



THE GILWELL GAZETTE



Mid-Course Flag Issue

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United States Flag Retirement

When the United States flag (Old Glory) becomes worn, torn, faded or badly soiled, it is time to replace it with a new flag. The old flag should be "retired" with all the dignity and respect befitting our nation's flag. The traditional method of retirement is to incinerate the flag, but this does not mean that one should simply drop the entire flag (intact) into a fire.

A flag ceases to be a flag when it is cut into pieces. In addition, it is easier to completely incinerate the flag if it is cut into smaller pieces. A flag should never be torn like an old bed sheet. It should be cut with scissors or shears in a methodical manner. The corners of the flag should be stretched out over a table top, and someone should cut the flag stripe by stripe and then star by star.

U.S. Flag Retirement Script

Leader: "The U.S. flag is more than just some brightly colored cloth . . . it is a symbol of our nation."

Scout #1: "Seven red stripes and six white stripes; together represent the original 13 colonies that gained us liberty. The red stripes remind us of the lifeblood of brave men and women who were ready to die for this, their country."

Scout #2: "The white stripes remind us of purity and cleanliness of purpose, thought, word and deed. The blue is for truth and justice, like the eternal blue of the star-filled heavens."

Scout #3: "The stars represent the fifty sovereign states of our union. The American Creed states, "It is my duty to my country to love it, to respect its Constitution, to obey its laws, to respect its flag and to defend it against all enemies."

Leader: "The U.S. flag should be treated with respect when it's flying, and should be treated with respect when it's being retired."

Scout # 4: Therefore, we retire flags with dignity and respect when they become worn, torn, faded or badly soiled. A flag ceases to be a flag when it is cut into pieces. We separate the 13 stripes that represent the original 13 colonies and the 50 stars to pay homage to the 50 states that together make up this great nation.

First Stripe: "The thirteen stripes stand for the thirteen original colonies which are: *(Read 1st thirteen)*

Second Stripe: "The white stands for purity."

Third Stripe: "The red stands for courage."

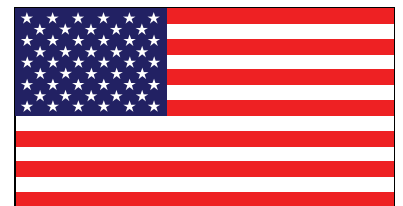
Fourth Stripe: "Give me liberty or give me death."

Fifth Stripe: "One if by land, two if by sea."

Sixth Stripe: "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the blessing of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution on the United States of America."

Seventh Stripe: "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal. They are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights. Among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Eighth Stripe: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."



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Ninth Stripe: "Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech or press."

Tenth Stripe: "Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

Eleventh Stripe: "One Nation under God."

Twelfth Stripe: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

Thirteenth Stripe: "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

NOTE: *Place each stripe one at a time in the already-going fire with a stick. You can either read the 13 colonies' names in alphabetical order or the previous sayings as you place each stripe in the fire.*

Have the Scouts line up behind the already prepared flags and have them enter one at a time in a slow solemn manner. When the stripe is placed on the fire, the Master of Ceremonies reads the state or a Scout reads the saying. It is best not to have the same Scout placing the stripe also reading the saying.

If you have more than one flag, separate them beforehand, into piles. Place a stripe from each flag in each of the 13/50 piles. Place all corresponding stripes in the fire simultaneously.

If you have separated the 50 stars: Now have the Scouts, one-at-a-time, take a star and a stick then place it on the fire. As the Scout places the star on the fire, an adult reads each state in the order they entered the union. The Scout stands by the fire until the state is read. Then he returns to the end of the line. The next Scout does not enter the fire ring until the previous Scout leaves. Continue this for all 50 states.

If you have left the star field intact, place it on the flame and then read the 50 states.

The Scouts maintain a vigil over the fire until all traces of the flag remnants are destroyed. Then, the fire is extinguished and the ashes are buried before sunset the following day. The ashes and the metal grommets are buried in separate unmarked graves. The burial can be completed with a moment of silence while a bugler plays "Taps".

SPECIAL NOTE: *Some organizations do not like the stars separated because the blue star field represents the union of the fifty states, and one should never let the union be broken. Others feel that each state is equal to the others and, therefore, should have the dignity of the state's name being read.*

When to Fly the U.S. Flag

The flag may be displayed every day from sunrise to sunset and at night if illuminated properly. On the days listed below it is particularly appropriate to display the flag.

New Year's Day - January 1
Martin Luther King Day - Third Monday in January
Inauguration Day - January 20
Lincoln's Birthday - February 12
Washington's Birthday - Third Monday in February
Easter Sunday (date is variable)
Mother's Day - Second Sunday in May
Peace Officers Memorial Day (half-staff) - May 15
Armed Forces Day - Third Saturday in May
Memorial Day (half-staff until noon) - Last Monday in May
Flag Day - June 14
Father's Day - Third Sunday in June
Independence Day - July 4
National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day - July 27 (added January 6, 2009)
Labor Day -- First Monday in September
Patriot Day (half-staff) September 11
Constitution Day - September 17
Gold Star Mothers Day - Last Sunday in September

Firefighters Memorial Day (half-staff) - Sunday before or on October 9th
Columbus Day - Second Monday in October
Navy Day - October 27
Election Day - First Tuesday in November
Veterans Day - November 11
Thanksgiving Day - Fourth Thursday in November
Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (half-staff) - December 7
Christmas Day - December 25
State Birthdays - See chart on page 3

(and other days as may be proclaimed by the President of the United States.)

The flag should be displayed daily on or near the main administration building of every public institution.



The 50 States in the United States

#	State	Settled	Capital	Entered Union	#	State	Settled	Capital	Entered Union
1	Delaware	1638	Dover	12/07/1787	26	Michigan	1668	Lansing	01/26/1837
2	Pennsylvania	1682	Harrisburg	12/12/1787	27	Florida	1565	Tallahassee	03/03/1845
3	New Jersey	1660	Trenton	12/18/1787	28	Texas	1682	Austin	12/29/1845
4	Georgia	1733	Atlanta	01/02/1788	29	Iowa	1788	Des Moines	12/28/1846
5	Connecticut	1634	Hartford	01/09/1788	30	Wisconsin	1766	Madison	05/29/1848
6	Massachusetts	1620	Boston	02/06/1788	31	California	1769	Sacramento	09/09/1850
7	Maryland	1634	Annapolis	04/28/1788	32	Minnesota	1805	St. Paul	05/11/1858
8	South Carolina	1670	Columbia	05/23/1788	33	Oregon	1811	Salem	02/14/1859
9	New Hampshire	1623	Concord	06/21/1788	34	Kansas	1727	Topeka	01/29/1861
10	Virginia	1607	Richmond	06/25/1788	35	West Virginia	1727	Charleston	06/20/1863
11	New York	1614	Albany	07/26/1788	36	Nevada	1849	Carson City	10/31/1864
12	North Carolina	1660	Raleigh	11/21/1789	37	Nebraska	1823	Lincoln	03/01/1867
13	Rhode Island	1636	Providence	05/29/1790	38	Colorado	1858	Denver	08/01/1876
14	Vermont	1724	Montpelier	03/04/1791	39	North Dakota	1812	Bismarck	11/02/1889
15	Kentucky	1774	Frankfort	06/01/1792	40	South Dakota	1859	Pierre	11/02/1889
16	Tennessee	1769	Nashville	06/01/1796	41	Montana	1809	Helena	11/08/1889
17	Ohio	1788	Columbus	03/01/1803	42	Washington	1811	Olympia	11/11/1889
18	Louisiana	1699	Baton Rouge	04/30/1812	43	Idaho	1842	Boise	07/03/1890
19	Indiana	1733	Indianapolis	12/11/1816	44	Wyoming	1834	Cheyenne	07/10/1890
20	Mississippi	1699	Jackson	12/10/1817	45	Utah	1847	Salt Lake City	01/04/1896
21	Illinois	1720	Springfield	12/03/1818	46	Oklahoma	1889	Oklahoma City	11/16/1907
22	Alabama	1702	Montgomery	12/14/1819	47	New Mexico	1610	Santa Fe	01/06/1912
23	Maine	1624	Augusta	03/15/1820	48	Arizona	1776	Phoenix	02/14/1912
24	Missouri	1735	Jefferson City	08/10/1821	49	Alaska	1784	Juneau	01/03/1959
25	Arkansas	1686	Little Rock	06/15/1836	50	Hawaii	1820	Honolulu	08/21/1959

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.

Flag Folding

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.

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

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



Step 3

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



Step 4

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



Step 5

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



Step 6

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.



Why Sing?

In Wood Badge and in Scouting, we sing a lot. A question that comes up often is, "Why do we sing so much?"

Taking the big risk of looking foolish sometimes becomes the concern of Scouters, who have just begun to sing and are feeling a bit awkward. But, consider that singing provides a huge and pleasant release from the stresses of the world (and from the stresses of the Wood Badge course).

Additionally, there is that statement about "making a joyful sound." Whether you make your joyful sound to the Lord or just to your shower, singing makes you feel good! And singing those unusual, crazy, funny, patriotic or spiritual songs with other people makes you feel extra good.

Those reasons for singing are good ones. However, the real reason that we sing is for the Scouts.

Cub Scouts especially like to sing, and in certain situations, older Scouts like it, too. One example that comes to mind is a tired young man singing *The Philmont Hymn* at the final campfire after his 70-mile backpacking trek.

Singing is good for us—and fun too. More importantly, it is good and fun for our Scouts.



Flag Folding Ceremony

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.

Here is a typical sequence of the reading (Begin reading as Honor Guard or Flag Detail is coming forward).

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.

(Wait for the Honor Guard or Flag Detail to unravel and fold the flag into a quarter fold--resume reading when Honor Guard is standing ready.)

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

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

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.

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.

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.

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

(Wait for the Honor Guard or Flag Detail to inspect the flag--after the inspection, resume reading.)

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington and the sailors and marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for us the rights, privileges, and freedoms we enjoy today.

The Flag Folding Ceremony above is from the US Air Force Academy.

The American's Creed

**"I believe in the United States of America
as a Government of the people by the people,
for the people, whose just powers are derived from
the consent of the governed;
a democracy in a Republic;
a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States;
a perfect Union, one and inseparable;
established upon those principles of freedom,
equality, justice, and humanity for which American
patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.**

**I therefore believe it is my duty to my Country
to love it; to support its Constitution;
to obey its laws; to respect its flag, and
to defend it against all enemies."**

Basic Flag Opening Ceremony

(Have the scouts offstage, ready holding the flags. The US Flag is on the right, then State flag, then Troop flag on the far left.)

Leader: "Color Guard, Attention!"

Leader: "Audience, Please Rise!"

Leader: "Scout Salute! Those not in uniform, please place your right hand over your heart."

Leader: "Color Guard, Forward March!"
(wait for color guard to reach the front)

Leader: "Color Guard, Halt!"

Leader: "Color Guard, Cross the Colors!"
(US Flag crosses in front of others to left-most flag stand, then state, then troop flags. wait for flag bearers to move to the flag pole stands)

Leader: "Color Guard, Post the Flag of [Pack/Troop] 123! "

Leader: "Color Guard, Post the Flag of the Great State of [your state name]! " (US Flag remains held by bearer)

Leader: "Please recite the Pledge of Allegiance!"

Leader: "TWO!" (Everyone drops salute)

Leader: "Scout Sign!"
(Everyone raises right hand making the Scout sign or Cub Scout sign)

Leader: "Please join us in reciting the [Scout Law, Scout Oath, Cub Scout Promise, Outdoor Code, ...]!"
(This is where the ceremony can be customized by the color guard. Choose what to recite. Could sing a song such as 'America the Beautiful'..)

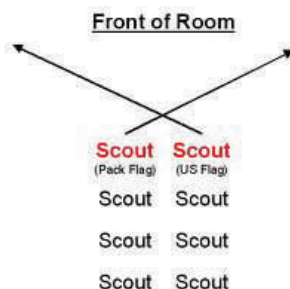
Leader: "TWO!" (Everyone drops Scout sign)

Leader: "Color Guard, Post the Flag of the United States of America! "

Leader: "Color Guard, Honor your Colors!"
(Flag bearers salute the US flag)

Leader: "Color Guard, return to ranks!"
(wait for flag bearers return to formation)

Leader: "Audience, Please be seated!"



Basic Flag Closing Ceremony

(Leader assembles color guard in back of room or offstage so they are ready. You may only have flag bearers, 2 or 3 scouts following, 2 in front and 2 behind, or any crisp formation depending on number of scouts in color guard.)

Leader: "Color Guard, Attention! "

Leader: "Audience, Please Rise! "

Leader: "Color Guard, Forward March! "
(wait for color guard to reach the front)

Leader: "Color Guard, Halt! "

Leader: "Scout Salute! Please put your right hand over your heart if you are not in uniform."

Leader: "Color Guard, Retrieve the Colors! "
(wait for flag bearers to pick up their flags)

Leader: "Color Guard, Return to Ranks! "
(Scouts not carrying flags turn around so they are facing the audience. Wait for flag bearers to return to formation)
(US Flag is on the far right facing the audience, then state flag, then troop flag on far left.)

Leader: "Color Guard, Forward March! "
(wait until color guard reaches back of room)

Leader: "Color Guard, Halt! "

Leader: "TWO! " (everyone drops salute.)

Leader: "Audience, Thank you for joining us. "

Leader: "Color Guard, Dismissed! "
(flag bearers should immediately put the flags away before starting to play with the other guys.)

