

Cub Scout Flag Etiquette

University of Scouting

November 2, 2019

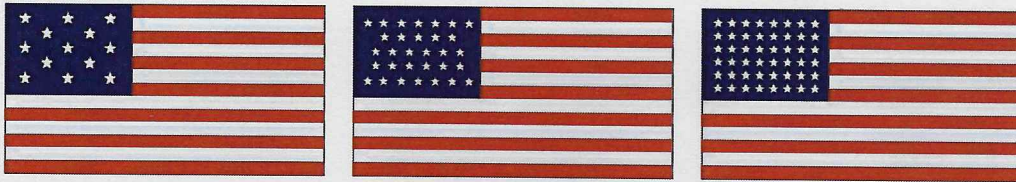
Flag History

- 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."



Flag History

- 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.



Rules of the Flag

- United States Flag Code:
- The United States Flag Code establishes advisory rules for display and care of the national flag of the United States of America. It is Chapter 1 of Title 4 of the United States Code (4 U.S.C. § 1 et seq). This is a U.S. federal law, but the penalty described in Title 18 of the United States Code (18 U.S.C. § 700) for failure to comply with it is not enforced. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *United States v. Eichman* that prohibiting burning of the U.S. flag conflicts with the First Amendment right to freedom of speech and is therefore unconstitutional.[1]

Proper Display of the Flag

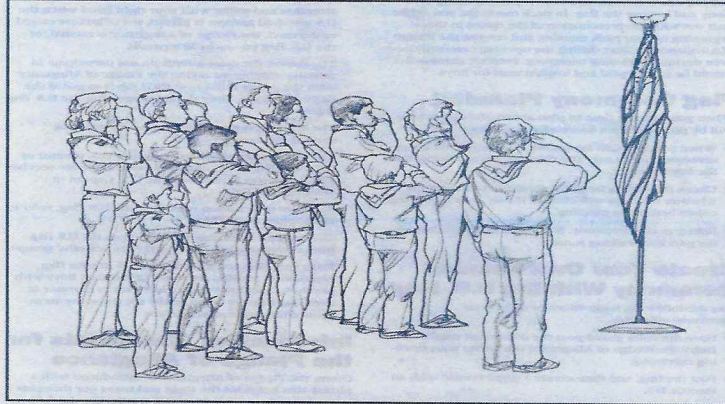
- When the flag is displayed from a staff projecting from a window, balcony, or a building, the union should be at the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff. When it is displayed from the same flagpole with another flag, the flag of the United States must always be at the top except that the church pennant may be flown above the flag during church services for Navy personnel when conducted by a Naval chaplain on a ship at sea.
- When the United States flag is displayed with the flags of states of the union or municipalities, and not with the flags of other nations, the federal flag, which represents all states, should be flown above and at the center of the other flags. 4 U.S.C. § 7(e).[14] The other flags may be the same size but none may be larger.

Proper display of the Flag...

- No other flag should be placed above it. The flag of the United States is always the first flag raised and the last to be lowered.
- The flag should be raised briskly and lowered slowly and ceremoniously.
- Ordinarily it should be displayed only between sunrise and sunset, although the Flag Code permits night time display "when a patriotic effect is desired" and the flag is illuminated.[17] Similarly, the flag should be displayed only when the weather is fair, except when an all-weather flag is displayed.[18]
- The flag of the United States of America is saluted as it is hoisted and lowered. The salute is held until the flag is unsnapped from the halyard or through the last note of music, whichever is longer.

Flag Ceremonies

Flag Ceremonies



When We Should Have Flag Ceremonies and Say the Pledge of Allegiance

Most den and pack meetings should include the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag. It is appropriate to have a presentation of the colors and the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of every pack meeting, with the retirement of the colors at the conclusion. On occasion, especially in den meetings, you can vary the opening ceremony and not use the flag. In pack meetings, you might start out with the presentation of the colors in the beginning of your pack meeting and reserve the Pledge of Allegiance for later during the opening ceremony or even during the closing ceremony. Patriotic ceremonies should be meaningful and inspirational for boys.

Flag Ceremony Planning

When you take the time to plan ahead, the Cub Scouts will be prepared for a successful experience.

- When younger Cub Scouts are responsible for a flag ceremony, make sure the flags are not too heavy for the boys to carry.
- Check the ceiling height beforehand to determine whether the flags will clear it. If they won't, post the colors before the meeting.
- Rehearse the ceremony. Make sure everyone knows his part and walking route.

Presentation of Colors—Indoors

Narrator	Actions
Attention. Will the audience please rise? <i>(Pause.)</i>	The color guard waits in the back of the room for the audience to stand and become quiet.
Color guard, advance.	The pack flag guards and bearer are on the left, and the U.S. flag guards and bearer are on the right. With the U.S. flag in the lead, they walk in and cross so that the U.S. flag will be on the left side of the room when you look toward the front. The bearers and guards take their positions near the flag stands, facing the audience and holding the flags vertically.
Hand salute.	Everyone, with the exception of the flag bearers and guards, salutes.
Please say with me the Pledge of Allegiance. <i>(All join in.)</i>	The bearers and guards stand at attention and continue to hold the flags. The pack flag is lowered slightly so that the U.S. flag stands taller. The U.S. flag guards and bearer and pack flag guards and bearer do not salute or say the Pledge of Allegiance.
Two.	The pack drops its salute. The pack flag is raised to its vertical position again.
Color guard, post the colors.	The pack flag is placed in its stand. Its guards and bearer step back into place. The U.S. flag is then posted. Its guards and bearer salute it and step back into place.
Color guard, dismissed.	The U.S. flag guard leads the procession to the back of the room with the narrator following last.

Retiring of Colors—Indoors

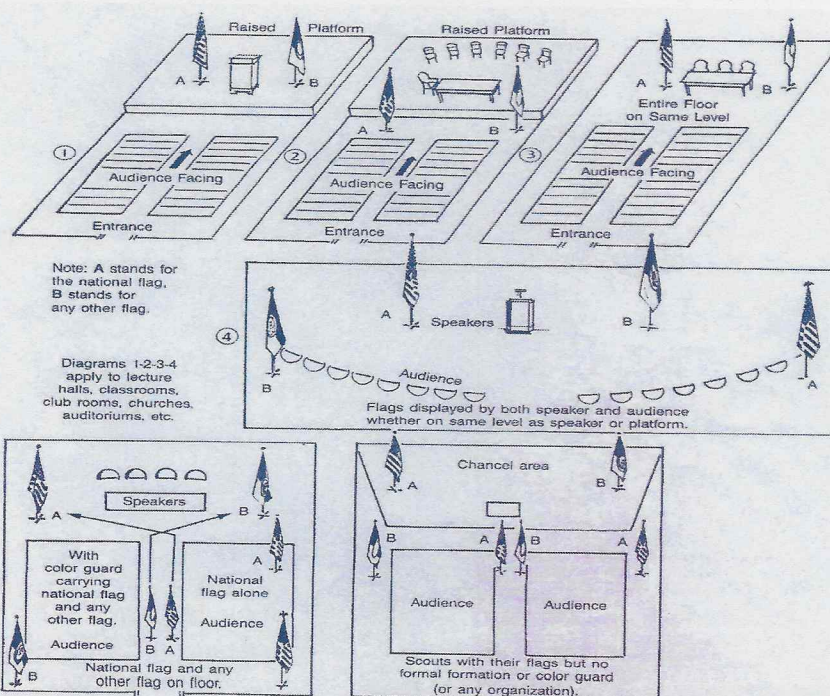
Narrator	Actions
Will the audience please rise? <i>(Pause.)</i>	The color guard waits in the back of the room for the audience to rise and become quiet.
Color guard, advance.	The U.S. flag guard and bearer and pack flag guard and bearer walk down the aisle and to the flags. They stand behind the flags, facing the audience.
Color guard, salute.	The guards and bearers salute.
Color guard, retire the colors.	The U.S. flag is removed first (just slightly ahead of the pack flag).
Hand salute.	Everyone, with the exception of the guards and bearers, salutes. The U.S. flag stays on its "marching right" as the guards and bearers proceed down the aisle to the rear of the room.
Two.	Everyone drops the salute.

Presentation of Colors—Flagpole

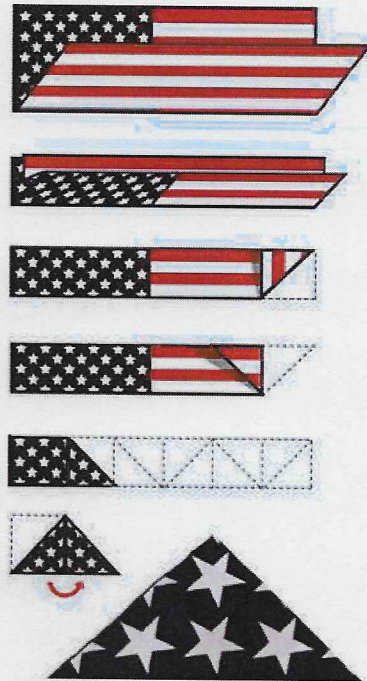
Narrator	Actions
Attention. Will the audience please rise. <i>(Pause.)</i>	The color guard waits in the rear for the audience to become quiet.
Color guard, advance.	The U.S. flag guards and bearer walk in and take their positions near the flagpole, facing the audience.
Color guard, prepare to raise the colors.	The line is unwound. The flag is unfolded and attached to the rope.
Hand salute.	Everyone, with the exception of the U.S. flag guards and bearer, salutes.
Color guard, raise the colors.	The flag is now raised quickly to the top of the pole, and the cord is wound back in place.
Please say with me the Pledge of Allegiance.	The U.S. flag guards and bearer stand at attention.
<i>(All join in.)</i>	The U.S. flag guards and bearer do not salute or say the Pledge of Allegiance.
Two.	The pack drops its salute.
Color guard, salute.	The U.S. flag guards and bearer salute.
Color guard, dismissed.	The color guard retreats to the back of the group.

Retiring of Colors—Flagpole

Narrator	Actions
Attention. Will the audience please rise. <i>(Pause.)</i>	The color guard waits in the rear for the audience to become quiet.
Color guard, advance.	The U.S. flag guards and bearer walk to the flagpole. They stand behind the flag, facing the audience.
Color guard, salute.	The U.S. flag guards and bearer salute.
Color guard, prepare to retire the colors.	They unwind the cord and wait.
Hand salute.	Everyone, with the exception of the U.S. flag guards and bearer, salutes. The U.S. flag is quickly lowered.
Two.	As soon as the flag touches the hands of the guard, this command is given. Everyone drops the salute. The U.S. flag guard and bearer remove the flag from the rope and fold it correctly.
Color guard, retreat.	The color guard retreats to the back of the group.



Flag Folding



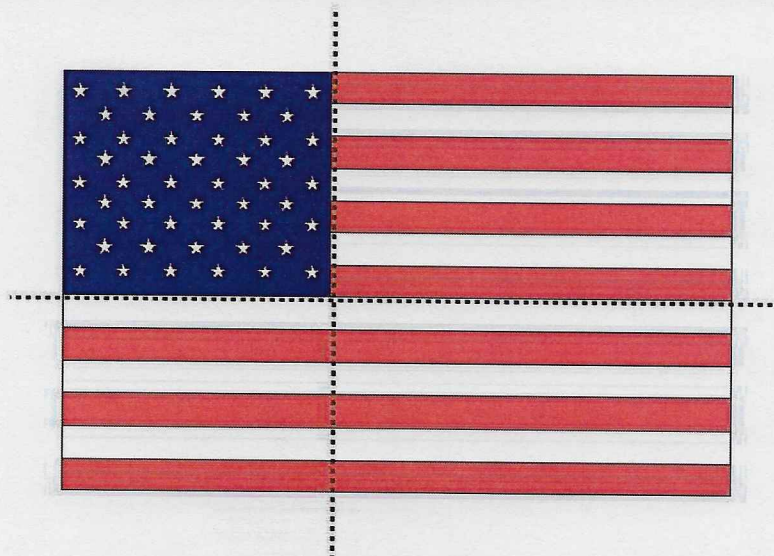
Flag Retirement Ceremonies

- Under Title 4, Chapter 1, § 8, paragraph k of the US Code (often referred to as the Flag Code) it states:
- "The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning."

Retiring Old Glory

When the United States flag (Old Glory) becomes worn, torn, faded or badly soiled, it is time to replace it with a new flag, and 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 up like an old bed sheet. It should be cut up 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 in half, vertically (be careful not to cut up the blue star field (see the figure)). Then, place the two halves together and cut them in half, horizontally. You will end up with four pieces of flag, one being the blue star field.



NOTE: The reason we do not cut the blue star field is it represents the union of the fifty states and one should never let the union be broken.

While the Scouts are performing the flag dissection, other Scouts should start and tend a medium size, wood fire (preferably in a metal drum or incinerator). Once the flag remnants and fire are ready, you perform the following ceremony. 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. The burial can be completed with a moment of silence while taps is played by a bugler.

NOTE: Before accepting a flag for retirement, the recipient should obtain information about its history. For example: Where has it flown? How long? Any memorable events happen at that site? This information should be used in the ceremony.

Many units start the flag retirement process by contacting a local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) post, Elks Lodge, American Legion post or similar group. Your pack, troop or crew could conduct a small service project in exchange for the group's helping to retire your flag.

PRO: This option ensures the ceremony will be held in a respectful manner by people who know what they're doing. Your Scouts/Venturers are sure to learn something.

CON: Your Scouts/Venturers learn better by doing, and this option reduces them to being bystanders.

Cub Scout Rank Requirements

- Tiger- Team Tiger: #2 With you Den make a job chart that shows everyone is doing something to help, as one of the jobs, lead the Pledge of Allegiance at a den meeting.
- Wolf- Council Fire: #1 Participate in a flag ceremony, and learn how to properly care for and fold the flag.
- Bear- Paws for Action: 1c Learn about our flag. Display it at home for one month. Say the Pledge of Allegiance and learn its meaning.
- Webelos/ AOL- Building A Better World: #1 Explain the history of the United States flag. Show how to properly display the flag in public, and help lead a flag ceremony.

Webelos/ AOL- Scouting Adventure: 1f Repeat from memory the Pledge of Allegiance. In your own words, explain its meaning.

References:

1. <http://www.usflag.org/history/flagevolution.html>
2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Flag_Code
3. Cub Scout Ceremonies for Dens and Packs
4. <http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/Media/Resources/DisplayingtheFlag/07.aspx>
5. <http://usscouts.org/ceremony/flagret1.asp>