

PROPER DISPLAY OF THE FLAG

These rules have been established by generally accepted custom and by Public Law 94-344 (known as the Federal Flag Code) approved by Congress and signed by the president of the United States. There are 43 in all, this is a list of a few of them.

1. It is the universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings & on stationary flagstaffs in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed 24 hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.
3. The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is inclement. Except when an all weather flag is displayed.
9. When displayed over the middle of the street, the flag should be suspended metrically with the union to the north in an east & west street. Or to the east in a north & south street.
10. 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 the front & center of the flag line.
12. The flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides or back of a vehicle or of a railroad train or a boat. When the flag is displayed on a motorcar, the staff should be so suspended that its folds fall free, as though the flag were staffed.
13. The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.
14. During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the flag or when the flag is passing in a parade or in review, all persons present except those in uniform should face the flag & stand at attention with the right hand over the heart. Those present in uniform should render the military salute.
23. Do not display the Flag of the U.S.A. with the union down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.
24. Do not let the Flag of the United States touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, floor, water or merchandise.
25. The U.S. Flag should be a distinctive feature of a ceremony for unveiling a statue or monument, but the flag should never be used as the cover for the statue or monument.
26. On Memorial Day the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff. By order of the president, the flag shall be flown at half-staff 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.

- 28. 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.
- 29. Blue, white & red bunting should be used for covering a speaker's stand, draping a platform front or for general decoration. Such bunting should always be arranged with the blue above, white in the middle & red below.
- 33. Never hang or drape the flag in any position below the seats on a platform.
- 36. The U.S. Flag should never be used as a table cover or receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying or delivering anything.
- 37. The U.S. Flag should never have placed upon any part of it, nor attached to it, any mark, insignia, letter, work, figure, design, picture or drawing of any nature.
- 38. The flag should never be used for advertising purposed in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs & the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxed or anything that is designed for temporary use & discard. Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the flag is flown.
- 39. When the flag is used on a casket it's union should be over the deceased's left shoulder. Carry the casket foot first. The flag should not be lowered into the grave, nor allowed to touch the ground.
- 42. Never destroy a U. S. Flag in public ceremony. When the flag is so badly torn, soiled or faded that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display the flag should be destroyed in private, preferably by burning & without ceremony. A torn flag may be mended, or if soiled it may be washed or dry-cleaned.

HOW PATRIOTIC ARE YOU?

Do you think you know a lot about our country's flag?

Do you know in which American war the Star Spangled Banner was written and when it was adapted as our National Anthem?

Francis Scott Key went aboard a British prisoner exchange ship in Baltimore harbor in September of 1814. This was during the "War of 1812". Key wrote the words as a poem, later added it to the tune of a popular English drinking song. It was not adopted as the U.S. National Anthem until 1931. There are four verses to our Anthem.

Most of us learned the Pledge of Allegiance in kindergarten or first grade. We learned it the same way we learned nursery rhymes, like Humpty Dumpty, - three or four words at a time. The sad part is we still say the Pledge as we learned it in our early years, three or four words at a time, placing nine commas in the pledge instead of the three that it is written with.

Do you know there is a law that determines the proper use of the flag? Public Law 94-344 (known as the Federal Flag Code) states 43 rules of displaying the flag.

Some of the law is forgotten or never learned here are some examples:

Rule #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 north and south street.

(Get out your compass.)

Rule #13. The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.

(Recently many sporting events have displayed very large flags carried flat.)

Rule #14 ... - The salute to the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes.

(If your hands are full stand at attention at the moment the flag passes.)

Rule #25 The U.S. flag should be a distinctive feature of a ceremony for unveiling a statue or monument, but the flag should never be used as the cover for the statue or monument.

(Or any other unveiling.)

Rule #26 On Memorial Day the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff.

Rule #28 The U.S. flag should never be used as a drapery, never festooned, drawn back, nor up in folds. It should always be allowed to fall free. Bunting should be used for decoration.

(Instead of the flag - bunting is hung with the blue color above white above red)

Rule #33 Never hang or drape the flag in any position below the seats on a platform.

(No flags should be placed at the bottom of the podium or stage or below the speaker.)

Rule #37 The U.S. flag should never have placed upon any part of it, nor attached to it any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture or drawing of any nature.

(Do not put any patriotic slogan, i.e. In God we trust, Proud to be an American etc. Do not write names of loved ones or hero's names on the flag. Do not write messages on the flag, or dates. Do not imprint a picture on the flag. DO NOT DEFACE THE FLAG.)

Rule # 38 The flag should never be used for advertising purposed in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discarded.

Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the flag is flown.

(Replicas are permissible to use if it is not a true rendition of the flag, i.e. a flag image of lesser than the 13 stripes and fewer than the 50 stars. Do not have pictures of a true U.S. flag on placemats, coasters, and clothes. Do not use a flag as a bedspread, shower curtain, window curtain, or to make an article of clothing.)

Rule #39 When a 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, nor allowed to touch the ground. (Even the military sometimes gets this wrong.)

Rule #42 Never destroy a U.S. flag in public ceremony. When the flag is so badly torn, soiled or faded that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, the flag should be destroyed in private, preferably by burning and without ceremony. A torn flag may be mended, or if soiled it may be washed or dry-cleaned.

(It is not proper to fly a ragged, torn, faded or dirty flag.)

* * * * *

In the year 1814 the U.S. was at war with the Great Britain. Francis Scott Key was granted permission by President Monroe to attempt the release of a friend, William Beanes, held by the British.

As Key boarded the prisoner-exchange ship in Baltimore harbor, he turned and looked back to shore and Fort McHenry. In the twilight's last gleaming he could still distinguish the broad stripes and bright stars gallantly streaming above the fort.

Throughout the night, by the glare of the rockets and bursting bombs, the landscape was lit giving proof that the flag was still there.

As the early light of dawn slowly cleared the view of the shore, Key saw proof that the star spangled banner did yet wave, over the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Francis Scott Key could not have known that his inspiration to write the poem that morning would lead to the adoption of those words 117 years later as our National Anthem, to be sung in a 50 state Union.

Public Law 94-344, 94th
Congress, S.J. Res. 49

Annin & Co. Roseland N.J.

World Book Encyclopedia, Field Enterprises Educational Corp.

Etiquette of the Stars and Stripes – Veterans of Foreign War of the United States

1. It is the universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaffs in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed 24 hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.
- * 2. The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.
3. The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is inclement, except when an all weather flag is displayed.
4. The flag should be displayed on all special days.
- * 5. The flag should be displayed daily on or near the main administration building of every public institution.
6. The flag should be displayed in or near every polling place on election days.
7. The flag should be displayed during school days in or near every schoolhouse.
8. When the flag is displayed from a sill, balcony or building front the union of the flag should always be at the peak of the staff unless the flag is a half-staff. When suspended over a sidewalk from a rope between a building and a pole at the edge of the sidewalk, the flag should be hoisted out from the building, union first.
- * 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 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.
11. When displayed on a float in a parade the U.S. Flag should be mounted on a staff or, if displayed flat, it should be so suspended that its folds fall free, as though the flag were staffed.
12. The flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides or back of a vehicle or of a railroad train or a boat. When the flag is displayed on a motorcar, the staff should be fixed firmly to the chassis, or clamped to the right fender.
- * 13. The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.
- * 14. During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the flag or when the flag is passing in a parade or in review, all persons present except those in uniform should face the flag and stand at attention with the right hand over the heart. Those present in uniform should render the military salute. When not in uniform, men should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Aliens should stand at attention. The salute to the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes.
15. During the rendition of the national anthem when the flag is displayed, all present except those in uniform should stand at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. Men not in uniform should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should render the military salute at the first note of the anthem and retain this position until the last note. When the flag is not displayed those present should face toward the music and act in the same manner they would if the flag were displayed there.
16. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag should be rendered by standing at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. When not in uniform, men should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag and render the military salute.
17. 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.

- 6
18. When flags or pennants of states, cities or societies are flown on the same halyard with the Flag of the U.S.A., the latter should always be at the peak. When flown from adjacent staffs, the U.S. Flag should be hoisted first and lowered last.
 19. No other flag or pennant should be placed above or, if on the same level, to the right of the U.S. Flag, except during church services conducted by naval chaplains at sea, when the church pennant may be flown above the flag during church services for navy personnel.
 20. When a number of flags of states or cities, or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs with the U.S. Flag the latter should be at the center and highest point of the group.
 - ✕ 21. When displayed with another flag, the U.S. Flag should be to its own right, or the observer's left, with its staff over that of the other flag.
 22. The U.S. Flag should not be dipped to any person or thing. Regimental colors, state, city, organizational or other flags are dipped as a mark of honor.
There is one exception to the above provision: U.S. Navy vessels, upon receiving a salute by the dipping of the flag from a vessel registered by a nation which is formally recognized by the U.S., must return the compliment dip for dip.
 23. Do not display the Flag of the U.S.A. with the union down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.
 24. Do not let the Flag of the United States touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, floor, water or merchandise.
 - ✕ 25. The U.S. Flag should be a distinctive feature of a ceremony for unveiling a statue or monument, but the flag should never be used as the cover for the statue or monument.
 - 26. On Memorial Day the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff. By order of the president, the flag shall be flown at half-staff 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.
 27. 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, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.
 - ✕ 28. 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.
 29. Blue, white and red bunting should be used for covering a speaker's stand, draping a platform front or for general decoration. Such bunting should always be arranged with the blue above, white in the middle and red below.
 30. When bunting is displayed vertically, the blue will be to the observer's left, white in the center and red on the right.
 31. The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used or stored in such a manner as will permit it to be easily torn, soiled or damaged.
 32. The flag should never be used as a ceiling cover.
 - ✕ 33. Never hang or drape the flag in any position below the seats on a platform.
 34. 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.
 35. When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, 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 or to the right of the audience.

- * X 36. The U.S. Flag should never be used as a table cover or receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying or delivering anything.
 - * * X 37. The U.S. Flag should never have placed upon any part of it, nor attached to it, any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture or drawing of any nature.
 - 38. The flag should never be used for advertising purposed in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discard. Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the flag is flown.
 - 39. 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, nor allowed to touch the ground.
 - 40. After a U.S. flag has been used as a casket cover it may, and should, be displayed in every normal manner.
 - 41. When the flag is placed upon a grave, see that it will not touch the ground. Do not leave it there indefinitely. In Arlington and other national cemeteries flags are removed the following day.
 - 42. Never destroy a U.S. Flag in public ceremony. When the flag is so badly torn, soiled or faded that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display the flag should be destroyed in private, preferably by burning and without ceremony. A torn flag may be mended, or if soiled it may be washed or dry-cleaned.
- Any rule or custom pertaining to the display of the U.S. Flag may be changed or repealed, or additional rules may be prescribed only by the president of the United States, acting as commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Any such change shall be set forth in a presidential proclamation.

FLAG TERMS AND PHRASES

Banner: Originally a large medieval flag, rectangular in shape and usually carried in battle. Today the word is synonymous with flag.

Canton: The four quarters of a flag are named cantons. But this word is applied particularly to the upper canton in the hoist, that is, the upper left hand corner of the flag; the canton is sometimes also called the union.

Color: Specifically, a flag carried by an infantry or other dismounted military unit; more generally, any flag, as in the phrase, national colors.

Dipping: Practice formerly followed of merchant vessels lowering their ensigns in salute on meeting a naval vessel. The practice was also, on occasion, observed between warships.

Field: The surface of a flag on which the canton, badges, and other devices and designs are placed.

Fly: The portion of a flag farthest from the hoist.

Hoist: The portion of a flag nearest the flagstaff.

National Flag: A flag representing a country; its use is sometimes restricted to the Government, but more often extended to the citizens in general. The term, when applied specifically to the United States Flag, refers to that flag in general without regard to a particular size or manner of display.

National Standard: A term designating the United States Flag carried by mounted, mechanized or motorized units.

Union: a design, signifying union, used on national emblem. It is the honor point of the flag. On the United States Flag, it is the blue field containing the group of white stars.

To "hoist" or "raise the flag" is to draw the banner to the top of a pole, staff or mast.

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 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.

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.

Francis Scott Key

SOURCES

"Etiquette of the Stars and Stripes" Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

"Flag of the United States" The American Legion

"Old Glory, The Story of Our Flag" Compiled and edited by M.R. Bennett

PLEDGE

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.



Today's 50-Star United States Flag