

Evolution of the United States Flag

No one knows with **absolute certainty** who designed the first stars and stripes or who made it. Congressman Francis Hopkinson seems most likely to have designed it, and few historians believe that Betsy Ross, a Philadelphia seamstress, made the first one.

Until the Executive Order of June 24, 1912, neither the order of the stars nor the proportions of the flag was prescribed. Consequently, flags dating before this period sometimes show unusual arrangements of the stars and odd proportions, these features being left to the discretion of the flag maker. In general, however, straight rows of stars and proportions similar to those later adopted officially were used. The principal acts affecting the flag of the United States are the following:

The First Official United States Flag: This 13-Star Flag became the Official United States Flag on June 14th, 1777. Each star *and* stripe represented a Colony of which there were thirteen, united nearly one year earlier by the Declaration of Independence. The thirteen Colonies are listed below with the date that each ratified the Constitution and became a State. (1st) Delaware, (2nd) Pennsylvania, (3rd) New Jersey, (4th) Georgia, (5th) Connecticut, (6th) Massachusetts, (7th) Maryland, (8th) South Carolina, (9th) New Hampshire, (10th) Virginia, (11th) New York, (12th) North Carolina, (13th) Rhode Island.

15 Stars and 15 Stripes - The Star Spangled Banner: On May 1st, 1795. Two stars were added for the admission of Vermont and Kentucky and was to last for 23 years. The five Presidents who served under this flag were; Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe. The 15-star, **15-stripe** flag was immortalized by Francis Scott Key during the bombardment of Fort McHenry, Sept 13, 1814. You can notice the "tilt" in some of the stars just as in the original Star Spangled Banner.

20 Stars and 20 Stripes - The 1818 Flag: Realizing that the addition of a new star and new stripe for each new State was impractical, Congress passed the Flag Act of 1818 which returned the flag design to 13 stripes and specified 20 stars for the 20 states. Five stars were added for the admission of Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana, Indiana, and Mississippi and was to last for just one year. The only President to serve under this flag was Monroe.

The 21-Star Flag: On July 4th 1819. A star was added for the admission of Illinois and was to last for just one year. The only President to serve under this flag was Monroe.

The 23-Star Flag: On July 4th 1820. Two stars were added for the admission of Alabama and Maine and was to last for 2 years. The only President to serve under this flag was Monroe.

The 24-Star Flag: On July 4th 1822. A star was added for the admission of Missouri and was to last for fourteen years. Three Presidents served under this flag; Monroe, Adams, and Jackson.

The 25-Star Flag: On July 4th 1836. A star was added for the admission of Arkansas and was to last for just one year. Two Presidents serve under this flag; Jackson and Van Buren.

The 26-Star Flag: On July 4th 1837. A star was added for the admission of Michigan and was to last for 8 years. Four Presidents serve under this flag; Van Buren, Harrison, Tyler, and Polk.

The 27-Star Flag: On July 4th 1845. A star was added for the admission of Florida and was to last for only 1 year. The only President to serve under this flag was Polk.

The 28-Star Flag: On July 4th 1846. A star was added for the admission of Texas and was to last for only 1 year. The only President to serve under this flag was Polk.

The 29-Star Flag: On July 4th 1847. A star was added for the admission of Iowa and was to last for only 1 year. The only President to serve under this flag was Polk.

The 30-Star Flag: On July 4th 1848. A star was added for the admission of Wisconsin and was to last for 3 years. The three Presidents to serve under this flag were; Polk, Taylor, and Fillmore.

The 31-Star Flag: On July 4th 1851. A star was added for the admission of California and was to last for seven years. The three Presidents who served under this flag were; Fillmore, Pierce, and Buchanan.

The 32-Star Flag: On July 4th, 1858. A star was added for the admission of Minnesota and was to last for just one year. The only President to serve under this flag was Buchanan.

The 33-Star Flag: On July 4th, 1859. A star was added for the admission of Oregon and was to last for 2 years. Two Presidents serve under this flag; Buchanan and Lincoln.

The 34-Star Flag: On July 4th, 1861. A star was added for the admission of Kansas and was to last for 2 years. The only President to serve under this flag was Abraham Lincoln.

The 35-Star Flag: On July 4th, 1863. A star was added for the admission of West Virginia and was to last for 2 years. Two Presidents serve under this flag; Abraham Lincoln and Johnson.

The 36-Star Flag: On July 4th, 1865. A star was added for the admission of Nevada and was to last for 2 years. The only President to serve under this flag was Johnson.

The 37-Star Flag: On July 4th 1867. A star was added for the admission of Nebraska and was to last for ten years. Three Presidents served under this flag; Johnson, Grant, and Hayes.

The 38-Star Flag: On July 4th, 1877. A star was added for the admission of Colorado and was to last for 13 years. Five Presidents serve under this flag; Hayes, Garfield, Cleveland, Harrison.

The 43-Star Flag: On July 4th, 1890. Five stars were added for the admission of North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Washington, and Idaho and was to last for just 1 year. The only President to serve under this flag was Harrison.

The 44-Star Flag: On July 4th, 1891. A star was added for the admission of Wyoming and was to last for 5 years. Two Presidents serve under this flag; Harrison, Cleveland.

The 45-Star Flag: On July 4th, 1896. A star was added for the admission of Utah, and was to last for 12 years. Three Presidents served under this flag; Cleveland, McKinley, Roosevelt.

The 46 Star Flag: On July 4, 1908, the U.S. flag grew to 46 stars with the addition of Oklahoma. This was the official flag for 4 years. Two Presidents served under this flag; Roosevelt, Taft .

The 48 Star Flag: On July 4, 1912, the U.S. flag grew to 48 stars with the addition of New Mexico and Arizona. This flag was official for 47 years, longer than any other flag, through two World Wars. Eight Presidents served under this flag; Taft, Wilson, Harding, Coolidge, Hoover, Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower

49-Star Flag: On January 3rd, 1959 Alaska was formally granted statehood placing the 49th star on our Flag.

50-Star Flag: 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. This is the current flag of the United States. Hawaii was admitted on 1959. The 27th flag of the United States became the official flag on July 4th, 1960. Nine presidents have served under this flag; Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush, Clinton, Bush and Obama.

Flag Etiquette

STANDARDS of RESPECT

The Flag Code, which formalizes and unifies the traditional ways in which we give respect to the flag, also contains specific instructions on how the flag is not to be used. They are:

- 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 as a drapery, or for covering a speaker's desk, draping a platform, or 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 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 placed on it, or attached to it, any mark, insignia, letter, word, number, figure, or drawing of any kind.
- The flag should never be used as a receptacle 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.

Note: Most American Legion Posts regularly conduct a dignified flag burning ceremony, often on Flag Day, June 14th. Many Cub Scout Packs, Boy Scout Troops, and Girl Scout Troops retire flags regularly as well. Contact your local American Legion Hall or Scout Troop to inquire about the availability of this service.

Displaying the Flag Outdoors

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 - of a state, community, society or Scout unit - 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 flag is displayed over a street, it should be hung vertically, with the union to the north or east. If the flag is suspended over a sidewalk, the flag's union should be farthest from the building.

When flown with flags of states, communities, or societies on separate flag poles which are of the same height and in a straight line, the flag of the United States is always placed in the position of honor - to its own right. ..The other flags may be smaller but none may be larger.

..No other flag ever should be placed above it.

..The flag of the United States is always the first flag raised and the last to be lowered.

When flown with the national banner of other countries, each flag must be displayed from a separate pole of the same height. Each flag should be the same size. They should be raised and lowered simultaneously. The flag of one nation may not be displayed above that of another nation.

Raising and Lowering the Flag

The flag should be raised briskly and lowered slowly and ceremoniously. Ordinarily it should be displayed only between sunrise and sunset. It should be illuminated if displayed at night.

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 the longest.

Displaying the Flag Indoors

When on display, the flag is accorded the place of honor, always positioned to its own right. Place it to the right of the speaker or staging area or sanctuary. Other flags should be to the left.

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, localities, or societies are grouped for display.

When one flag is used with the flag of the United States of America and the staffs are crossed, the flag of the United States is placed on its own right with its staff in front of the other flag.

When displaying the flag against a wall, vertically or horizontally, the flag's union (stars) should be at the top, to the flag's own right, and to the observer's left.

Parading and Saluting the Flag

When carried in a procession, the flag should be to the right of the marchers. When other flags are carried, the flag of the United States may be centered in front of the others or carried to their right. When the flag passes in a procession, or when it is hoisted or lowered, all should face the flag and salute.

The Salute

To salute, all persons come to attention. Those in uniform give the appropriate formal salute. Citizens not in uniform salute by placing their right hand over the heart and men with head cover should remove it and hold it to left shoulder, hand over the heart. Members of organizations in formation salute upon command of the person in charge.

The Flag in Mourning

To place the flag at half staff, hoist it to the peak for an instant and lower it to a position half way between the top and bottom of the staff. The flag is to be raised again to the peak for a moment before it is lowered. On Memorial Day the flag is displayed at half staff until noon and at full staff from noon to sunset.

The flag is to be flown at half staff in mourning for designated, principal government leaders and upon presidential or gubernatorial order.

When used to cover a casket, the flag should be placed with the union at the head and over the left shoulder. It should not be lowered into the grave.

Half Staff Displays

Flying the flag at half-staff is an area of flag etiquette that most people want to make sure they get right. It is also an area for which the road to error is routinely paved with good intentions. With that in mind, we offer this refresher course as the all-important intersection where knowledge meets benevolence.

FLYING THE FLAG AT HALF-STAFF: The pertinent section of the Flag Code says, "by order of the President, the flag shall be flown at half-staff upon the death of principal figures of the United States Government and the Governor of a State, territory, or possession, as a mark of respect to their memory. In the event of the death of other officials or foreign dignitaries, the flag is to be displayed at half-staff according to Presidential orders, or in accordance with recognized customs or practices not inconsistent with law.

In the event of the death a present or former official of the government of any State, territory, or possession of the United States, the Governor of that state, territory, or possession may proclaim that the National flag shall be flown at half-staff." The code also includes other related details including the specific length of time during which the flag should be displayed at half-staff, in the event of the death of a "principal figure"(e.g., 30 days for the death of a sitting or former President, 10 days for the death of a sitting Vice-President,etc.).

GOOD-FAITH MISUNDERSTANDINGS: Although the code is actually pretty clear, confusion continues to occur. For example, U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno recently ordered the American Flag flown at half-staff on all U.S. Department of Justice buildings, in honor of several DEA agents who had died. While NFF understands this gesture, the Flag Code does not give Attorney General Reno the authority to issue that order. Closer to NFF's Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania home, Mayor Tom Murphy ordered all flags flown at half-staff to honor the victims of a plane crash. Here again, a well-intentioned gesture, but one for which no authority exists. NFF points out these "good-faith misunderstandings" not to criticize or embarrass anyone, but rather to head off a growing trivialization of this memorial salute, and to preserve the dignity and significance of flying the U.S. flag at half-staff. To any readers who may think that NFF is insensitive for raising these breaches of etiquette, please be assured that our motives are pure. We grieve these human loses deeply; however, we believe proper respect for our flag must be maintained - no matter the circumstances.

The original Pledge of Allegiance

"I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands- one nation indivisible-with liberty and justice for all."

On September 8,1892, the Boston based "The Youth's Companion" magazine published a few words for students to repeat on Columbus Day that year. Written by Francis Bellamy,the circulation manager and native of Rome, New York, and reprinted on thousands of leaflets, was sent out to public schools across the country. On October 12, 1892, the quadricentennial of Columbus' arrival, more than 12 million children recited the Pledge of Allegiance, thus beginning a required school-day ritual.

At the first National Flag Conference in Washington D.C., on June14, 1923, a change was made. For clarity, the words "the Flag of the United States" replaced "my flag". In the following years various other changes were suggested but were never formally adopted.

It was not until 1942 that Congress officially recognized the Pledge of Allegiance. One year later, in June 1943, the Supreme Court ruled that school children could not be forced to recite it. In fact,today only half of our fifty states have laws that encourage the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in the classroom!

In June of 1954 an amendment was made to add the words "under God". Then-President Dwight D. Eisenhower said "In this way we are reaffirming the transcendence of religious faith in America's heritage and future; in this

way we shall constantly strengthen those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country's most powerful resource in peace and war."

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.**

What is in a TRUCK

A match, a razor and 1 45 cal round. If the military post is being overrun and you are the last person, you are to knock the flagpole down so that it lands due north. Where the ball (truck) lands is an unassembled 45 cal gun. You are to use the razor to cut the stars out of the flag (respect), then burn the flag with the match. You then assemble the 45 and shoot yourself.