The history, evolution and proper etiquette for displaying the American Flag
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 clipped to any person or thing. It is flown upside down only as a distress signal.
- The flag should never 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 tap,
- 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.
10 ‘Did You Knows’ about the US Flag

- Another name for the American Flag; Old Glory actually refers to a specific flag owned by Captain William Driver. Old Glory was made with 24 stars and 13 red and white stripes representing the original 13 colonies: Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, New York, North Carolina and Rhode Island. The flag was hidden away inside Driver’s bedspread in Nashville, when Tennessee seceded from the Union. When the war was over, Driver joyously ripped open his bedding to an astonished group of patriots to be proudly displayed for all to see. Sadly, due to its fragile state and incredible historical and sentimental value, Old Glory’s last show was at the Tennessee State Museum in 2006. It now lives in the Smithsonian.

- The red, white and blue stripes are strictly defined as Dark Red (Pantone 193 C), White (Pantone safe), and Navy Blue (281 C).

- The current version of the US flag was designed by an 18 year old high school student, who only received a “B-” for his efforts. Robert Heft, took exception to this grade, and issued his teacher a challenge: if Heft’s design proposal was accepted by Congress, he would deserve and receive an “A”. Heft’s design proposal was accepted by Congress, and President Proclamation in 1958, his design was officially adopted as the nation’s flag.

- The US flag is never to be “dipped” to any person or thing, except in the case of a naval ship signaling to a foreign country’s ship.

- The US flag must not be used on any item designed to be disposable. Darn; there goes my flag coffee cup.

- The US flag must not be disposed of if dropped by accident. If the flag is displayed at night, it must be illuminated.

- 6 US flags are currently stationed on the moon. Must be tough to have them illuminated there. They were put there by Apollo 11, 12, 14, 15, 16 and 17. Other countries who have had flags on the moon include, the Soviet Union, EU and India. India’s flag is the most recent, and to be fair, their flag was not so much planted, as it was mashed as it hurtled towards the moon in a fiery collision.

- The US flag bears a close likeness to the flag of Liberia; who is connected to the US through involvement in the slave trade; many slaves were taken from Liberia. For this reason, I would think Liberia would want to be as different as it could possibly be. The Liberian flag also has 13 stripes.

- When folded properly, the US flag is shaped like a triangle with only the stars showing. If you have exacting standards, it usually takes 13 folds: the same number of original colonies.

- The original flag had 13 red and white stripes with a Union Jack in the upper left corner. There was, for a brief time, a US flag with 15 stars and 15 stripes, made to welcome Kentucky and Vermont. The US government reverted to the 13 stripe model as the new version of the flag looked too cluttered. This 15 stars and stripes version, however, inspired Francis Scott Key to write “The Star Spangled Banner” in 1814.

- The US flag is never to be “dipped” to any person or thing, except in the case of a naval ship signaling to a foreign country’s ship.

- If harm should come to the flag, it must be disposed of in a dignified manner; namely by burning; which is the proper way of destroying a flag that is long in the tooth. The flag must not be allowed to touch the ground, but need not be disposed of if dropped by accident.
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. Here are the highlights of its unique past.

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.
Rules for displaying the U.S. Flag

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. Crepe streamers may be affixed to spear heads or flag-staffs in a parade only by order of the President of the United States.

Flown on the Same Halyard 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 flags own right, or, if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.
Rules for displaying the American Flag 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 > the street. When festoons, rosettes or drappings are desired, bunting of blue, white and red should be used, but never the flag.
Betsy Ross and the American Flag

Betsy would often tell her children, grandchildren, relatives, and friends of the fateful day when three members of a secret committee from the Continental Congress came to call upon her. Those representatives, George Washington, Robert Morris, and George Ross, asked her to sew the first flag. This meeting occurred in her home some time late in May 1776. George Washington was then the head of the Continental Army. Robert Morris, an owner of vast amounts of land, was perhaps the wealthiest citizen in the Colonies. Colonel George Ross was a respected Philadelphian and also the uncle of her late husband, John Ross.

Naturally, Betsy Ross already knew George Ross as she had married his nephew. Furthermore, Betsy was also acquainted with the great General Washington. Not only did they both worship at Christ Church in Philadelphia, but Betsy’s pew was next to George and Martha Washington’s pew. Her daughter recalled, “That she was previously well acquainted with Washington, and that he had often been in her house in friendly visits, as well as on business. That she had embroidered ruffles for his shirt bosoms and cuffs, and that it was partly owing to his friendship for her that she was chosen to make the flag.”

In June 1776, brave Betsy was a widow struggling to run her own upholstery business. Upholsterers in colonial America not only worked on furniture but did all manner of sewing work, which for some included making flags. According to Betsy, General Washington showed her a rough design of the flag that included a six-pointed star. Betsy, a standout with the scissors, demonstrated how to cut a five-pointed star in a single snip.

Impressed, the committee entrusted Betsy with making our first flag.

Until that time, colonies and militias used many different flags. Some are famous, such as the “Rattlesnake Flag” used by the Continental Navy, with its venomous challenge, “Don’t Tread on Me.”

This is not surprising. Many colonists considered themselves loyal subjects of Britain -- many colonists came from Britain, and King George III ruled over the colonies.

On January 1, 1776, the Continental Army was re-organized 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 “in compliment of the United Colonies.
In Boston, on that New Year’s Day, the Loyalists (supporters of Britain) had been circulating a recent King George speech, offering the Continental forces favorable terms if they laid down their arms. These Loyalists were convinced that the King’s speech had impressed the Continentals into surrendering - as a sign or the Continentals’ “surrender,” the Loyalists mistook the flying of the Grand Union flag over Prospect Hill as a show of respect to King George. In fact, however, the Continentals knew nothing of the speech until later. Washington wrote in a letter dated January 4, “By this time, I presume, they begin to think it strange we have not made a formal surrender of our lines.”

According to Betsy Ross’s dates and sequence of events, in May he Congressional Committee called upon her at her shop. She finished the flag either in late May or early June 1776. In July, the Declaration of Independence was read aloud for the first time in Independence Hall. Amid celebration, bells throughout the city tolled, heralding the birth of a new nation.

Much suffering and loss of life would result, however, before the United States would completely sever ties with Britain. Betsy Ross herself lost two husbands to the Revolutionary War. During the conflict the British appropriated her house to lodge soldiers. Through it all she managed to run her own upholstery business (which she continued operating for several decades after the war) and after the soldiers left, she wove cloth pouches which were used to hold gunpowder for the Continentals.

On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress, seeking to promote national pride and unity, adopted the national flag. “Resolved: that the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation.”
Evoluon of the Amercan Flag

0 Stars • Continental Colors 1775-1777

Also known as the Grand Union flag, the Union flag, the Continental flag, the Somerville flag and the Great Union. Designed with a British Union jack in the canton and 13 alternating red, and white stripes. Considered to then be the first American flag, but it was never official. The Maritime Committee of Continental Congress considered it the official flag of the American naval forces.

13 Stars • Betsy Ross Flag 1777-1795

First official flag of the United States.

Designed with 13 stars and 13 stripes to represent the 13 colonies (Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, New York, North Carolina, Rhode Island). Since Congress did not specify dimensions, proportions, shapes or star patterns, flags varied dramatically. Legend says that Betsy Ross designed and sewed the first American flag, but most historians disagree. The person who sewed the first flag is unknown, but the designer is thought to be Francis Hopkinson. The Second Continental Congress passed the Flag Resolution of 1777 on June 14, 1777 making the Betsy Ross flag official. This date is now celebrated annually as Flag Day. The only president to serve under this flag was George Washington.

15 Stars • Star Spangled Banner Flag 1795-1818

Designed with 15 stars and 15 stripes to represent the 13 original states plus Kentucky and Vermont. Made by Mary Pickersgill and her daughter. In 1812 the flag was flown over Fort McHenry, which inspired Francis Scott Key to write the Star Spangled Banner poem, which was put to music to become America’s national anthem. The Star Spangled Banner is on display at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History. George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and James Monroe all served under this flag.

20 Stars • 20-Star American Flag 1818-1819

Also known as the Great Star Flag and the Flag of 1818. Congress passed the Flag Act of 1818, adding five new stars to the flag and reducing the number of stripes from 15 to 13. The five additional stars represented Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana, Indiana, Mississippi. This flag was designed by Navy Captain Samuel Reid. James Monroe was the only president to serve under this flag.
One star was added with the admission of Illinois to the Union. James Monroe was the only president to service under this flag.

Two stars were added to the flag for the admission of Alabama and Maine. When Alabama was admitted in 1819, the free and slave states were balanced, but with the addition of Maine, the Union held a majority of free states. James Monroe was the only president to serve under this flag.

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Missouri. The name “Old Glory” spawned from a 24-star flag flown by shipmaster Captain William Driver. The flag, which was given to him by his mother and friends, became famous by the time of the Civil War. Driver, who lived in Tennessee, was afraid the flag would be seized by Confederate forces, so he hid the flag between layers of his com forter. In 1869 ten more stars were added to the flag for the admission of new states. Today Old Glory is one of America’s greatest treasures James Monroe, John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson served under the 24-star flag.

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Arkansas. Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren served under this flag.

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Michigan. Sailing under a 26-star American flag, U.S. Navy Lieutenant Charles Wilkes led the first American expedition to explore Antarctica. Martin Van Buren, William Henry Harrison, John Tyler and James Polk served under this flag.

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Florida. James Polk was the only president to serve under this flag.

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The 28th star was added to the flag when the United States annexed Texas; an action that would spawn the Mexican-American War. This was the first time in which American troops carried the flag into battle. The United States defeated Mexico and gained the land that would become New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, California and most of western Colorado. James Polk was the only president to serve under this flag.

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Iowa. James Polk was the only president to serve under this flag.

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Wisconsin. James Polk, Zachary Taylor and Millard Fillmore served under this flag.

One star was added to the flag for the admission of California. Millard Fillmore, Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan served under this flag.

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Minnesota. James Buchanan was the only president to serve under this flag.

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Kansas, South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Tennessee, North Carolina and Virginia seceded from the Union in 1861. President Lincoln did not remove stars from the flag because he believed that the southern states were still part of the government. In protest, some northerners cut 11 stars out of their personal flags. Abraham Lincoln was the only president to serve under this flag.
**35 Stars • 35-Star American Flag** 1863-1865

One star was added to the flag for the admission of West Virginia. Virginia split into two separate states because parts supported the Confederacy and other parts supported the Union (the section that would become West Virginia supported the Union). This was the first time that a new state formed out of rebellion of the original state. The Civil War ended on April 9, 1865, under this flag. Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson served under this flag.

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**36 Stars • 36-Star American Flag** 1865-1867

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Nevada. Three months before the flag became official, a 36-star flag was used to cushion President Lincoln’s head the evening of the assassination of Ford’s Theatre. “The Lincoln Flag” is currently on display at the Columns Museum of the Pike County Historical Society in Milford, Pa. Andrew Johnson was the only president to serve under this flag.

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**37 Stars • 37-Star American Flag** 1867-1877

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Nebraska. Andrew Johnson, Ulysses S. Grant and Rutherford B. Hayes served under this flag.

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**38 Stars • 38-Star American Flag** 1877-1890

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Colorado. Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield, Chester A. Arthur, Grover Cleveland and Benjamin Harrison all served under this flag.

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**43 Stars • 43-Star American Flag** 1890-1891

Five stars were added to the flag for the admission of North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Washington and Idaho. Benjamin Harrison was the only president to serve under this flag.

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**44 Stars • 44-Star American Flag** 1891-1896

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Wyoming. Benjamin Harrison and Grover Cleveland served under this flag.

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**45 Stars • 45-Star American Flag** 1896-1908

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Utah. Grover Cleveland, William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt served under this flag.

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**46 Stars • 46-Star American Flag** 1908-1912

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Oklahoma. William H. Taft was the only president to serve under this flag.
Two stars were added to the flag for the admission of New Mexico and Arizona. President Taft passed an Executive Order in 1912 establishing proportions for the flag and arranging the stars in six horizontal rows of eight, with each star pointing upward. This flag was in service for 47 years, lasting through two World Wars and making it the longest serving flag until July 4, 2007, when it will be succeeded by the 50-star American flag.


One star was added for the admission of Alaska. President Eisenhower passed an Executive Order in 1959 to have the stars arranged in 7 rows with 7 stars in each row, staggered horizontally and vertically. Dwight D. Eisenhower was the only president to serve under this flag.

One star was added to the flag for the admission of Hawaii. 17-year-old Rob Helt predicted that Hawaii would gain sisterhood after Alaska, and designed a 50-star flag for his high school history class. After Hawaii had been added, President Eisenhower selected Helt’s design to become the national emblem on July 4, 2007. The 50-star flag became America’s longest serving flag. Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard M. Nixon, Gerald R. Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald W. Reagan, George Bush, William J. Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama served under this flag.
In 1971, Mrs. Mary Hoff, an MIA wife and member of the National League of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia, recognized the need for a symbol of our POW/MIAs. Prompted by an article in the Jacksonville, Florida Times-Union, Mrs. Hoff contacted Norman Rivkees, Vice-President of Annin & Company which had made a banner for the newest member of the United Nations, the people’s Republic of China, as a part of their policy to provide flags to all UN member nations. Mrs. Hoff found Mr. Rivkees very sympathetic to the POW/MIA issue, and he, along with Annin’s advertising agency, designed a flag to represent our missing men. Following League approval, the flags were manufactured for distribution.

The flag is black, bearing in the center, in black and white, the emblem of the League. The emblem is a white disk silhouette the bust of a man, watch tower with a guard holding a rifle, and a strand of barbed wire; above the disk are the white letters POW and MIA framing a white 5-pointed; below the disk is a black and white wreath above the white motto YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN.

Concerned groups and individuals have altered the original POW/MIA Flag many times; the colors have been switched from black with white- to red, white and blue, -to white with black; the POW/MIA has at times been revised to POW/MIA. Such changes, however, are insignificant. The importance lies in the continued visibility of the symbol, a constant reminder of the plight of America’s POW/MIA.

On March 9, 1989, a POW/MIA Flag, which flew over the White House on the 1988 National POW/MIA Recognition Day, was installed in the United States Capitol Rotunda as a result of a legislation passed overwhelmingly during the 100th session of Congress. The leadership of both Houses hosted the installation ceremony in a demonstration of bipartisan congressional support. This POW/MIA Flag, the only flag displayed in the United States Capitol Rotunda, stands as a powerful symbol of our national commitment to our POW/MIAs until the fullest possible accounting for Americans still missing in Southeast Asia has been achieved.
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 under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The flag did not appear on U.S. postal stamp issues until the Battle of White Plains Issue was released in 1926, depicting the flag with a circle of 13 stars. The 48-star flag first appeared on the General Casimir Pulaski issue of 1931, though in a small monochrome depiction. The first U.S. postage stamp to feature the flag as the sole subject was issued July 4, 1957, pictured (top).
When to Fly the Flag at Half-Staff

The flag is displayed at half-staff (half-mast in naval usage) as a sign of respect or mourning. Nationwide, this action is proclaimed by the president; state-wide or territory-wide, the proclamation is made by the governor. In addition, there is no prohibition against municipal governments, private businesses or citizens flying the flag at half-staff as a local sign of respect and mourning.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first proclamation on March 1, 1954, standardizing the dates and time periods for flying the flag at half-staff from all federal buildings, grounds, and naval vessels; other congressional resolutions and presidential proclamations ensued.

To properly fly the flag at half-staff, one should briefly hoist it to the top of the staff, then lower it to the half-staff position, halfway between the top and bottom of the staff. Similarly, when the flag is to be lowered from half-staff, it should be first briefly hoisted to the top of the staff. Only state governors can decide to lower the flag to half-staff, according to US Code.

Federal guidelines state the flag should be flown at half-staff at the following dates/times:

- May 15: Peace Officers Memorial Day, unless it is the third Saturday in May, Armed Forces Day, full-staff all day
- Last Monday in May: Memorial Day (until noon)
- July 27: Korean War Veterans Day
- September 11: Patriot Day
- First Sunday in October: Start of Fire Prevention Week
- December 7: National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- For 30 days: Death of a president or former president
- For 10 days: Death of a vice president, Supreme Court chief justice/retired chief justice, or speaker of the House of Representatives.
- From death until the day of interment: Supreme Court associate justice, member of the Cabinet, former vice president, president pro-tempore of the Senate, or the majority and minority leaders of the Senate and House of Representatives. Also for federal facilities within a state or territory, for the governor.
- On the day after the death: Senators, members of Congress, territorial delegates or the resident commissioner of the commonwealth of Puerto Rico.
- Further, the flag is always flown at half-staff at four locations in the United States. These locations are The Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery; Arlington House at Arlington National Cemetery; the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor, and Mackinac Island, Michigan (Fort Mackinac Post Cemetery).
America, the Beautiful

This is a worth Addition to our patriotic songs. The author is professor of English at Wellesley College. The
Music, which is the well-known hymn tune “Materna.” Was composed by an American, who died in 1903. This hymn to
America should be sung with fervor and devotion, the refrain, “America, America,” being especially marked.

Katharine Lee Bates

Samuel A. Ward

O beautifu for spacious skies, For amber waves of
grain, For

purple mountain majesties Above the fruited plain. America! America!

brotherhood From sea to shining sea.

2. O beautiful for pilgrim feet
Whose stern impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness.
America! America!
God mend thine ev’ry flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law.

3. O beautiful for glorious tale
Of liberating strife,
When valiantly for man’s avail
Men lavish precious life.
America! America!
May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness
And ev’ry man divine.

4. O beautiful for patriot’s dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears.
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea.
On some U.S. military uniforms, flag patches are worn on the right shoulder, following the vehicle convention with the union toward the front.

This rule dates back to the Army’s early history, when both mounted cavalry and infantry units would designate a standard bearer, who carried the Colors into battle.

As he charged, his forward motion caused the flag to stream back. Since the Stars and Stripes are mounted with the canton closest to the pole, that section stayed to the right, while the stripes flew the left.

Every U.S. astronaut since the crew of Gemini 4 has worn the flag on the left shoulder of his or her space suit, with the exception of the crew of Apollo 1, whose flags were worn on the right shoulder. In this case, the canton was on the left.
Folding the Flag

As an Army and Navy custom, the flag is lowered daily at the last note of retreat. Special care should be 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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