



The National Flag, Proper Folding & the Pledge of Allegiance

Flag of the United States



The national **flag of the United States of America**:

- Stripes:
 - 13 equal horizontal stripes of red alternating with white
 - The stripes represent the thirteen British colonies that declared independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain and became the first states in the Union
- Blue rectangle in the “canton” (referred to specifically as the "union") with...
 - 50 small, white, five-pointed stars arranged in nine offset horizontal rows of six stars (top and bottom) alternating with rows of five stars.
 - The 50 stars on the flag represent the 50 states of the United States of America and the 13 stripes represent the thirteen British colonies that declared independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain and became the first states in the Union
- Nicknames for the flag include the "Stars and Stripes", "Old Glory"^[2] and "The Star-Spangled Banner".

Things to be careful NOT to do with the US flag:

- Let the flag get dirty
- Let the flag get torn
- Let the flag touch the ground

DISPLAYING THE COLORS



ON STAFF FOR MOURNING

To place the flag at half staff, hoist it to the peak for an instant and lower it to a position halfway 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.

INDOORS

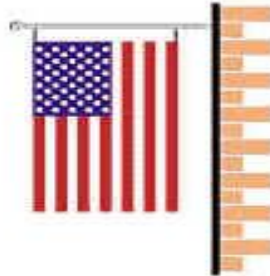


When displaying the flag against a wall, vertically or horizontally, the flag's stars should be at the top, to the observer's left.

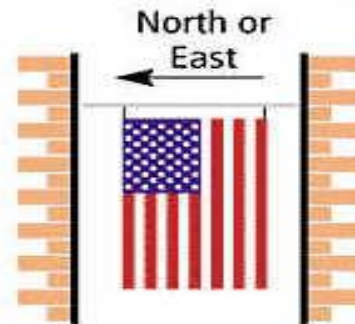
OUTDOORS



When the flag is displayed from a staff projecting from a window, balcony or a building, the stars should be at the peak of the staff.



If the flag is suspended over a sidewalk, the flag's stars should be farthest from the building.



When the flag is displayed over a street, it should be hung vertically, with the stars to the north or east.

NOTE: While a country is in mourning, flags from other countries should not be raised.

Source: usflag.org

SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER

HOW TO FOLD THE U.S. FLAG



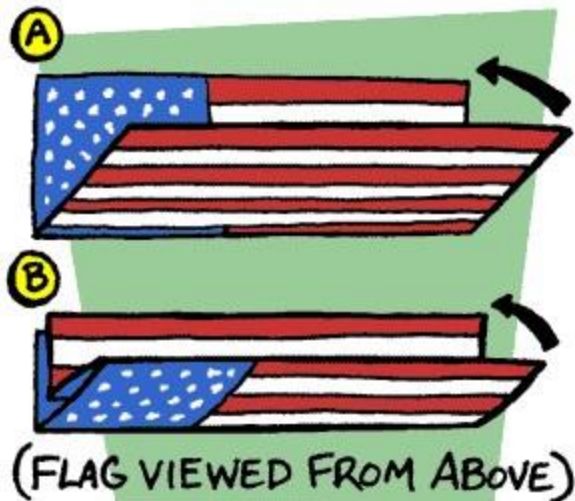
STEP ONE: Get Ready With Your Partner



Grab your partner and your flag. Yes, you'll, need a partner if you're going to do this right. Stand facing your partner while you hold two corners of the flag and he or she holds the other two at about waist level. The flag should be parallel to the ground, and the sides facing both of you should be the shorter ones.

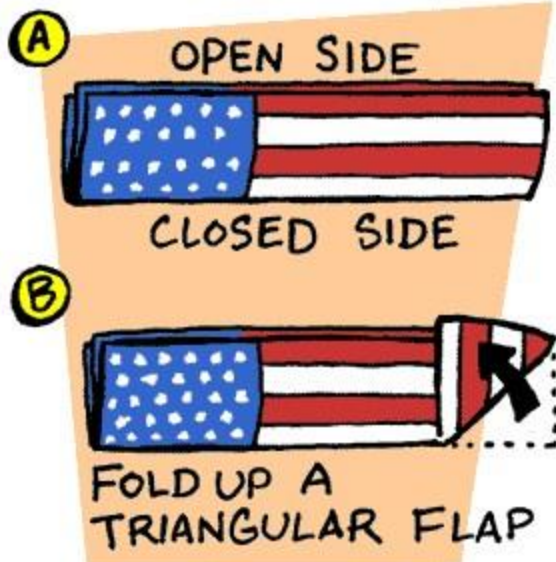
Careful — it's taboo to let the flag touch the ground. If you're feeling a bit uncoordinated, or you know your partner is a grade-A klutz, you may want to practice with a flat sheet or blanket first.

STEP TWO: Fold Widthwise Twice



Raise the side of the flag that normally hangs on the bottom, the side entirely covered by stripes, over the side with the "union" on it. Grab the new corner you have made along the crease so that again the flag is parallel to the ground, all-stripe side up. Repeat this widthwise fold so that the union is now on either side, half facing the ground and half facing the sky.

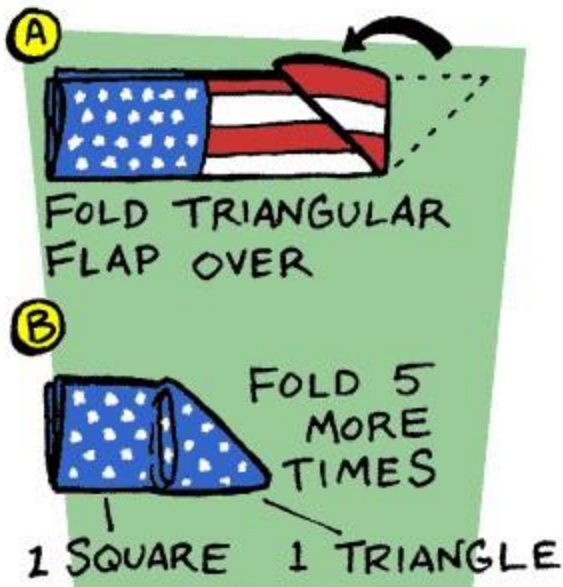
STEP THREE: Corner Your Flag



Now that you're holding your twice-folded flag, notice that of the new rectangle shape you have made, one long side is "open," and one is "closed." The open side consists of the original perimeter of the flag — you can still separate the folds into individual layers of material. The crease on the other side encloses the layers of fabric under it, so it's "closed." Now fold the flag in a series of triangles. To do it scrupulously correct, you've got to start the folding at a specific point. Start at the striped end of your

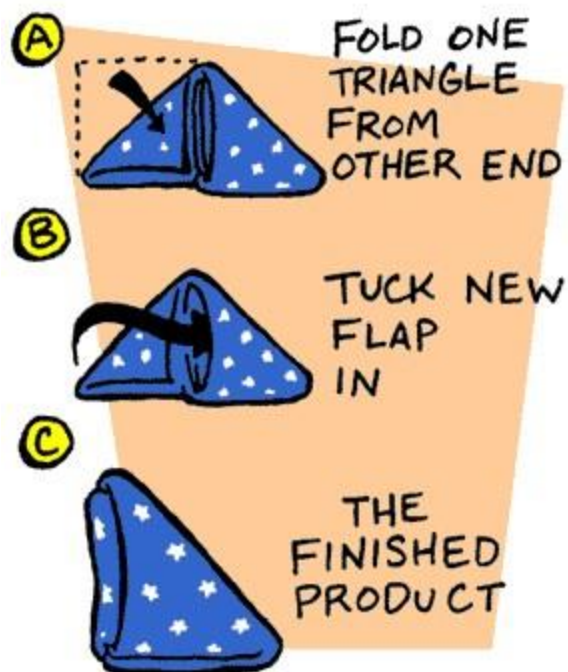
rectangle. Take the corner of the closed side and bring it diagonally over to the open side, forming a triangular flap.

STEP FOUR: Continue Cornering



You've created a most inharmonious shape at this point: a long, rectangular shape with a corner lopped off. Take the pointy corner and fold it down, over the other triangular fold, to create a straight edge once again. Now repeat this folding process, switching corners with each fold, until just a blue square of the union is peeking out from the triangular fold. Only one person does this triangular folding; your partner ceremoniously and patiently holds the other end (ensuring that it doesn't touch the floor!).

STEP FIVE: The Final Fold and Tuck



All you've got left is the final fold — the tricky turn that some argue is at the crux of the whole operation. Instead of you folding the thick triangle of folded flag fabric over the last remaining blue square, your partner — who has waited for you so patiently — finally gets to do some creasing. The person on the union end of the flag will take the corner on the open leg and fold it down along the edge of the other leg to form a triangle. He or she then tucks the remaining blue tab under the folds of the thick triangle until the flag is a neat triangle and can't easily unravel. Store the flag in a safe place, and when you want to raise it or use it again, unfold it using these steps in the opposite direction.

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 it means:

I Pledge Allegiance	I Promise to be faithful and true (Promise my loyalty)
to the flag	to the emblem that stands for and represents
of the United States	all 50 states, each of them individual, and individually represented on the flag
of America	yet formed into a UNION of one Nation.
and to the Republic	And I also pledge my loyalty to the Government that is itself a Republic, a form of government where the PEOPLE are sovereign,
for which it stands,	this government also being represented by the Flag to which I promise loyalty.
one Nation under God,	These 50 individual states are united as a single Republic under the Divine providence of God, "our most powerful resource" (according to the words of President Eisenhower)
Indivisible,	and can not be separated. (This part of the original version of the pledge was written just 30 years after the beginning of the Civil War and demonstrates the unity sought in the years after that divisive period in our history)
with Liberty	The people of this Nation being afforded the freedom to pursue "life, liberty, and happiness",
and Justice	And each person entitled to be treated justly, fairly, and according to proper law and principle,
for All.	And these principles afforded to EVERY AMERICAN, regardless of race, religion, color, creed, or any other criteria. Just as the flag represents 50 individual states that can not be divided or separated, this Nation represents millions of people who can not be separated or divided.