**When to Display the American Flag**

The flag is a symbol of respect, honor, and patriotism. It may be displayed on any day of the year according to the following guidelines:

The flag should be displayed on all days except during storms.

The custom is to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on flagstaffs in the open, but it may be displayed at night, if illuminated.

The flag should be displayed on [Memorial Day](https://www.almanac.com/content/when-memorial-day-2016) (half-staff until noon), full staff on all other days, except during declared times of mourning.

The flag should be displayed at every public institution and in or near every polling place on election days, and at schoolhouses during school days.

**How to Display the American Flag**

When the flag is hung vertically on a wall, window, or door, the Union (blue section) should be to the observer’s left. When the flag is hung either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the Union should be to the observer’s left.

In a procession, the American flag should be to the right (the flag’s own right) of any other flag or, if in a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.

When displayed from a staff projecting from a building, the union should be at the peak of the staff.

On a platform, the flag should be above and behind the speaker, with the union uppermost and to the observer’s left.

When displayed from a staff in a church or auditorium, the flag should occupy the position of honor and be placed at the speaker’s right as he faces the audience.

When the flag is used to cover a casket, the union should be at the head and over the left shoulder.

The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.

When flown at half-staff (half-mast when afloat), the flag should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to half-staff position. It should again be raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. Half-staff is one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff.

Displaying the American Flag alongside other flags

In the United States, no other flag should be placed above the American flag or, if they are to be placed on the same level, to the right of the American flag.

The flag, when displayed with another against a wall—both from crossed staffs—should be on the right (the flag’s own right), and its staff should be in front of the other staff.

The American flag should be at the center and the highest point when displayed with a group of state flags.

When flags of states, cities, etc., are flown on the same halyard, the American flag should be at the peak.

When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staffs of the same height, and the American flag should be on its own right and hoisted first and lowered last.

Flag Etiquette

Raising the flag on an outside pole:

**“Color guard, attention!” “Camp, attention!”** All stand at attention.

**“Color guard, advance!”** The color guard advances to the flagpoles. The audience stands at attention.

**“ Color guard, prepare to raise the colors!”** When the color guard attaches the flag to the halyard

**“Scout Salute!”**, all salute, except the Scout raising the colors. The flag is raised briskly to the top. Flags other than the U.S. flag are raised after the American flag starts up the pole.

Once the flag is raised and the halyard tied off, the Scout hoisting the flag joins the salute. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited. After the pledge is recited:

**“Two!”** All stop saluting, remaining at attention.

**“Color guard, dismissed!”** The color guard returns to their starting point.

**“Camp at ease!”** Audience relaxes from attention.

Lowering the flag on an outside pole:

**“Color guard, attention!” “Camp, attention!”** All stand at attention.

**“Color guard, advance!”** The color guard advances to the flagpoles. Flags other than the U.S. flag are lowered first and folded bed sheet style.

**“ Color guard, prepare to lower the colors!”** The color guard unties the lanyard from the pole.

**“Scout salute!”** All salute, except the Scout lowering the colors; the assistant salutes until the flag is within reach.

**“ Color guard, lower the colors!”** The U.S. flag is lowered slowly, with dignity. When the flag touches the assistant’s hand:

**“Two!”** All stop saluting, remaining at attention while the U.S. flag is properly folded triangle-style.

**“Color guard, dismissed!”** The color guard returns to their starting point.

**“Camp at ease!”** Audience relaxes from attention.

Presenting the Colors

**Color guard, attention!” “Camp, attention!”** All stand at attention.

**“Color guard, advance!”** The color guard moves toward the flag stands and stops on arrival.

**“Color guard, present colors!”** The U.S. flag is raised high and held; other flags are dipped forward.

**“Hand salute!”** All except the flag bearers salute. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited.

**“Two!”** All drop salute, remain at attention.

**“Color guard, post colors!”** The flags are posted in their stands; flag bearers take one step back.

**“Color guard, dismissed!”** Color guard returns to the starting point behind audience.

**“Camp at ease!”** The audience relaxes from attention.

Retrieving the colors

**“Color guard, attention!” “Camp, attention!”** All stand at attention.

**“Color guard, advance!”** The color guard moves toward the flag stands, and stops on arrival.

**“ Color guard, present the colors!”** The flags are removed from their stands; the color guard turns toward the audience and waits.

**“Hand salute!”** All except the flag bearers salute.

**“ Color guard, retire the colors!”** The U.S. flag precedes all others and they exit. When they are clear

of the audience:

**“Two!”** All drop salutes.

**“Camp at ease!”** Audience relaxes from attention.