

## THE FLAG

### THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

I Pledge Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of American and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The Pledge of Allegiance was written for a children's magazine by Francis Bellamy on September 7, 1892. The Pledge was designed to be short and was used to celebrate the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of Christopher Columbus in the western hemisphere. Bellamy, a Baptist minister, said that its purpose was to teach obedience to the state as a virtue. The Pledge was first used in public schools on October 12, 1892 after a proclamation by President Benjamin Harrison. The inclusion of "under God" in the Pledge was prompted by a sermon given by Rev. George M. Docherty, a native of Scotland, in Washington, D.C. when President Dwight Eisenhower was present. President Eisenhower signed it into law on Flag Day, June 14, 1954.

The Pledge should be rendered by standing with the right hand over the heart. Those in uniform render the military salute. Members of the Armed Forces and veterans not in uniform may render the military salute. Citizens of other countries should stand at attention.

### HISTORY OF THE FLAG

Before the first Flag was designed colonists used a flag consisting of 13 alternating red and white stripes and the British union in the canton.

The first Flag Act was passed by the Continental Congress on June 14, 1777. It specified that the Flag of the United States be made of 13 stripes, alternate red and white, that the union be 13 stars, white on a blue field.

Betsy Ross reported she sewed the first flag in May 1776 after being visited at her home by George Washington, Robert Morris, and George Ross. According to Betsy, George Washington showed a rough design of the Flag with 6-pointed stars, however she was credited several years later for demonstrating 5-pointed stars.

Evidence indicates that Francis Hopkinson, an expert in heraldry and signer of the Declaration of Independence, designed the first Flag as well as the Great Seal among other things. Hopkinson's flag had 6-pointed stars. He designed the Flag while he was chairman of the Continental Navy Board's Middle Department.

Laws have changed the shape, design and arrangement of the Flag and allowed additional stars and stripes to be added to reflect the admission of new states. The first Flag had 13 stripes and 13 5-pointed stars. In 1795 the Flag had 15 stripes and 15 stars as two new states were added. President James Monroe signed into law April 4, 1818 a provision for 13 stripes with a red on top and bottom and one star for every state. The union was to extend down to the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> red stripe. President Howard Taft in 1912 established proportions for the Flag, 6 horizontal rows of eight stars each, and for a single point of the star to be pointed up. The National Flag Code, adopted June 14, 1923 and revised on December 22, 1942 was passed in the 77<sup>th</sup> Congress. In 1959 by Executive Orders, President Dwight Eisenhower directed two different changes in the Flag. In the first on January 3, the provision was for the stars to be in 7 rows of 7 stars each, staggered horizontally and vertically. Later in the same year, August 21, the union was changed to 9 rows of stars staggered horizontally and 11 rows of stars staggered vertically. The Flag Protection Act of 1989 imposed fines for abusing the Flag.

The Flag now consists of 13 horizontal stripes, 7 red alternating with 6 white, representing the 13 colonies, and 9 rows of stars staggered horizontally and 11 rows of stars staggered vertically. The stars represent the 50 states of the union. Red symbolizes hardiness and valor, white purity and innocence, blue vigilance, perseverance, and justice.

### THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

*O! say can you see, by the dawn's early light,  
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,  
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,  
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?  
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,  
Gave proof through the night that our Flag was still there;  
O ! say does that star-spangled Banner yet wave,  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?*

*On the shore, dimly seen thro' the mist of the deep,  
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,  
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,  
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?  
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,  
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream,  
'Tis the star-spangled banner. O! long may it wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.*

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore  
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion,  
A home and a country, should leave us no more?  
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.  
No refuge could save the hireling and slave,  
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave,  
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave,  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Oh! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand,

between their lov'd home, and the war's desolation.  
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the Heav'n rescued land,  
Praise the Power that hath made and preserv'd us a nation!  
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,  
And this be our motto -"In God is our Trust;"  
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave,  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

### HISTORY OF THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

Frances Scott Key, a 35-year-old lawyer and amateur poet wrote a poem after seeing the 1812 bombardment of Fort McHenry in Baltimore, Maryland by British ships. The poem was entitled, "Defence of Fort McHenry." Key had been held captive by the British during the battle at Baltimore. When he was released he observed the Flag which had been placed on the fort in place of the storm flag. This Flag, 15 stripes and 15 stars, inspired him to write the lyrics next day to commemorate the American victory and the site of the Flag.

Key gave the poem to his brother-in-law, Judge Joseph H. Nicholson, who noted that the words fit the melody of an old British drinking song from the mid-1760s composed by John Stafford Smith. Judge Nicholson had it printed and distributed. The song quickly became popular and was printed in newspapers throughout the new country.

The United States Navy used it 1889 and in 1916 President Woodrow Wilson ordered it played at military and other appropriate occasions. It was then played during the seventh inning stretch at a 1918 World Series baseball game. It was played as early as 1897 at Philadelphia and 1898 at the Polo Grounds. It is now played at the beginning of each baseball game and many other sporting events.

The Star-Spangled Banner was made the National Anthem by a congressional resolution on March 3, 1931, the bill was signed by President Herbert Hoover.

It is customary for American citizens to stand, face, and salute the Flag when the Nation Anthem is performed. If there is no Flag then it is customary to stand and face the source of the music as if the Flag was on display. Men remove their head cover and place it over the heart. Women place their right hands over the heart. Those in uniform should render the military salute. Members of the Armed Forces and veterans not in uniform may render the military salute.

## GOD BLESS AMERICA!

### U.S.A. FLAG ETIQUETTE

#### APPROPRIATE:

- ❖The Flag should be displayed on all days, especially holidays.
- ❖To salute the Flag, come to attention, members of the Armed Forces in uniform give the military salute, those not in uniform and veterans not in uniform may give the military salute. Others salute by placing their right hand over the heart, men should remove head cover and hold it to the left shoulder, women should hold the right hand over the heart.
- ❖Display the Flag sunrise to sunset on buildings and flag staffs in the open, may be displayed at night with proper lighting.
- ❖Display the Flag near the administration building of public institutions.
- ❖Display the Flag near every schoolhouse during school days.
- ❖Display the Flag in or near polling places.
- ❖The Flag is flown at the top when other flags are on the same pole.
- ❖When several flags are flown on separate flag poles the Flag is placed on its own right, no flag above it, none should be larger, and the U.S. Flag is first to be raised and last to be lowered.
- ❖When the Flag is flown with that of other countries, they should be the same size and flown at the same height on separate flag poles. All flags should be raised and lowered simultaneously.
- ❖Indoors, the Flag is positioned to the right of the speaker and other flags to the left.
- ❖When the Flag is displayed flat on a speaker's platform it should be above and behind the speaker.
- ❖When the Flag is displayed across a corridor or lobby of a building with one main entrance it should be suspended vertically with the union on the observer's left upon entering.
- ❖Indoors, the Flag is at the center and at the highest point when a number of other flags are grouped.
- ❖The Flag is on its own right when its staff is crossed with another flag.
- ❖When the Flag is being displayed on a wall, vertically and horizontally, the union should be at the top to its own right. The folds of the Flag should fall free.
- ❖When the Flag is being displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from a building, the union should be at the peak of the staff.
- ❖When the Flag is being displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union to the north on an east>west street and to the east in a north>south street
- ❖The Flag should be at the right of marchers in a procession. With several flags the Flag can be centered in front of others.

- ❖When the national anthem is being played or sung, the salute is directed to the Flag if displayed, otherwise to the music. All persons should face the Flag, stand at attention, and salute. Those in uniform should give a formal salute. Aliens should stand at attention.
- ❖When the Flag is to be flown at half staff it is hoisted to the top and then lowered to the halfway position. The Flag is raised to the top of the flag pole before it is lowered.
- ❖The union of the Flag is placed at the head and over the left shoulder when used to cover a casket. The Flag should not be allowed to touch the ground.
- ❖The Flag should be raised briskly and lowered slowly and saluted as it is raised and lowered.
- ❖Display an all weather Flag during inclement weather.
- ❖No disrespect should be shown the Flag.
- ❖Destroy the Flag in a dignified manner, preferably by burning.

#### INAPPROPRIATE:

- ❖Do not display the Flag in inclement weather.
- ❖Do not use the Flag for advertising.
- ❖Do not display the Flag upside down, it is flown upside down only as a distress signal.
- ❖Should not use the Flag as drapery, wearing apparel, or bedding; covering for desk, vehicle, or boat; draping for a platform; covering for a stature; or for any decoration.
- ❖The Flag should not be used as part of a uniform or costume but may be used as a flag patch under certain circumstances.
- ❖The Flag should not be used as a receptacle for carrying anything.
- ❖No other flag should be placed over the Flag or on the same level to its right.
- ❖The Flag should never touch the ground, floor, water, or merchandise.
- ❖The Flag should never have placed on it any mark, insignia, letter, work, figure, design, picture, or drawing.
- ❖The Flag should never be carried flat or horizontally but free and aloft.



## DISPLAY YOUR PATRIOTISM

### SHOW YOUR COLORS

Motto: God We Trust  
Anthem: Star-Spangled Banner  
March: The Stars and Stripes Forever  
Floral Emblem: Rose



Courtesy of the  
Alabama SAR