



American Flag-Folding Ceremony

There is no official Flag-Folding Ceremony and there is no official meaning to each of the FOLDS. Below are several suggested scripts to be used during FLAG-FOLDING Ceremonies.

Flag-Folding Script #1

As the flag is FOLDED, recite the following for each FOLD:

1. The 13 stripes represent the original 13 states: Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, New York, North Carolina, and Rhode Island
2. The 50 stars represent our 50 United States of America
3. I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death", Patrick Henry
4. These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman", Thomas Paine
5. We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal. They are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights. Among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness", Declaration of Independence
6. We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States of America", United States Constitution
7. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances", First Amendment
8. The basis of our political system is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government", George Washington
9. My God! How little do my countrymen know what precious blessings they are in possession of, and which no other people on earth enjoy!" Thomas Jefferson
10. Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal", Abraham Lincoln
11. Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door", Emma Lazarus, inscription on the Statue of Liberty
12. Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country", John Fitzgerald Kennedy
13. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character", Martin Luther King, Jr.



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Boy Scouts Flag-Folding Script #2

(Not Official)

1. In honor of the thirteen original colonies and our forefathers who founded this great nation, we salute you.
2. To the men who died in the War for Independence, we salute you.
3. To those men who fell in the War of 1812, to preserve our freedom, we salute you.
4. To the brave soldiers on both sides, The North and The South, in the Civil War, we salute you.
5. To those who shed their blood in the name of hope and freedom in The Great War, we salute you.
6. For our fathers and sons who died in the terrible battles of World War Two, Pearl Harbor, Anzio, Midway, The Bulge, Iwo Jima, Guadalcanal, Normandy, and Berlin, we salute you.
7. To the men of the First Marine Division, who, in a rear guard action at the Chosin Reservoir in Korea saved their battalion and the lives of their brother Marines, we salute you.
8. For the brave men and women of our armed forces who died on the fields of fire in Vietnam and whose names will live on forever on that hallowed wall, we salute you.
9. For our commander in chief, who leads our nation in good times, and bad, we salute you.
10. For the Boy Scouts of America and all the Scouts who have gone before us, we salute you.
11. To God, our parents and our families who we love and respect, we salute you.
12. To the men and women of our armed forces, the Arsenal of Democracy and the Hammer of Freedom, we salute you, and
13. To freedom, because without freedom there is no honor, without honor, we are not Americans, and on this we vow, that as long as this flag flies, we salute you.



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Air Force Flag-Folding Script #3

Air Force leaders recently approved a new script that can be read during flag-folding ceremonies. Though there are no official ceremonies in the Air Force that require a script to be read when a flag is folded, unofficial ceremonies such as retirements often do, said Lt. Col. Samuel Hudspath, Air Force protocol chief, "We have had a tradition within the Air Force of individuals requesting that a flag be folded, with words, at their retirement ceremony." This new script was prepared by Air Force services to provide Air Force recognized words to be used at those times.

1. For more than 200 years, the American flag has been the symbol of our nation's unity, as well as a source of pride and inspiration for millions of citizens.
2. Born on June 14, 1777, the Second Continental Congress determined that the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternating between seven red and six white; and that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field representing a new constellation.
3. Between 1777 and 1960, the shape and design of the flag evolved into the flag presented before you today. The 13 horizontal stripes represent the original 13 colonies, while the stars represent the 50 states of the Union. The colors of the flag are symbolic as well; red symbolizes hardiness and valor; white signifies purity and innocence; and blue represents vigilance, perseverance and justice.
4. Traditionally, a symbol of liberty, the American flag has carried the message of freedom, and inspired Americans, both at home and abroad.
5. In 1814, Francis Scott Key was so moved at seeing the Stars and Stripes waving after the British shelling of Baltimore's Fort McHenry that he wrote the words to The Star Spangled Banner.
6. In 1892 the flag inspired Francis Bellamy to write the "Pledge of Allegiance," our most famous flag salute and patriotic oath.
7. In July 1969 the American flag was "flown" in space when Neil Armstrong planted it on the surface of the moon.
8. Today, our flag flies on constellations of Air Force satellites that circle our globe, and on the fin flash of our aircraft in harm's way in every corner of the world. Indeed, it flies in the heart of every Airman who serves our great Nation. The sun never sets on our US Air Force, nor on the flag we so proudly cherish.
9. Since 1776 no generation of Americans has been spared the responsibility of defending freedom... Today's Airmen remain committed to preserving the freedom that others won for us, for generations to come.
10. By displaying the flag and giving it a distinctive we show respect to the flag, and express our gratitude to those individuals who fought, and continue to fight for freedom, at home and abroad. Since the dawn of the 20th century, Airmen have proudly flown the flag in every major conflict on lands and skies around the world. It is their responsibility ... our responsibility ... to continue to protect and preserve the rights, privileges and freedoms that we, as Americans, enjoy today.
11. The United States flag represents who we are. It stands for the freedom we all share and the pride and patriotism we feel for our country. We cherish its legacy, as a beacon of hope to one and all. Long may it wave!



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“The Flag” **Flag-Folding Script** *(Not Official)*

“The Flag”

1. Hello! Remember me? Some people call me Old Glory, others call me the Star Spangled Banner, but whatever they call me, I am your flag, the flag of the United States of America.
2. Something has been bothering me, so I thought I might talk it over with you — because it is about you and me.
3. I remember some time ago, people would line up on both side of the street to watch the parade, and naturally I was leading every one, proudly waving in the breeze.
4. When your Daddy saw me coming, he immediately removed his hat and placed it against his left shoulder so that his hand was directly over his heart — Remember?
5. And you, I remember, were standing there, straight as a soldier. You didn't have a hat, but you were giving the right salute. Remember your little sister? Not to be outdone, she was saluting the same as you with her right hand over her heart — Remember?
6. What happened? I'm still the same old flag. Oh, I've added a few more stars since you were a boy, and a lot more blood has been shed since those parades of long ago.
7. But now, somehow I don't feel as proud as I used to feel. When I come down the street, you just stand there with your hands in your pockets. You may give me a small glance, and then you look away. I see children running around you shouting; they don't seem to know who I am.
8. I saw one man take his hat off, then he looked around, and when he didn't see anybody else take off his hat, he quickly put his on again.
9. Is it a sin to be patriotic today? Have you forgotten what I stand for, and where I have been? Anzio, Guadalcanal, Korea and Vietnam!
10. Take a look at the memorial honor rolls, and see the names of those patriotic Americans who gave their lives to keep this republic free. When you salute me, you are actually saluting them!
11. So when you see me, please stand straight and place your hand over your heart, and I'll know that you remembered. I'll salute you by waving back!



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Flag-Folding Script #4

What follows is a popular script for folding the flag; however, it should not be used in official ceremonies as it is in violation of the Establishment Clause. The Establishment Clause (First Amendment) requires that expression not create the reasonable impression that the government is sponsoring, endorsing, or inhibiting religion generally, or favoring or disfavoring a particular religion.

The flag-folding ceremony represents the same religious principles on which our country was originally founded. The portion of the flag denoting honor is the canton of blue containing the stars representing the states our veterans served in uniform. The canton field of blue dresses from left to right and is inverted when draped as a pall on a casket of a veteran who has served our country in uniform.

In the Armed Forces of the United States, at the ceremony of retreat the flag is lowered, folded in a triangle and kept under watch throughout the night as a tribute to our nation's honored dead. The next morning it is brought out and, at the ceremony of reveille, run aloft as a symbol of our belief in the resurrection of the body.

(Wait for the Honor Guard or Flag Detail to unravel flag – resume reading when Honor Guard is standing ready.)

1. The **first fold** of our flag is a symbol of life.
2. The **second fold** is a symbol of our belief in the eternal life.
3. The **third fold** is made in honor and remembrance of the veteran departing our ranks who gave a portion of life for the defense of our country to attain a peace throughout the world.
4. The **fourth fold** represents our weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in times of war for His divine guidance.
5. The **fifth fold** is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but it is still our country, right or wrong."
6. The **sixth fold** is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we 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.
7. The **seventh fold** is a tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.
8. The **eighth fold** is a tribute to the one who entered in to the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor mother, for whom it flies on Mother's Day.
9. The **ninth fold** is a tribute to womanhood; for it has been through their faith, love, loyalty and devotion that the characters of the men and women who have made this country great have been molded.



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10. The **tenth fold** is a tribute to father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since they were first born.
11. The **eleventh fold**, in the eyes of a Hebrew citizen, represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon, and glorifies, in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
12. The **twelfth fold**, in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost.

When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto,
"In God we Trust."

(Wait for the Honor Guard or Flag Detail to inspect the flag--after the inspection, resume reading.)

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington and the sailors and marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for us the rights, privileges, and freedoms we enjoy today.