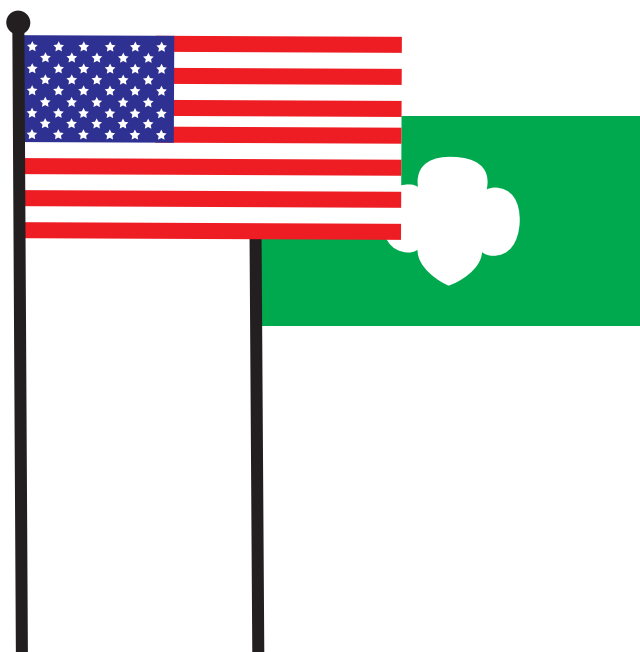


FLAG CEREMONY

Participating in a flag ceremony can be an inspiring and patriotic experience for girls because they gain the pride of knowledge and respect for our flag and its customs. Simplicity is key! When introducing flag customs to girls, keep in mind that the emphasis should be on showing respect for the flag rather than on the commands or techniques.

Planning a flag ceremony is a simple, fun way to practice girl-led leadership, with lots of opportunity for taking turns and sharing roles.





PLANNING A FLAG CEREMONY

- How will girls be selected to participate in the ceremony?
- Who will carry the flag?
- Who will be the color guards?
- Who will give the directions for the ceremony?
- What song will we sing? Who will sound the pitch and start the song?
- Do we want a poem or quotation? Who will say or read it?
- After the Pledge of Allegiance, will we recite the Promise and the Law?
- In what order will we do all these things?
- When should we practice?
- Where will the flags be placed at the end of the ceremony?

From "Let's Celebrate! Girl Scout Ceremonies" Girl Scouts of the United States of America, 2004.



SALUTING THE FLAG

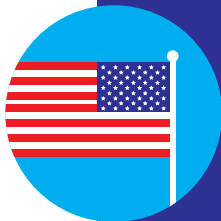
When saluting the flag, Girl Scouts use the civilian salute of placing the right hand over the heart.



- When the flag passes in front of you, like in a procession or a parade
- When the national anthem is played
- When saying the Pledge of Allegiance
- From the moment the flag is attached to the flagpole until it has reached the top. And from the moment the flag starts to be lowered from the flagpole, until it is unclipped from the flagpole



OUTDOOR FLAG CEREMONY TIPS



- To raise the flag, unfurl (unfold) it and hoist it quickly and smoothly to raise it to the top of the pole. Do not raise the flag while it is furled (folded).
- To lower the flag, lower it slowly with dignity.
- To fly the flag at half mast, raise the flag quickly to the top of the pole, and then lower it slowly to the half-mast position. When retrieving the flag from a half-mast position, raise it quickly to the top of the pole and then lower it slowly with dignity to the Color Guard.



WHAT IS MEANT BY THE FLAG'S "OWN RIGHT?"

The American Legion explains the meaning of the flag's "own right" like this:

The "right" as a position of honor developed from the time when the "right hand" was the "weapon hand" or "point of danger." The right hand raised without weapon was a sign of peace. The right hand, to any observer, is the observer's left. Therefore, as used in the Flag Code, the flag and/or blue field is displayed to the left of the observer, which is the flag's "own right."

Source: <https://www.legion.org/flag/questions-answers/91490/what-meant-flags-own-right>



HOW TO DISPLAY THE AMERICAN FLAG

The U.S. flag stands for our nation and the shared history, pride, principles, and commitment of its people. The red and white stripes represent the original 13 colonies, the blue section represents the union, and the stars are symbolic of the 50 states. When we properly display this powerful symbol, we signal our respect for everything it represents.



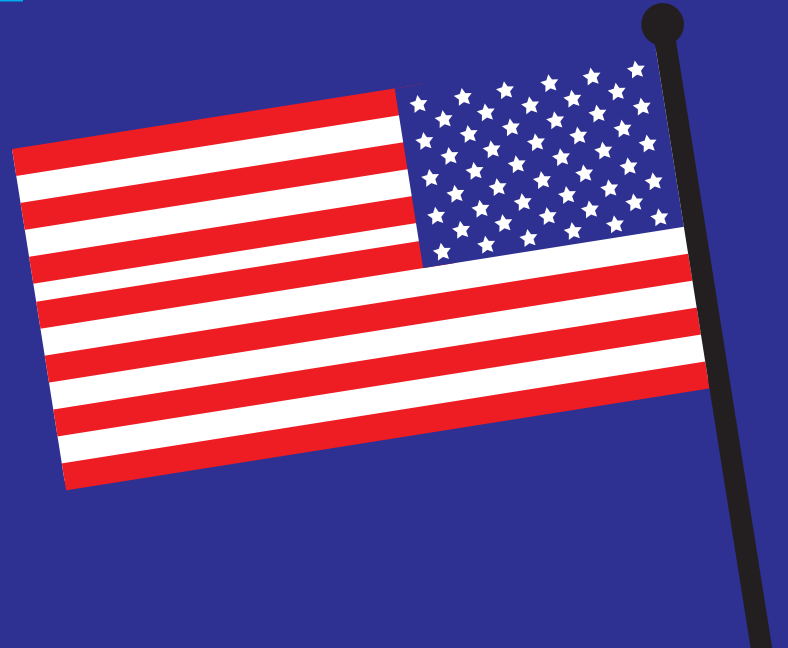
The flag shouldn't be flown in inclement weather unless it's an all-weather flag.



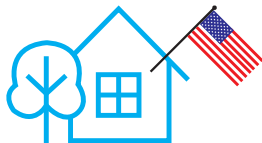
Flags displayed at night should be properly illuminated.



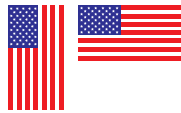
In a time of national mourning, hang the flag at half-mast.



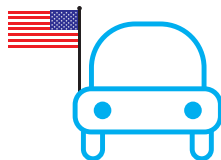
WHEN DISPLAYING THE FLAG...



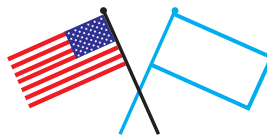
From your porch, place the union (blue section) at the peak of the staff.



Against a wall or on a window, place the union (blue section) at the top left corner.



On your vehicle, clamp the staff to the right front fender.



With another flag, place the U.S. flag to your left when crossed.

THE FLAG CAN BE FLOWN EVERY DAY, BUT IT IS OFTEN FLOWN TO SHOW PATRIOTISM ON THESE OBSERVANCES:

- New Year's Day
- Inauguration Day
- Lincoln's Birthday
- Washington's Birthday
- Armed Forces Day
- Memorial Day
- Flag Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Patriot Day
- Constitution Day
- Columbus Day
- Navy Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day



Keep your flag completely dry and folded properly — into a triangle, with the union (blue section) visible — before storing it in a well-ventilated area. If the flag is damaged or worn out, it should be disposed of with dignity.

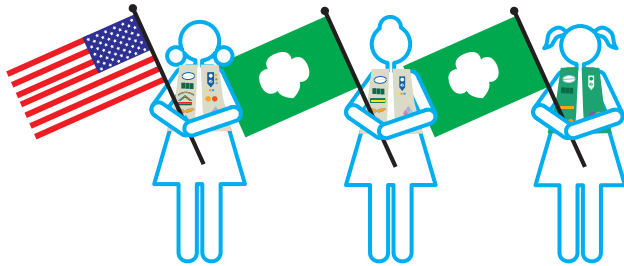


The flag should not touch anything below it or rest on the ground.

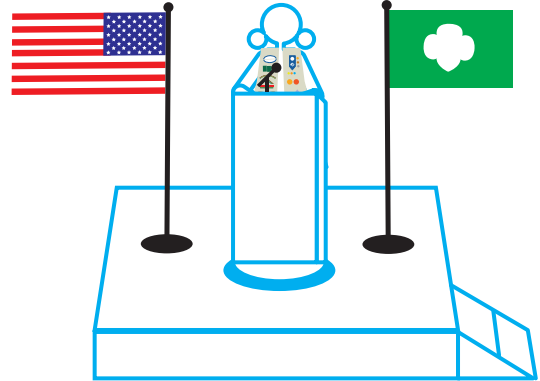


CORRECT FLAG POSITIONS FOR DISPLAY, PROCESSION, OR PARADE

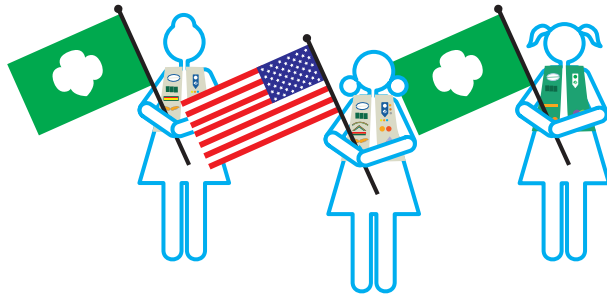
- When carrying two or more flags in a straight line, the U.S. flag is on its own right. If the procession stops for the Pledge of Allegiance, the U.S. flag bearer steps to the center in front of the other flags.



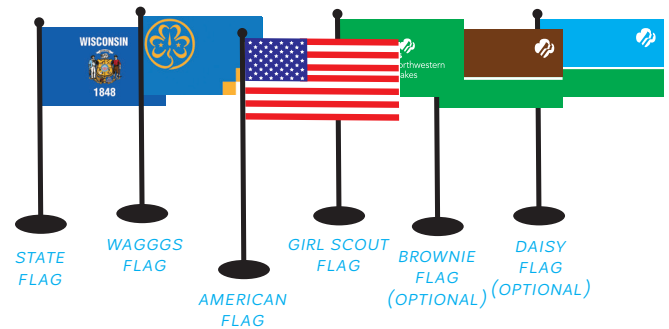
- The U.S. flag is to the right of a speaker.



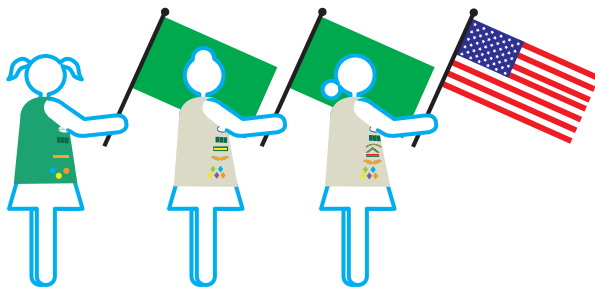
- When carrying three flags, the U.S. flag will be in the center front.



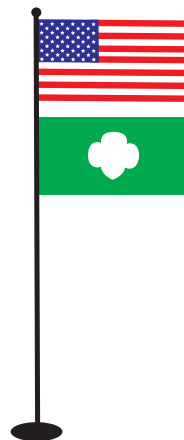
- When multiple flags of States, localities, or organizations are grouped and displayed on staffs, the U.S. flag should be at the center and highest place.



- When carrying multiple flags down a narrow aisle, the U.S. flag is first.



- When flown on the same flagpole, the U.S. flag is always at the peak.

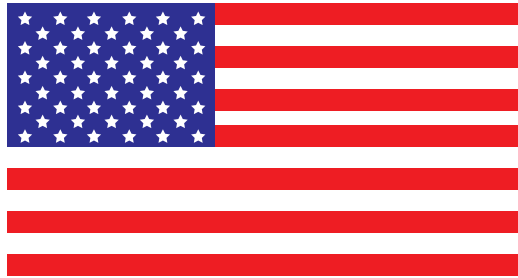




HOW TO FOLD THE AMERICAN FLAG

Honor the symbol of our nation by folding the flag with care and respect.

STEP ONE:



Straighten out the flag to full length and hold parallel to the floor.

STEP TWO:



Fold in half lengthwise, once.

STEP THREE:



Fold in half lengthwise, again. The union (blue section) should be facing outward.

STEP FOUR:



Make a **triangular fold** by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to meet the open edge.

STEP FIVE:



Fold the corner of the triangular fold inward, parallel the open edge, to form a second triangle.

STEP SIX:



Continue the **triangular folding** until the entire length of the flag is folded in this manner.

STEP SEVEN:



Neatly tuck the flag's binding edge inside the folds of the flag so it does not show. When the flag is completely folded, only the union (blue section) should be visible.

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE FLAG?

The Federal Flag Code provides uniform guidelines for the display of and respect shown for the flag.
<https://www.senate.gov/reference/resources/pdf/RL30243.pdf>

OPENING FLAG CEREMONY

Indoors: Color Guard assembles at the back of the room (avoid having girls and flags pass through doorways at the start of the ceremony). Caller moves to the podium/position in the front of room.

Outdoors: Color Guard assembles outside the horseshoe surrounding the flagpole.

CALLER COMMANDS:

<i>Please stand.</i>
<i>Girl Scouts, Attention</i>
<i>Color Guard, Attention</i>
<i>Color Guard, Advance</i>
<i>Color Guard, Post the Colors</i>
<i>Color Guard, Honor your flag</i> OR <i>Color Guard, Salute</i>
<i>Please Join Me in the Pledge of Allegiance.</i> <i>"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."</i>
Optional: <i>Special reading, national anthem or song, or moment of silence (This can also be placed after the Girl Scout Promise.)</i> <i>("Thank you...")</i>
<i>Please Join Me in the Girl Scout Promise.</i> <i>"On my honor, I will try:</i> <i>To serve God and my country, To help people at all times, And to live by the Girl Scout Law."</i> <i>("Please Join Me in the Girl Scout Law" can be recited here.)</i>
<i>Color Guard, Dismissed</i>
<i>Please be seated</i> OR <i>Girl Scouts, Dismissed</i>

ACTIONS:

All stand.
All girls are quiet, respectful, and ready.
Flag bearers lift flags up (indoors), ready to walk. Color Guard stands at attention with their hands at their sides.
Color Guard walks to the front of the room and stands next to or behind their flag stands (indoors), or the flagpole (outdoors). American Flag leads.
American Flag stays highest the longest. Indoors, it is posted last. Place flags in flag stands and stand at attention. Outdoors, it is hoisted first. The flag bearer hooks the grommets on the flag and hoists it while the Color Guard unfurls the flag and keeps it from touching the ground. American flag goes up first; state or Girl Scout flags may fly beneath it.
Color Guard salutes and then returns to standing at attention. (Other traditions have developed but any action honoring the flag should be quiet and respectful.)
The audience and Caller recite the Pledge with hand over heart. Color Guard stands at attention.
Special Reading: A brief poem or narrative that fits the occasion/event – it does not need to be read by the Caller. Song: A patriotic song, sung by an individual or group. Moment of Silence: The caller bows her head and counts to 15, then raises her head and continues. Color Guard stands at attention.
Audience and Caller recite the Promise with the Girl Scout sign. Color Guard stands at attention. (Audience and Caller recite the Law with the Girl Scout sign. Color Guard stands at attention.)
American flag bearer goes first. Color Guard members follow in the same order/formation in which they arrived. Color Guard walks to the back of the room (indoors) or exits the horseshoe (outdoors).
Audience may be seated for presentations or dismissed to other activities. Adjust this call to meet the need of the event.

Remember to tell the girls when and where to return for the Closing Flag Ceremony.



CLOSING FLAG CEREMONY

Indoors: Color Guard assembles at the back of the room. Caller moves to the podium/position in the front of room.

Outdoors: Color Guard assembles outside the horseshoe surrounding the flagpole.

CALLER COMMANDS:

<i>Please stand.</i>
<i>Girl Scouts, Attention</i>
<i>Color Guard, Attention</i>
<i>Color Guard, Advance</i>
<i>Color Guard, Honor your flag</i> OR <i>Color Guard, Salute</i>
Optional: <i>Special reading, song, or moment of silence</i>
<i>Color Guard, Retire the Colors</i>
<i>Color Guard, Dismissed</i>
<i>Please be seated</i> OR <i>Girl Scouts, Dismissed</i>

ACTIONS:

All stand.
All girls are quiet, respectful, and ready.
Color Guard members stand at attention with their hands at their sides, in the same order as the opening flag ceremony.
Color Guard walks to the front of the room and stands next to or behind their flag stands (indoors), or the flagpole (outdoors). American flag bearer leads.
Color Guard salutes and then returns to standing at attention. (Other traditions have developed but any action honoring the flag should be quiet and respectful.)
(At outdoor flag ceremonies, singing Taps is common.)
American flag stays highest the longest. Indoors, it is retired first. Flag bearers lift other flags out of the stands. Outdoors, flag bearer begins lowering the flag(s) and Color Guard catches the flag before it touches the ground. Color Guard folds the American flag.
American flag bearer goes first. Color Guard members follow in the same order/formation in which they arrived. Color Guard walks to the back of the room (indoors) or exits the horseshoe (outdoors).
Audience may be seated or dismissed. Adjust this call to meet the need of the event.

NOTES:

- Assign roles based upon the girls you have present, assessing maturity and comfort level.
- During a flag ceremony, the Color Guard is silent and respectful.
- The American flag (and its flag bearer and Color Guard) leads all processions.
- After the American Flag, the flag order is usually State Flag, WAGGGS Flag, Girl Scouts Flag, Brownie Flag and Daisy Flag.
- When the sashes are worn: The flag bearer may wear the red sash over her right shoulder (the same as a Girl Scout sash), tied in a square knot on the left hip. The Color Guard may wear the red sash around her waist tied in a square knot left side. Sashes are a local council tradition more than a GSUSA tradition.
- Carry the flag pole with two hands, thumbs up. When walking, keep the left hand low on the left hip.
- White gloves can be a little bit slippery and hot, so save them for formal ceremony occasions.