

# Guidelines for Display of the U.S. Flag

Public Law 94-344, known as the Federal Flag Code, contains rules for handling the U.S. Flag.

- Traditional guidelines call for displaying the flag in public only from sunrise to sunset. However, the flag may be displayed at all times if it's illuminated during darkness.
- The flag should not be subject to weather damage, so it should not be displayed during rain, snow or wind storms - unless it is an all-weather flag.
- The flag should be displayed often, especially on national and state holidays.
- The flag should be displayed on or near the main building of public institutions, schools when in session, and polling places on Election Day.
- It should be hoisted briskly and lowered slowly.
- When carried in procession with other flags, the U.S. flag should be either on the marching right (the flags' right) or to the front and center of the flag line.
- When displayed on a float in a parade, the flag should be hung from a staff or suspended so it falls free; it should not be draped over a vehicle.
- When displayed with another flag from crossed staffs, the U.S. flag should be on its own right (left to a person facing the wall). Its staff should be in front of other flag's staff.
- In a group of flags displayed from staffs, the U.S. flag should be at the center and at the highest point.
- When flags of states, cities, or organizations are flown on the same staff, the U.S. flag must be at the top.
- When other flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the U.S. flag should be hoisted first and lowered last. It must be on the right of other flags, and no flag should stand higher than it does.
- Flags of other nations should be flown on separate staffs. International custom dictates that flags of other nations be displayed at the same height in peacetime and be approximately the same size.
- When a flag is displayed other than on a staff, it should be flat or suspended so that it falls free. When displayed against a wall or object, the union should be at the top and to the flag's own right (the observer's left) whether displayed horizontally or vertically.
- When displayed flat against the wall on a speaker's platform, the flag should be above and behind the speaker with union on the flag's right side (the audience's left).

- When the flag hangs from a staff in a church or public place, it should be on the speaker's right side (the audience's left) and any other flags should be on the opposite side of the speaker.
- When displayed over a street or walkway where the flag can be seen from either side, the union should be to the north on an east-west street and to the east on a north-south street. The same directions apply to a building lobby or corridor with entrances to the east and west or north and south.
- The flag may cover a casket, but should not cover a statue or monument for unveiling.
- On a casket, the union should be over the deceased's left shoulder and near the head and heart. The flag should be removed before the casket is lowered.
- When the flag is worn or soiled, it should be destroyed in a dignified way. Veterans organizations burn old flags in special ceremonies.

### Things not to do with the flag:

- Never drape the flag or draw it back in folds.
- Never dip the flag for any person or thing even though other flags may be dipped as a mark of honor.
- Never let the flag touch anything beneath it, such as ground or floor.
- Never display the flag with the union down, except as a signal of distress.
- Never carry it flat/horizontally. Always carry it aloft.
- Never place anything on the flag, including letters, insignia, or designs.
- Never use it to hold objects of any kind.
- Never use a flag as wearing apparel, bedding, or drapery. A flag should not be used on a costume or athletic uniform.
- However, a flag patch may be attached to the uniforms of patriotic organizations, military personnel, police officers and firefighters.

