

Rules for Display of the American Flag



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.

About the Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance of the United States is an oath of loyalty to the national flag and the republic of the United States of America, originally composed by Francis Bellamy in 1892. The Pledge has been modified four times since then, with the most recent change adding the words "under God" in 1954. The Pledge is predominantly sworn by children in public schools in response to state laws requiring the Pledge to be offered. Congressional sessions open with the swearing of the Pledge, as do government meetings at local levels, meetings held by the Knights of Columbus, Boy Scouts of America, other organizations, and many sporting events.

According to the United States Flag Code, the Pledge "should be rendered by standing at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart.

When not in uniform men should remove any non-religious 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."

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General Etiquette

- The flagpole should be illuminated at all times, either by sunlight or an appropriate light source at night.
- The flag should be flown in fair weather, unless the flag is designed for inclement weather use.
- The flag should never be dipped to any person or thing. It is flown upside down only as a distress signal.
- The flag should not be used for any decoration in general. Bunting of blue, white and red stripes is available for this purpose. The blue stripe of the bunting should be on the top.
- The flag should never be used for any advertising purpose. It should not be embroidered, printed or otherwise impressed on such articles as cushions, handkerchiefs, napkins, boxes, or anything intended to be discarded after temporary use. Advertising signs should not be attached to the staff or halyard.
- The flag should not be used as part of a costume or athletic uniform, except that a flag patch may be used on the uniform of military personnel, fireman, policeman and members of patriotic organizations.
- 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.

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.

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.

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 flagstaves 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.

Rules for Display of the American Flag

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.

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.

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.

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 flag's own right, or, if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.

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.

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 in the street. When festoons, rosettes or drapings are desired, bunting of blue, white and red should be used, but never the flag.