through our history there were a lot of things that happened that didn't necessarily get recorded. Things women did weren't always considered noteworthy. Did Betsy Ross sew together our first flag? Did someone forget to write it down at the time? There was a war going on after all. After 240 years as a nation and with numerous changes the flag has gone through does it really matter in the long run? I don't know. I guess it's up to the individual to decide.

### Answers to Betsy Ross Quiz

1. C
2. B
3. C
4. D
5. D
6. A
7. B



## Betsy Ross Quiz

1. Where were Betsy Griscom, a Quaker and John Ross, a member of Christ Church married in November, 1773?
  - A. In Betsy's church
  - B. In John's church
  - C. In Hugg's Tavern
  - D. In Pennsylvania
2. What did Betsy do after she completed her education?
  - A. She opened a tea shop and sold bakery goods.
  - B. She was an apprentice for a man who owned an upholstery shop.
  - C. She taught school until she had her first child.
  - D. She cleaned houses for two members of the Continental Congress until she got married.
3. How many siblings did Betsy have?
  - A. None-she was an only child
  - B. Three- two older sisters and one younger brother
  - C. Sixteen-seven older and nine younger
  - D. Nine-she was the oldest of the ten
4. Who officiated at John and Betsy's wedding?
  - A. John's father who was an assistant rector at Christ Church where John was a member
  - B. Betsy's father who was the Deacon at Friends Church where Betsy was a member
  - C. George Washington a close family friend
  - D. William Franklin the Governor of New Jersey
5. How long were Betsy and John Married?
  - A. 10 years and 1 month
  - B. 45 years 6 days
  - C. 5 years 5 months
  - D. 2 years 2 months
6. How many times did Betsy get married?
  - A. Three
  - B. One
  - C. Two
  - D. Five
7. How was money raised to purchase the Betsy Ross house in Philadelphia after her death in 1836?
  - A. Her children donated the house to the city because they didn't want to pay for the upkeep and taxes any more.
  - B. Subscriptions were sold to the American Flag House for ten-cents a person.
  - C. School children sold American flags to raise the money.
  - D. Benjamin Franklin donated the money so it could be preserved.

## The U. S. Coast Guard

### Its History and Flag Codes

The Coast Guard was officially started August 4, 1790 when President George Washington signed the Tariff Act. It authorized the construction of ten vessels to enforce federal tariff and trade laws and to prevent smuggling. Originally known as "revenue cutters," the Revenue Marine and Revenue Cutter Service its size and responsibilities grew as the nation grew. The Coast Guard is one of the oldest organizations of the federal government and until Congress established the Navy Department in 1798 it was the only armed force the nation had afloat.

In 1915, an act of Congress was passed to merged the Revenue Cutter Service with the U. S. Life-Saving Service and change the name to the U. S. Coast Guard. The legislation stated that it "shall constitute a part of the military forces of the United States" which simply reinforces its long history of defending the nation along with the other armed services.

President Franklin Roosevelt transferred the Lighthouse Service to the Coast Guard in 1939. The Commerce Department's Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation was permanently transferred to the Coast Guard by Congress in 1946. Now there is a single maritime federal agency dedicated to saving lives at sea and enforcing the nations maritime laws. The Coast Guard's national defense responsibilities remain one of its most important functions even today. In times of war, or at the direction of the President, the Coast Guard serves as part of the Navy.

The Dolphin helicopter is the Coast Guard's Short Range Recovery aircraft. There are a total of 102 Dolphins in the Coast Guard Fleet. There are 17 cities where the Coast Guard have their home ports. They are on the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, Gulf of Mexico, Hawaii, and the Great Lakes region. The Dolphins are used mainly for search and rescue, enforcement of laws and treaties (including drug interdiction), polar ice breaking, marine environmental protection including pollution control, and military readiness.

The Dolphin is usually deployed from shore but if necessary it can be deployed from medium and high endurance Coast Guard Cutters and Polar Icebreakers. When deployed from an icebreaker, the helicopter acts as the ship's eyes by looking out for thinner ice and more navigable ice channels. They also airlift supplies to villages stranded by winter weather or transport scientists to conduct research in remote areas.

Seven new Dolphins were acquired to patrol the Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) around Washington D.C.



## International Code Flags or Signaling Flags

International Code Flags are used to signal between two ships or between ship and shore. Also called signaling flags they are a set of flags of different colors, shapes and markings. When they are used by themselves or in combination they have different meanings. There are 26 square flags representing the letters of the alphabet, 10 numeral pendants, one answering pendant, and three substitutes or repeaters.

There are only five colors that are readily distinguishable at sea. They are red, blue, yellow, black, and white. Also, the colors can only be combined a certain way; either red and white, yellow and blue, blue and white, or black and white.

The number of flags flown together and the combination of certain flags have different meanings. One-flag signals are for urgent situations or very common signals. Two-flag signals are mainly distress and maneuvering signals. Three-flag signals are for points of the compass, relative bearings, standard times, verbs, punctuation, and general code and decode signals. Four-flags are geographical signals, names of ships, bearings, etc. Five-flag signals relate to time and position. Six-flag signals are used to indicate north, south, east or west in latitude and longitude signals. Seven-flags are for longitude signals containing more than 100 degrees.

If you spend time at some of the towns on the coast, visit Portland when the fleet is in or are around navel installations, or other port cities where there is a lot of international shipping traffic you will get to see some of these code flags being flown. Mainly we think of them as being used in time of distress for the boat or ship especially if their radio goes out. But as you can see, just like signing with your hands to "talk" with someone who is deaf, people on ships can communicate with each other with flags. They don't have to know the other person's speaking language. So if you want to know what they are saying you will have to learn what their signs or signals are telling you.

The quizzes can be given out just before the presentation of each section then, give the answers after each section is done. The signal flag game can be done after the presentation of the International Code Flags information.

### Answers for Coast Guard Quiz

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 1. True  | 6. True  |
| 2. True  | 7. True  |
| 3. False | 8. True  |
| 4. False | 9. True  |
| 5. False | 10. True |

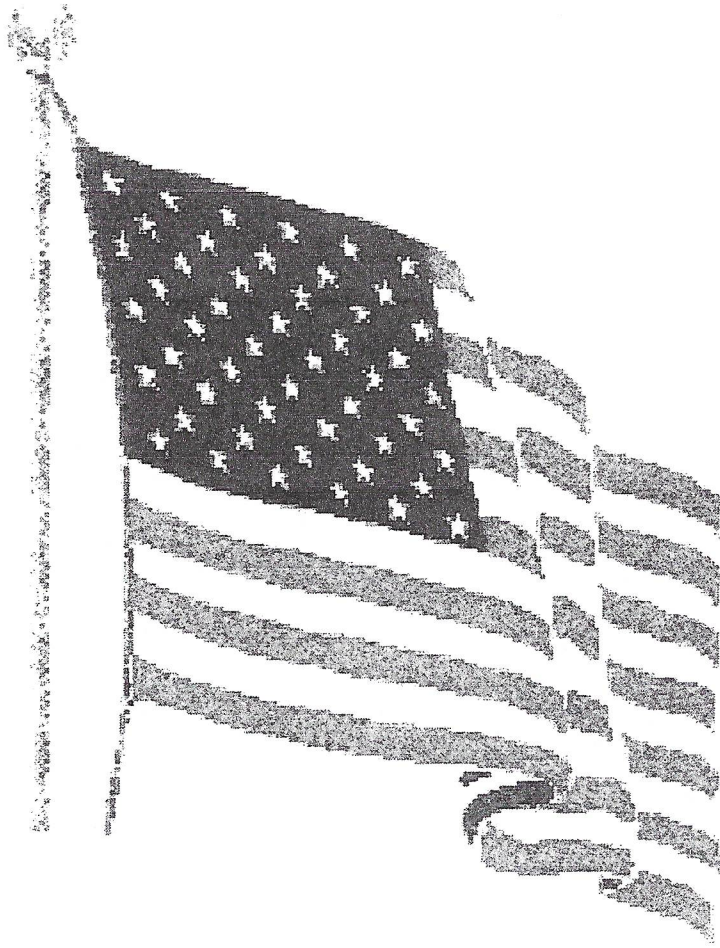
## U. S. Coast Guard Quiz

Mark each sentence with a T if it is True or F if it is False

1. \_\_\_\_ The Coast Guard is one of the oldest organizations of the federal government.
2. \_\_\_\_ The Coast Guard was originally known as the Revenue Cutter Service.
3. \_\_\_\_ The Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean off the United States coast lines are the only waters where the Coast Guard is allowed to patrol.
4. \_\_\_\_ President Franklin Roosevelt transferred the care of lighthouses to the Navy in 1939.
5. \_\_\_\_ The Coast Guard's largest ship is called the Dolphin.
6. \_\_\_\_ Seven new Dolphins were acquired to patrol the Air Defense Identification Zone around Washington D.C.
7. \_\_\_\_ In 1790 when President George Washington signed the Tariff Act it authorized ten vessels to be constructed to enforce federal tariff and trade laws and to prevent smuggling.
8. \_\_\_\_ In 1915 Congress acted to merge the Revenue Cutter Service and the U. S. Life Saving Service and changed the name to the U. S. Coast Guard.
9. \_\_\_\_ The Coast Guard Fleet has home ports in 17 cities on the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, Hawaii, and the Great Lakes region.
10. \_\_\_\_ There are only five colors used on flags that are flown at sea--red, blue, yellow, black, and white.



# Stars and Stripes Forever



Written by

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Jeanne Purich, Program Coordinator

Public Policy

# 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.**

The pledge of allegiance should be rendered by standing at attention, facing the flag, and saluting.

To salute, all persons come to attention. Those in uniform give the appropriate formal salute. Citizens not in uniform salute by placing their right hand over the heart and men with head cover should remove it and hold it to left shoulder, hand over the heart. Members of organizations in formation salute upon command of the person in charge.

## Commentary on the Pledge of Allegiance

*Red Skelton*



*As a schoolboy, one of Red Skelton's teachers explained the words and meaning of the Pledge of Allegiance to his class. Skelton later wrote down, and eventually recorded, his recollection of this lecture. It is followed by an observation of his own.*



I - - Me; an individual; a committee of one.

Pledge - - Dedicate all of my worldly goods to give without self-pity.

Allegiance - - My love and my devotion.

To the Flag - - Our standard; *Old Glory* ; a symbol of Freedom; wherever she waves there is respect, because your loyalty has given her a dignity that shouts, Freedom is everybody's job.

United - - That means that we have all come together.

States - - Individual communities that have united into forty-eight great states. Forty-eight individual communities with pride and dignity and purpose. All divided with imaginary boundaries, yet united to a common purpose, and that is love for country.





**And to the Republic** - - Republic--a state in which sovereign power is invested in representatives chosen by the people to govern. And government is the people; and it's from the people to the leaders, not from the leaders to the people.

**For which it stands**

**One Nation** - - One Nation--meaning, so blessed by God.

**Indivisible** - - Incapable of being divided.

**With Liberty** - - Which is Freedom; the right of power to live one's own life, without threats, fear, or some sort of retaliation.

**And Justice** - - The principle, or qualities, of dealing fairly with others.

**For All** - - For All--which means, boys and girls, it's as much your country as it is mine.

And now, boys and girls, let me hear you recite the 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, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Since I was a small boy, two states have been added to our country, and two words have been added to the Pledge of Allegiance: **Under God**. Wouldn't it be a pity if someone said that is a prayer, and that would be eliminated from schools, too?

Red Skelton



# I am the Flag

by Ruth Apperson Rous

I am the flag of the United States of America.

I was born on June 14, 1777, in Philadelphia.

There the Continental Congress adopted my stars and stripes as the national flag.

My thirteen stripes alternating red and white, with a union of thirteen white stars in a field of blue, represented a new constellation, a new nation dedicated to the personal and religious liberty of mankind.

Today fifty stars signal from my union, one for each of the fifty sovereign states in the greatest constitutional republic the world has ever known.

My colors symbolize the patriotic ideals and spiritual qualities of the citizens of my country.

My red stripes proclaim the fearless courage and integrity of American men and boys and the self-sacrifice and devotion of American mothers and daughters.

My white stripes stand for liberty and equality for all.

My blue is the blue of heaven, loyalty, and faith.

I represent these eternal principles: liberty, justice, and humanity.

I embody American freedom: freedom of speech, religion, assembly, the press, and the sanctity of the home.

I typify that indomitable spirit of determination brought to my land by Christopher Columbus and by all my forefathers - the Pilgrims, Puritans, settlers at James town and Plymouth.

I am as old as my nation.

I am a living symbol of my nation's law: the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights.

I voice Abraham Lincoln's philosophy: "A government of the people, by the people, for the people."

I stand guard over my nation's schools, the seedbed of good citizenship and true patriotism.

I am displayed in every schoolroom throughout my nation; every schoolyard has a flag pole for my display.

Daily thousands upon thousands of boys and girls pledge their allegiance to me and my country.

I have my own law—Public Law 829, "The Flag Code" - which definitely states my correct use and display for all occasions and situations.

I have my special day, Flag Day. June 14 is set aside to honor my birth.

Americans, I am the sacred emblem of your country. I symbolize your birthright, your heritage of liberty purchased with blood and sorrow.

I am your title deed of freedom, which is yours to enjoy and hold in trust for posterity.

If you fail to keep this sacred trust inviolate, if I am nullified and destroyed, you and your children will become slaves to dictators and despots.

Eternal vigilance is your price of freedom.

As you see me silhouetted against the peaceful skies of my country, remind yourself that I am the flag of your country, that I stand for what you are - no more, no less.

Guard me well, lest your freedom perish from the earth.

Dedicate your lives to those principles for which I stand: "One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

I was created in freedom. I made my first appearance in a battle for human liberty. God grant that I may spend eternity in my "land of the free and the home of the brave" and that I shall ever be known as "Old Glory," the flag of the United States of America





## History of American Flag.

*For more than 200 years, the American flag has been the symbol of our nation's strength and unity. It's been a source of pride and inspiration for millions of citizens. And the American Flag has been a prominent icon in our national history<sup>[6]</sup>.*

On January 1, 1776, the Continental Army was reorganized in accordance with a Congressional resolution which placed American forces under George Washington's control. On that New Year's Day the Continental Army was laying siege to Boston which had been taken over by the British Army. Washington ordered the Grand Union flag hoisted above his base at Prospect Hill. It had 13 alternate red and white stripes and the British Union Jack in the upper left-hand corner (the canton).

In May of 1776, Betsy Ross reported that she sewed the first American flag.

On June 14, 1777, in order to establish an official flag for the new nation, the Continental Congress passed the first Flag Act: "Resolved that the flag of the United States be made of thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new Constellation."

Between 1777 and 1960, Congress passed several acts that changed the shape, design and arrangement of the flag and allowed for additional stars and stripes to be added to reflect the admission of each new state.

- Act of January 13, 1794 – provided for 15 stripes and 15 stars after May 1795.
- Act of April 4, 1818 – provided for 13 stripes and one star for each state, to be added to the flag on the 4th of July following the admission of each new state, signed by President Monroe.
- Executive Order of President Taft dated June 24, 1912 – established proportions of the flag and provided for arrangement of the stars in six horizontal rows of eight each, a single point of each star to be upward.
- Executive Order of President Eisenhower dated January 3, 1959 – provided for the arrangement of the stars in seven rows of seven stars each, staggered horizontally and vertically.
- Executive Order of President Eisenhower dated August 21, 1959 – provided for the arrangement of the stars in nine rows of stars staggered horizontally and eleven rows of stars staggered vertically.

Today the flag consists of thirteen horizontal stripes, seven red alternating with 6 white. The stripes represent the original 13 colonies; the stars represent the 50 states of the Union. The colors of the flag are symbolic as well: Red symbolizes Hardiness and Valor, White symbolizes Purity and Innocence and Blue represents Vigilance, Perseverance and Justice.



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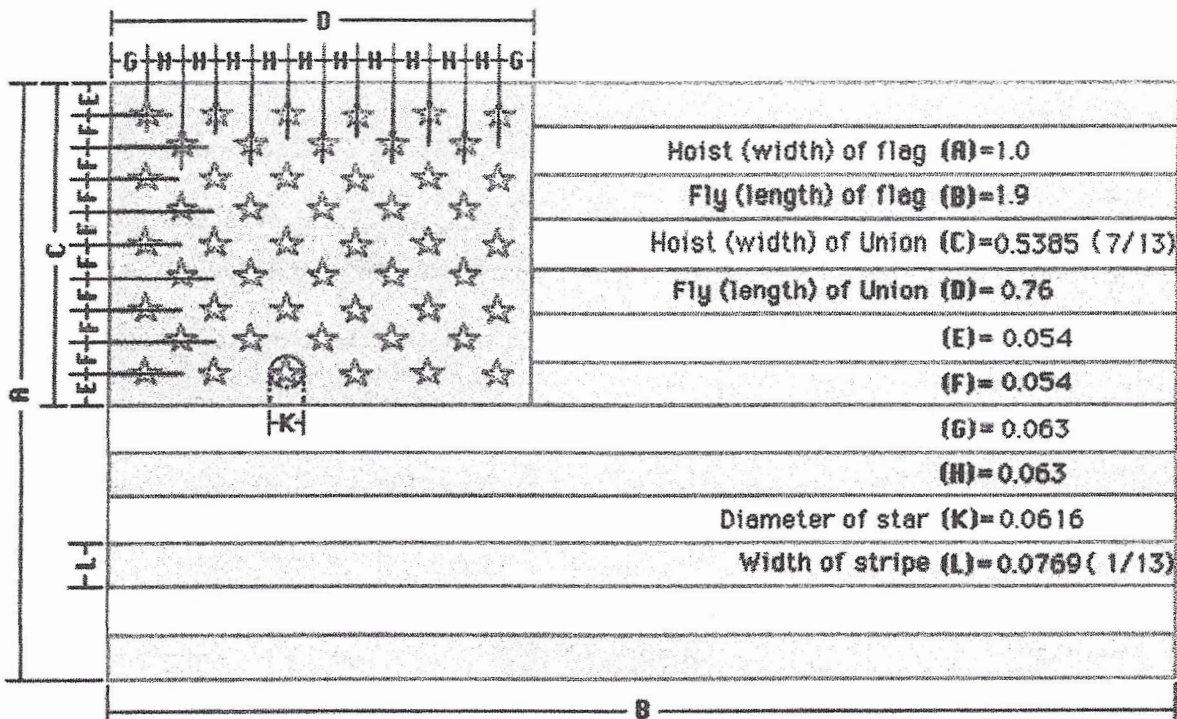
Guard me well, lest your freedom perish from the earth.

Dedicate your lives to those principles for which I stand: "One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

I was created in freedom. I made my first appearance in a battle for human liberty. God grant that I may spend eternity in my "land of the free and the home of the brave" and that I shall ever be known as "Old Glory," the flag of the United States of America







**Standard Proportions**

- Hoist (width) of flag (A) 1.0
- Fly (length) of flag (B) 1.9
- Hoist (width) of Union (C) 0.5385 (7/13)
- Fly (length) of Union (D) 0.76
- (E) 0.054
- (F) 0.054
- (G) 0.063
- (H) 0.063
- Diameter of star (K) 0.0616
- Width of stripe (L) 0.0769 (1/13)

The official regulation at the Defense Technology Information Center website <http://www.dtic.mil> is General Services Administration "Federal Specification, Flag, National, United States of America and Flag, Union Jack," DDD-F-416E, dated November 27, 1981. It specifies the colors by reference to "Standard Color Cards of America" maintained by the Color Association of the United States, Inc.

These are:

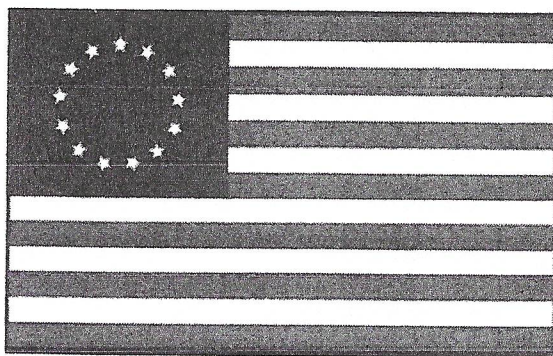
- Cable No. 70180 Old Glory Red
- Cable No. 70001 White
- Cable No. 70075 Old Glory Blue
- In the Pantone system the colors are: Blue PMS 282 and Red



## Betsy Ross

Elizabeth Griscom Ross (1752-1836), was a Philadelphia seamstress, married to John Ross, an upholsterer who was killed in a munitions explosion in 1776. She kept the upholstery shop going and lived on Arch Street, not too far from the State House on Chestnut, where history was being made almost every day. According to most historians, she has been incorrectly credited with designing the first Stars and Stripes. The story has enormous popularity, yet the facts do not substantiate it. Lets begin with the legend itself.

George Washington was a frequent visitor to the home of Mrs. Ross before receiving command of the army. She embroidered his shirt ruffles and did many other things for him. He knew her skill with a needle. Now as General of the Continental Army, George Washington appeared on Mrs. Ross's doorstep around the first of June, 1776, with two representatives of Congress, Colonel Ross and Robert Morris. They asked that she make a flag according to a rough drawing they carried with them. At Mrs. Ross's suggestion, Washington redrew the flag design in pencil in her back parlor to employ stars of five points instead of six. (Her version" of the flag for the new republic was not used until six years later.)



This account of the creation of our first flag was first brought to light in 1870 by one of her grandsons, William J. Canby, at a meeting of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. This took place 94 years after the event supposedly took place! Mr. Canby was a boy of eleven years when Mrs. Ross died in his home.

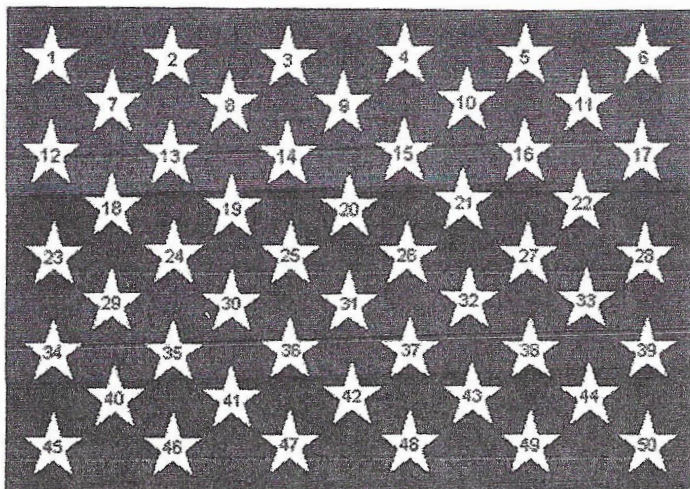
In the many years since the story was told, numerous historians have conducted vigorous searches into extant government records, personal diaries, and writings of Washington and his contemporaries and none of them have been able to verify the claims of Canby. One verifiable fact is this; the minutes of the State Navy Board of Pennsylvania for May 29, 1777, say in part "An order on William Webb to Elizabeth Ross for fourteen pounds twelve shillings and two pence, for making ship's colors, put into Richards store". The minutes show that Elizabeth Ross made ship's colors for Pennsylvania state ships. Some of the facts, among others, that have been discovered by this research that cast doubt on Canby's claim are these; He asserted that the stars and stripes were in common if not general use soon after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, nearly a year before the resolution of Congress proclaiming the flag. There is no record of the flag being discussed or of a committee being appointed for the design of the flag in either the Journals of the Continental Congress or the diaries and writings of Washington around this time. Meetings with Colonel Ross and Robert Morris cannot be documented. Further, it is illogical to assume that Washington was present at the alleged meeting with Betsy Ross on the design of the flag when it is known that he wanted a national standard made for the use of the army in 1779.



The question that begs to be asked is; Why have so many generations of Americans come to accept this legend as fact? After Canby's death, a book written by his brother George Canby and nephew Lloyd Balderson was published in 1909. The book, *The Evolution of the American Flag*, presented in more detail the claims for Betsy Ross made by William Canby in 1870. Among other things, the authors describe the formation of the Betsy Ross Memorial Association, and reproduced a painting by Charles H. Weisgerber depicting the alleged meeting of the committee of Congress with Betsy Ross. The picture, entitled *Birth of Our Nations Flag*, is actually a composite portrait made from pictures of her granddaughters and other descendants. The artist took liberties with history by painting the stars in the flag in a circle. This painting, incidentally, stirred a great deal of public interest in the subject when it was first exhibited, at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Following this, money to purchase the Betsy Ross house in Philadelphia was raised by selling ten-cent subscriptions to the American Flag House and Betsy Ross Memorial Association, incorporated in 1898. Each contributor received a certificate of membership that included a picture of the house, her grave in Mt. Moriah Cemetery in Philadelphia, and a color reproduction of the Weisberger painting. This campaign gave the legend wide publicity and the Weisberger painting was reproduced in school.



# Which Star Is Your State?



The stars on the flag are not associated with any state OFFICIALLY. Just for the fun of it, we have assigned the stars to the flag in the chronological order in which the states joined the union. <sup>[2]</sup>

1 <u>Delaware</u> Dec. 7, 1787	2 <u>Pennsylvania</u> Dec. 12, 1787	3 <u>New Jersey</u> Dec. 18, 1787	4 <u>Georgia</u> Jan. 2, 1788	5 <u>Connecticut</u> Jan. 9, 1788	6 <u>Massachusetts</u> Feb. 6, 1788
7 <u>Maryland</u> Apr. 28, 1788	8 <u>South Carolina</u> May 23, 1788	9 <u>New Hampshire</u> Jun. 21, 1788	10 <u>Virginia</u> Jun. 25, 1788	11 <u>New York</u> Jul. 26, 1788	
12 <u>North Carolina</u> Nov. 21, 1789	13 <u>Rhode Island</u> May 29, 1790	14 <u>Vermont</u> Mar. 4, 1791	15 <u>Kentucky</u> Jun. 1, 1792	16 <u>Tennessee</u> Jun. 1, 1796	17 <u>Ohio</u> Mar. 1, 1803
18 <u>Louisiana</u> Apr. 30, 1812	19 <u>Indiana</u> Dec. 11, 1816	20 <u>Mississippi</u> Dec. 10, 1817	21 <u>Illinois</u> Dec. 3, 1818	21 <u>Illinois</u> Dec. 3, 1818	
23 <u>Maine</u> Mar. 15, 1820	24 <u>Missouri</u> Aug. 10, 1821	25 <u>Arkansas</u> Jun. 15, 1836	26 <u>Michigan</u> Jan. 26, 1837	27 <u>Florida</u> Mar. 3, 1845	28 <u>Texas</u> Dec. 29, 1845
29 <u>Iowa</u> Dec. 28, 1846	30 <u>Wisconsin</u> May 29, 1848	31 <u>California</u> Sep. 9, 1850	32 <u>Minnesota</u> May 11, 1858	33 <u>Oregon</u> Feb. 14, 1859	
34 <u>Kansas</u> Jan. 29, 1861	35 <u>West Virginia</u> Jun. 20, 1863	36 <u>Nevada</u> Oct. 31, 1864	37 <u>Nebraska</u> Mar. 1, 1867	38 <u>Colorado</u> Aug. 1, 1876	39 <u>North Dakota</u> Nov. 2, 1889
40 <u>South Dakota</u> Nov. 2, 1889	41 <u>Montana</u> Nov. 8, 1889	42 <u>Washington</u> Nov. 11, 1889	43 <u>Idaho</u> Jul. 3, 1890	44 <u>Wyoming</u> Jul. 10, 1890	
45 <u>Utah</u> Jan. 4, 1896	46 <u>Oklahoma</u> Nov. 16, 1907	47 <u>New Mexico</u> Jan. 6, 1912	48 <u>Arizona</u> Feb. 14, 1912	49 <u>Alaska</u> Jan. 3, 1959	50 <u>Hawaii</u> Aug. 21, 1959



# American Flag Protocol

## Rules for Display of the American Flag

### Display Outdoors

#### Over the Middle of the Street

It 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.

#### Flown at Half-staff

Should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. By "half-staff" is meant lowering the flag to one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff. The flag can be flown at half-staff in mourning for designated, principal government leaders and upon presidential or gubernatorial order. On Memorial Day the flag is displayed at half-staff until noon and at full staff from noon to sunset. When respect is thus shown upon the death of current or former United States government officials, the flag is flown at half-staff according to the following:

- 30 Days from the death of the President or a former President
- 10 Days from the day of death of
  - The Vice President
  - A sitting or former Supreme Court Chief Justice
  - The Speaker of the House of Representatives
- From the day of death to the day of Internment of:
  - An Associate Justice of the Supreme Court
  - The Secretary of an Executive or Military Department
  - A Former Vice President
  - The Governor of a State, territory, or possession of the United States
- On the day of death and the following day for a Member of Congress

#### Flown on the Same Halyard (a rope used to raise or lower flag) with Non-Nation Flags

The American Flag should always be at the peak. When the flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the flag of the United States should be hoisted first and lowered last. No such flag or pennant may be placed above the flag of the United States or to the right of the flag of the United States.

#### Suspended Over a Sidewalk

The flag may be suspended from a rope extending from a house to a pole at the edge of the sidewalk, the flag should be hoisted out, union first, from the building.

#### From a Staff Projecting Horizontally or at an Angle

The flag may be projected from the window sill, balcony, or front of a building, with the union of the flag placed at the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff.



**In a Parade with Other Flags**

The flag, when carried in a procession with another flag, or flags, should be either on the marching right; that is, the flag's own right, or, if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line. Crepe streamers may be affixed to spear heads or flagstuffs in a parade only by order of the President of the United States.

**With Non-National Flags**

The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of States or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.

**With Other National Flags**

When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace.

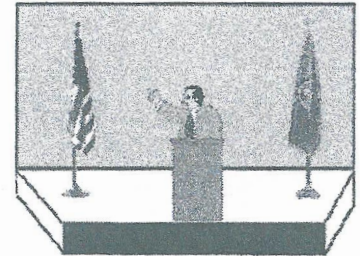
**With Another Flag Against a Wall from Crossed Staffs**

Should be on the right, the flag's own right which is the viewer's left, and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.

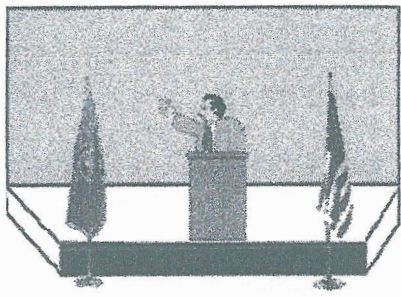
**Display Indoors**

**From a Staff in a Church or Public Auditorium on a Podium**

The flag of the United States of America should hold the position of superior prominence, in advance of the audience, and in the position of honor at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he faces the audience. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the clergyman or speaker (to the right of the audience).



**From a Staff in a Church or Public Auditorium off the Podium**



Custom and not the flag code hold that the flag of the United States of America should hold the position of superior prominence as part of the audience, in the position of honor at the audience's right.

**Used to Cover a Casket**

It should be so placed that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The flag should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.



**Other than being Flown from a Staff**

The flag should be displayed flat, whether indoors or out. 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 it should be displayed in the same way that is with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street. When festoons, rosettes or drapings are desired, bunting of blue, white and red should be used, but never the flag.



## American Flag Etiquette

Federal law stipulates many aspects of flag etiquette. The section of law dealing with American Flag etiquette is generally referred to as the Flag Code. Some general guidelines from the Flag Code answer many of the most common questions:

- The flag should be lighted at all times, either by sunlight or by an appropriate light source.
- The flag should be flown in fair weather, unless the flag is designed for inclement weather use.
- The flag should never be dipped to any person or thing. It is flown upside down only as a distress signal.
- The flag should not be used for any decoration in general. Bunting of blue, white and red stripes is available for these purposes. The blue stripe of the bunting should be on the top.
- The flag should never be used for any advertising purpose. It should not be embroidered, printed or otherwise impressed on such articles as cushions, handkerchiefs, napkins, boxes, or anything intended to be discarded after temporary use. Advertising signs should not be attached to the staff or halyard.
- The flag should not be used as part of a costume or athletic uniform, except that a flag patch may be used on the uniform of military personnel, fireman, policeman and members of patriotic organizations.
- The flag should never have any mark, insignia, letter, word, number, figure, or drawing of any kind placed on it, or attached to it.
- The flag should never be used for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything. When the flag is lowered, no part of it should touch the ground or any other object; it should be received by waiting hands and arms. To store the flag it should be folded neatly and ceremoniously.
- The flag should be cleaned and mended when necessary.
- When a flag is so worn it is no longer fit to serve as a symbol of our country, it should be destroyed by burning in a dignified manner.
- To place the flag at half-staff, hoist it to the peak for an instant and lower it to a position half way between the top and bottom of the staff. The flag is to be raised again to the peak for a moment before it is lowered.

See also Hearth Fire # 11 Someone's in The USA..... Showing Respect for the Flag (PP) <sup>101</sup>



## The "FLAG CODE"

Previous to Flag Day, June 14, 1923 there were no federal or state regulations governing display of the United States Flag. It was on this date that the National Flag Code was adopted by the National Flag Conference which was attended by representatives of the Army and Navy which had evolved their own procedures and some 66 other national groups. This purpose of providing guidance based on the Army and Navy procedures relating to display and associated questions about the U. S. Flag was adopted by all organizations in attendance.

A few minor changes were made a year later during the Flag Day 1924 Conference. It was not until June 22, 1942 that Congress passed a joint resolution which was amended on December 22, 1942 to become Public Law 829; Chapter 806, 77th Congress, 2nd session. Exact rules for use and display of the flag (36 U.S.C. 173-178) as well as associated sections (36 U.S.C. 171) Conduct during Playing of the National Anthem, (36 U.S.C. 172) the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, and Manner of Delivery were included.

This code is the guide for all handling and display of the Stars and Stripes. **It does not impose penalties** for misuse of the United States Flag. That is left to the states and to the federal government for the District of Columbia. Each state has its own flag law.

Criminal penalties for certain acts of desecration to the flag were contained in Title 18 of the United States Code prior to 1989. The Supreme Court decision in Texas v. Johnson; June 21, 1989, held the statute unconstitutional. This statute was amended when the Flag Protection Act of 1989 (Oct. 28, 1989) imposed a fine and/or up to 1 year in prison for knowingly mutilating, defacing, physically defiling, maintaining on the floor or trampling upon any flag of the United States. The Flag Protection Act of 1989 was struck down by the Supreme Court decision, United States vs. Eichman, decided on June 11, 1990.

While the Code empowers the President of the United States to alter, modify, repeal or prescribe additional rules regarding the Flag, no federal agency has the authority to issue 'official' rulings legally binding on civilians or civilian groups. Consequently, different interpretations of various provisions of the Code may continue to be made. The Flag Code may be fairly tested: "No disrespect should be shown to the Flag of the United States of America." Therefore, actions not specifically included in the Code may be deemed acceptable as long as proper respect is shown.

## Why is the Flag patch "backwards" on Military uniforms?

Following is a quote from the Department of Defense website:

Army Regulation 670-1, "Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia," updated most recently September 5, 2003, addresses explicitly the proper and lawful placement of the U.S. flag patch on the Army uniform.

The regulation states that when authorized for application to the proper uniform the American flag patch is to be worn, right or left shoulder, so that "the star field faces forward, or to the flag's own right. When worn in this manner, the flag is facing to the observer's right, and gives the effect of the flag flying in the breeze as the wearer moves forward. The appropriate replica for the right shoulder sleeve is identified as the 'reverse side flag'."





# The Flags that Fly 24 Hours a Day

**Historical Note:** After the addition of the new House and Senate wings in the 1850s, even before the great dome was completed in 1863, photographs of the period show flags flying over each new wing and the central east and west fronts.

The custom of flying the flags 24 hours a day over the east and west fronts was begun during World War I. This was done in response to requests received from all over the country urging that the flag of the United States be flown continuously over the public buildings in Washington, DC.

Presidential proclamations and laws since that time authorize the display of the flag **24 hours a day** at the following places:

**Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine**, Baltimore, Maryland (Presidential Proclamation No.2795, July 2, 1948).

**Flag House Square**, Albemarle and Pratt Streets, Baltimore Maryland (Public Law 83-319, approved March 26, 1954).

**United States Marine Corp Memorial (Iwo Jima)**, Arlington, Virginia (Presidential Proclamation No.3418, June 12, 1961).

**On the Green of the Town of Lexington**, Massachusetts (Public Law 89-335, approved November 8, 1965).

**The White House**, Washington, DC. (Presidential Proclamation No.4000, September 4,1970).

**Washington Monument, Washington, DC.**, (Presidential Proclamation No.4064, July 6,1971, effective July 4, 1971). Fifty Flags of the United States are displayed at the Washington Monument continuously.

**United States Customs Ports of Entry** which are continually open (Presidential Proclamation No.4131, May 5, 1972).

**Grounds of the National Memorial Arch in Valley Forge State Park**, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania (Public Law 94-53, approved July 4, 1975).

Many other places fly the flag at night as a patriotic gesture by custom.



# Holidays to Display your Flag

The flag should be displayed, from sunrise to sunset, on all days when the weather permits, especially on:

- New Year's Day (January 1st)
  - Inauguration Day (January 20th)
  - Lincoln's Birthday (February 12th)
  - Washington's Birthday (3rd Monday in February)
  - Easter Sunday (Varies in early Spring)
  - Mother's Day (2nd Sunday in May)
  - Armed Forces Day (3rd Saturday in May)
  - Memorial Day (Last Monday in May)
  - Flag Day (June 14th)
  - Independence Day (July 4th)
  - Labor Day (First Monday in September)
  - Patriot's Day (September 11)
  - Columbus Day (2nd Monday in October)
  - Constitution Day (September 17)
  - Navy Day (October 27th)
  - Veterans Day (November 11th)
  - Thanksgiving Day (4th Thursday in November)
  - Christmas Day (December 25th)
  - Election Day
  - Other Days as proclaimed by the President of the United States
  - Birthdays of States (Based upon the date of admission to the Union)
  - Various State holidays
- 
- The flag should be displayed DAILY 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.
  - The flag should be displayed during school days in or near every schoolhouse.





# Flag Folding

The flag folding ceremony described by the Uniformed Services is a dramatic and uplifting way to honor the flag on special days, like Memorial Day or Veterans Day, and is sometimes used at retirement ceremonies.

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

In the Armed Forces of the United States, 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.

As an Army and Navy custom, the flag is lowered daily at the last note of retreat. Special care is taken that no part of the flag touches the ground. The Flag is then carefully folded into the shape of a tri-cornered hat, emblematic of the hats worn by colonial soldiers during the war for Independence. In the folding, the red and white stripes are finally wrapped into the blue, as the light of day vanishes into the darkness of night.

This custom of special folding is reserved for the United States Flag alone.

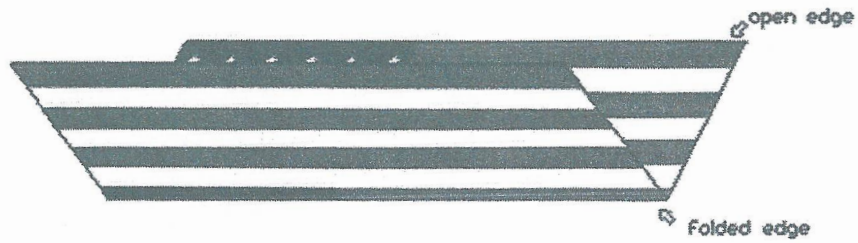
## How to fold the Flag

Step 1



To properly fold the Flag, begin by holding it waist-high with another person so that its surface is parallel to the ground.

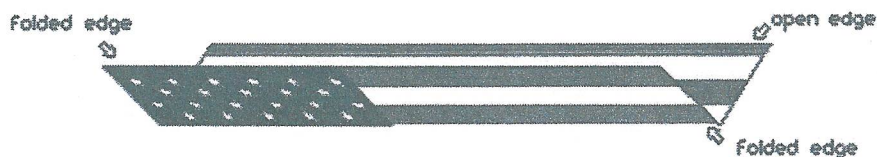
Step 2



The first fold of our flag is a symbol of life.

Fold the lower half of the stripe section lengthwise over the field of stars, holding the bottom and top edges securely.

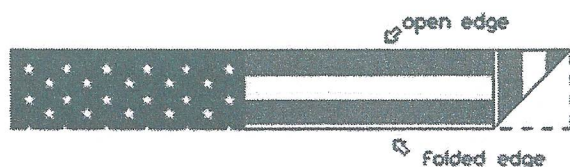
### Step 3



The second fold is a symbol of our belief in the eternal life.

Fold the flag **again** lengthwise with the blue field on the **outside**.

### Step 4



The third fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veteran departing our ranks who gave a portion of life for the defense of our country to attain a peace throughout the world.

Make a triangular fold by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to meet the open (top) edge of the flag.

### Step 5



The fourth fold represents our weaker nature, for 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.

Turn the outer (end) point inward, parallel to the open edge, to form a second triangle.

### Step 6



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."

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.



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 her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

The eighth fold is a tribute to the one who entered in to the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor mother, for whom it flies on mother's day.

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.

The tenth fold is a tribute to father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since they were first born.

The eleventh fold, in the eyes of a Hebrew citizen, 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.

The twelfth 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.

The triangular folding is continued until the entire length of the flag is folded in this manner.

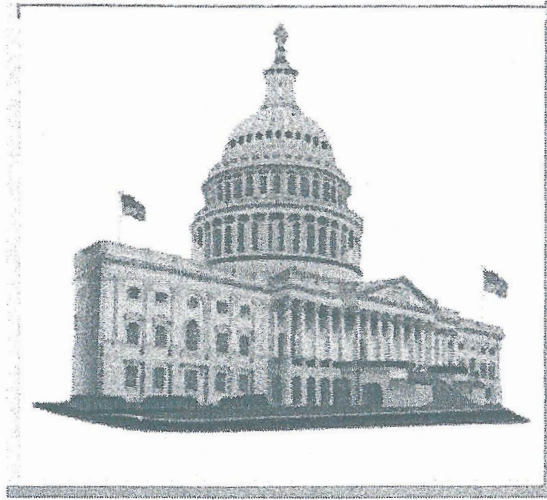
#### Step 7



When the flag is completely folded, only a triangular blue field of stars should be visible.

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

## Purchase a U.S. Flag that has flown over the Capitol



Anyone can purchase a U.S. Flag that has flown over the United States Capitol building in Washington D.C. This can be accomplished writing a letter to your Senator with your request.

You may request that your flag be flown on a certain date such as a birthday or anniversary. Be sure to mail in your request at least 4 weeks prior to the date you have selected. Your flag will be mailed to you and arrive 3-4 weeks after the date you have specified (**Since September 11th, 2001 it may take longer to receive your flag**). Enclosed with your flag will be a Certificate from The Architect Of The Capitol certifying that your flag was flown as requested. If you mention in your letter that this flag is for *any* specific occasion, that information will be included on the certificate.



## "Ragged Old Flag"

JOHNNY CASH

I walked through a county courthouse square  
 On a park bench, an old man was sittin' there.  
 I said, "Your old court house is kinda run  
 down,  
 He said, "Naw, it'll do for our little town".  
 I said, "Your old flag pole is leaned a little bit,  
 And that's a ragged old flag you got hangin' on  
 it".  
 He said, "Have a seat", and I sat down,  
 "Is this the first time you've been to our little  
 town"  
 I said, "I think it is"  
 He said "I don't like to brag, but we're kinda  
 proud of  
 That Ragged Old Flag  
 "You see, we got a little hole in that flag there,  
 When Washington took it across the Delaware.  
 and It got powder burned the night Francis  
 Scott Key sat watching it,  
 writing "Say Can You See"  
 It got a rip in New Orleans, with Packingham  
 & Jackson  
 tugging at its seams.  
 and It almost fell at the Alamo  
 beside the Texas flag,  
 But she waved on though.  
 She got cut with a sword at Chancellorsville,  
 And she got cut again at Shiloh Hill.

There was Robert E. Lee and Beauregard and  
 Bragg,  
 And the south wind blew hard on  
 That Ragged Old Flag

"On Flanders Field in World War I,  
 She got a big hole from a Bertha Gun,  
 She turned blood red in World War II  
 She hung limp, and low, a time or two,  
 She was in Korea, Vietnam, She went where  
 she was sent  
 by her Uncle Sam.  
 She waved from our ships upon the briny foam  
 and now they've about quit wavin' back here at  
 home  
 in her own good land here She's been abused,  
 She's been burned, dishonored, denied an'  
 refused.  
 And the government for which she stands  
 Has been scandalized throughout out the land.  
 And she's getting thread bare, and she's wearin'  
 thin,  
 But she's in good shape, for the shape she's in.  
 Cause she's been through the fire before  
 and i believe she can take a whole lot more.  
 "So we raise her up every morning  
 And we bring her down slow every night,  
 We don't let her touch the ground,  
 And we fold her up right.  
 On second thought  
 I \*do\* like to brag  
 Cause I'm mighty proud of  
 That Ragged Old Flag"



# The Star Spangled Banner

By Francis Scott Key 1814

Oh, say can you see by the dawn's early light  
 What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?  
 Whose broad stripes and bright stars thru the perilous fight,  
 O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?  
 And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air;  
 Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.  
 Oh, 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! Oh long may it wave  
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore  
 That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion,  
 A home and a country should leave us no more!  
 Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.  
 No refuge could save the hireling and 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!  
 Oh! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand  
 Between their loved home and the war's desolation!  
 Blest with victory 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!





## How to Salute The Star Spangled Banner

When the national anthem is played or sung, citizens should stand at attention and salute at the first note and hold the salute through the last note. The salute is directed to the flag, if displayed, otherwise to the music.

Traditionally, members of the nation's veteran's service organizations have rendered the hand-salute during the national anthem and at events involving the national flag only while wearing their organization's official head-gear.

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 contained an amendment to allow un-uniformed service members, military retirees, and veterans to render a hand salute during the hoisting, lowering, or passing of the U.S. flag.

A later amendment further authorized hand-salutes during the national anthem by veterans and out-of-uniform military personnel. This was included in the Defense Authorization Act of 2009, which President Bush signed on Oct. 14, 2008.

Here is the actual text from the law:

### SEC. 595. MILITARY SALUTE FOR THE FLAG DURING THE NATIONAL ANTHEM BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES NOT IN UNIFORM AND BY VETERANS.

Section 301(b)(1) of title 36, United States Code, is amended by striking subparagraphs (A) through (C) and inserting the following new subparagraphs:

- (A) individuals in uniform should give the military salute at the first note of the anthem and maintain that position until the last note;
- (B) members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute in the manner provided for individuals in uniform; and
- (C) all other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, and men not in uniform, if applicable, should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart.

Note: Part (C) applies to those not in the military and non-veterans. The phrase "men not in uniform" refers to civil service uniforms like police, fire fighters, and letter carriers - non-veteran civil servants who might normally render a salute while in uniform.



# Old Glory Speak

Amos F Hurley, Montclair California

I am the Flag of the United States of America. I was conceived in the dreams of liberty and in the hopes of freedom. I was designed by the hands of Betsy Ross and her sewing basket was my cradle.

Though I was never an orphan, I was adopted by the Continental Congress in 1777 and proclaimed the national emblem of a nation newly born on this continent, fighting valiantly for survival and destined to bring to all mankind a new concept of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

I have been many places and have seen many things. I have witnessed every event of American history.

I was there when they fired the shot heard around the world. I was there in the late twilight at Fort McHenry and inspired Francis Scott Key to write the immortal words to "The Star Spangled Banner", now our national anthem.

I saw Molly Pitcher take the cannon swab from the hands of her dead husband and help carry on the fight for freedom. I felt the biting cold at Valley Forge, and gave warmth and comfort to general Washington and his tired and hungry Continental Army.

I was flown above the decks of Old Ironsides and from the masts of the Yankee and China clippers. I blazed the trail with Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett. I led the settlers coming West and crossed Death Valley in a covered wagon.

I was carried through the Halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoly by the United States Marines.

Once I fell to the ground at Custer's Last Stand, and there were no living hands to pick me up. I galloped up the slopes of San Juan Hill with Teddy Roosevelt and the Rough Riders of the United States Cavalry. I stayed with the boys until it was over, over there, and on the battlefields of the Marne,

Chatsan-Thierry, St. Michael and the Argonne Forest. I saw many youth and men of our nation fall and lie still in death. They had given their last full measure of devotion. The war was over for them forever and I kept my lonely vigil over their graves and stayed to watch the poppies grow amid the crosses, row on row, in Flanders Fields. I was raised by five brave men during the "hell" of Iwo Jima. I waved farewell to the four immortal Chaplains who went down with their ship and to honored glory.

I have not changed much in my 215 years. I still have my original 13 stripes, but as each state came into the union a new star was proudly added to the Constellation on my field of blue. I was started with 13 stars; now there are 50.

I am easy to find. I am everywhere. I draped the caskets of our nation's heroes borne to their last resting place, the caskets of presidents, generals, admirals, privates and unknown soldiers. Wherever there is Justice, Equality, Faith, Hope, Charity, Truth and brotherly love, there, too, am I.

May history never write my obituary, for I am the Stars and Stripes forever. I am Old Glory!"





## God Bless The U.S.A.

By Lee Greenwood

If tomorrow all the things were gone  
 I worked for all my life  
 And I had to start again  
 With just my children and my wife  
 I thank my lucky stars  
 To be living here today  
 'Cause the flag still stands for freedom  
 And they can't take that away  
 And I'm proud to be an American  
 Where at least I know I'm free  
 And I won't forget the men who died  
 Who gave that right to me  
 And I'd gladly stand up next to you  
 And defend Her still today  
 'Cause there ain't no doubt  
 I love this land  
 God Bless the U.S.A.  
 From the lakes of Minnesota  
 To the hills of Tennessee  
 Across the plains of Texas  
 From sea to shining sea  
 From Detroit down to Houston  
 And New York to L.A.  
 Where's pride in every American heart  
 And it's time we stand and say  
 That I'm proud to be an American  
 Where at least I know I'm free  
 And I won't forget the men who died  
 Who gave that right to me  
 And I'd gladly stand up next to you  
 And defend Her still today  
 'Cause there ain't no doubt  
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 Who gave that right to me  
 And I'd gladly stand up next to you  
 And defend Her still today  
 'Cause there ain't no doubt  
 I love this land  
 God Bless the U.S.A.



# God Bless America

By Irving Berlin

While the storm clouds gather far across the sea,  
 let us swear allegiance to a land that's free.  
 Let us all be grateful for a land so fair, as we  
 raise our voices in a solemn prayer.  
 God Bless America, land that I love.  
 Stand beside her and guide her  
 Through the night with a light from above.  
 From the mountains, to the prairies,  
 To the oceans white with foam.  
 God Bless America, my home sweet home.  
 God Bless America, my home sweet home.

Irving Berlin wrote the song in 1918 while serving the U.S. Army at Camp Upton in Yaphank, New York, but decided that it did not fit in a revue called Yip Yip Yaphank, so he set it aside.<sup>[1]</sup> The lyrics at that time included the line "Make her victorious on land and foam, God bless America..."<sup>[4]</sup> as well as "Stand beside her and guide her *to the right* with the light from above".<sup>[5]</sup>

Music critic Jody Rosen says that a 1906 Jewish dialect novelty song, "When Mose with His Nose Leads the Band," contains a six-note fragment that is "instantly recognizable as the opening strains of "God Bless America". He interprets this as an example of Berlin's "habit of interpolating bits of half-remembered songs into his own numbers."<sup>[2]</sup> Berlin, born Israel Baline, had himself written several Jewish-themed novelty tunes.<sup>[3]</sup>

In 1938, with the rise of Adolf Hitler, Berlin, who was Jewish and a Russian immigrant, felt it was time to revive it as a "peace song," and it was introduced on an Armistice Day broadcast in 1938, sung by Kate Smith on her radio show.<sup>[6]</sup> Berlin had made some minor changes; by this time, "to the right" might have been considered a call to the political right, so he substituted "through the night" instead. He also provided an introduction that is now rarely heard but which Smith always used: "While the storm clouds gather far across the sea / Let us swear allegiance to a land that's free / Let us all be grateful for a land so fair, / As we raise our voices in a solemn prayer." (In her first broadcast of the song, Kate Smith sang "that we're far from there" rather than "for a land so fair".)<sup>[5]</sup> This was changed when Berlin published the sheet music in March 1939.<sup>[5]</sup>





References

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## How to Fly Old Glory-Quiz

1. **You're flying the U.S. flag vertically, hanging it from your window down the side of your building. Where should the 'union' (the blue field of stars) be if you're standing in front of the flag admiring your handiwork?**
  - Upper right
  - Lower left
  - Upper left
  - Lower right
  
2. **You're planning a political function, and you want the speaker's podium to look suitably patriotic. What's a correct way to decorate the podium and the stage?**
  - With red, white and blue-striped bunting, white stripe on top.
  - With red, white and blue-striped bunting, blue stripe on top.
  - With an American flag wrapped around the speaker.
  - With an American flag covering the podium.
  
3. **Which of these is not an occasion for flying a U.S. flag at half-staff?**
  - The President or Governor has ordered it.
  - A prominent government leader has died.
  - It's the morning of Memorial Day.
  - Your attractive next-door neighbor has moved away.
  
4. **You're flying an American flag at half-staff for a time of mourning. During this grieving period, does the flag ever rise to full staff?**
  - Yes
  - No
  
5. **You're displaying the US flag on the same flagpole as the flag of your state. Where should the US flag be?**
  - Just below the state flag.
  - Above or below the state flag, depending on whether the state voted for the current President in the
  - On a different flagpole - it can't be flown on the same pole as a state flag.
  - At the top of the pole, just above the state flag.
  
6. **You're displaying the US flag on the same flagpole as the flag of another country. Where should the US flag be?**
  - At the top of the pole, just above the other flag.
  - Above or below the other flag, depending on whether the other nation belongs to NATO.
  - Just below the other flag.
  - On a different flagpole - it can't be flown from the same pole as another national flag.



7. **It looks like there's about to be a rainstorm in your area, and the American flag flying outside your house is plain cotton instead of an all-weather version. What should you do?**

Nothing. The flag should only be lowered at sunset.

Lower it. An ordinary cotton flag should not be flown in the rain.

Make sure it's well-anchored, so that it won't fall and hit the ground.

Nothing. The flag should fly proudly at all times.

8. **You are at a baseball game as the national anthem is played. A large U.S. flag is flying to your left; to your right, the players are standing and the music is playing. Which way should you face?**

Towards the players at the right, since they're in the closest thing to military uniform.

Towards the music at the right.

Towards the flag at the left.

Straight ahead.

9. **When people are buried with military honors, the American flags draping their caskets are buried with them.**

True

False

10. **When the U.S. flag has become so worn and faded that it should no longer be displayed, what is the preferred method of destroying it?**

It doesn't matter; it can just be taken out with the trash.

It should be burned in a dignified way.

It shouldn't be destroyed; take it to a military base for recycling.

It should be ceremonially buried.

## How to Fly Old Glory-Answers

1. Upper left
2. Blue on Top
3. Your attractive next-door neighbor has moved away.
4. Yes
5. At the top of the pole, just above the state flag.
6. On a different flagpole - it can't be flown from the same pole as another national flag.
7. Lower it. An ordinary cotton flag should not be flown in the rain.
8. Towards the flag at the left.
9. False
10. It should be burned in a dignified way.