



# About Our Flag...

*A comprehensive guide of  
history and facts about  
our United States Flag...*



**GRAND LODGE  
FRATERNAL COMMITTEE**  
Benevolent and Protective  
Order of Elks  
United States of America

Visit our Web site at:

<http://www.elks.org/grandlodge/fraternal/programs.cfm>

# Table of Contents:

1

*Introduction*

2

*About Our Flag*

4

*When To Display*

6

*How To Display*

8

*How To  
Pledge Allegiance*

9

*Flag Facts*

10

*History Of Our Flag*

12-13

*Flag Specifications*

# Did You Know?

*Grand Exalted Ruler  
Henry A. Melvin,  
in his report to the  
Grand Lodge in 1907,  
recommended the  
observance of Flag Day  
by the Benevolent  
and Protective Order  
of Elks.*

red, white

*The Grand Lodge  
adopted his suggestion  
at this meeting and  
urged all local Lodges  
to take part in  
ceremonies honoring  
our flag and its history.*



The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks was the first fraternal organization to observe Flag Day. The President of the United States is authorized and requested to issue annually a proclamation calling upon officials of the Government to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on such day, and urging the people to observe the day as the anniversary of the adoption on June 14, 1777, by the Continental Congress of the Stars and Stripes as the official flag of the United States of America.

The importance of every single U.S. flag, and how it is displayed is keenly observed by the Elks. We celebrate over 110 years of the Grand Lodge's 1907 designation of June 14 as Flag Day, which was followed in 1911 with the Order's approval for mandatory observance by all Lodges.

We hope that as you acknowledge the great love for your country by displaying our flag, you may reference the information in this guide, and maybe learn more about its history.

*and  
blue...*



*Elks*



# About Our Flag:

## **OUR FLAG...**

is more than just a piece of cloth  
flown from a staff or halyard.

## **OUR FLAG...**

is the symbol that stands for a  
nation's basic ideas and purposes.

## **OUR FLAG...**

is our national chief emblem.  
Every country in the world  
has a flag.

*stars and*

## **OUR FLAG...**

**represents the union of 50 states  
and millions of people joined into  
one great country.**

## **OUR FLAG...**

**stands for our people...millions of  
Americans who have worked and  
fought to preserve our freedom  
and way of life.**

## **THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**



*stripes forever...*

# When To Display Our Flag:

Every day is appropriate.

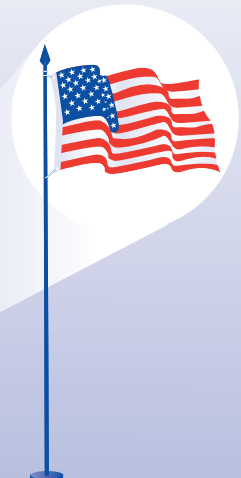


## DURING THE DAY...

- From sunrise to sunset on buildings and stationary poles outside.
- Any day when the weather is good, unless an all-weather flag is used.

## AT NIGHT...

- The flag is usually lowered at night.
- If a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed 24 hours a day, only if properly illuminated during darkness.



# HOLIDAYS...

## AND OTHER SPECIAL DAYS TO DISPLAY OUR FLAG:

**New Year's Day — January 1**

**Inauguration Day — January 20**

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
3rd Monday in January**

**President's Day — 3rd Monday in February  
Easter Sunday**

**Mother's Day — 2nd Sunday in May**

**Armed Forces Day — 3rd Saturday in May**

**Memorial Day — Last Monday in May  
(half staff until noon)**

**Flag Day — June 14**

**Father's Day — 3rd Sunday in June**

**Independence Day — July 4**

**Labor Day —  
1st Monday in September**

**Patriot Day — September 11**

**Constitution Day — September 17**

**Columbus Day —  
2nd Monday in October**

**Veterans Day — November 11**

**Thanksgiving Day —  
4th Thursday in November**

**Christmas Day — December 25**

**State Holidays**

**Admission Day of State**

## Did You Know?

What the colors in the U.S. Flag stand for?

**WHITE:** signifies purity and innocence.

**RED:** signifies hardiness and valor.

**BLUE:** vigilance, perseverance and justice.

# How To Display Our Flag:

## Did You Know?

To always **RAISE** the flag on staff briskly?

To always **LOWER** the flag slowly and respectfully?

## RAISING OUR FLAG...

**MEMORIAL DAY:** Fly flag at half-staff until noon; then raise to full-staff until sunset.

**AS A SIGN OF MOURNING:** First raise flag to full-staff, then lower to half-staff.

## LOWERING OUR FLAG...

Don't let the flag touch the ground. Fold as it comes down and before completely detaching it from halyard.

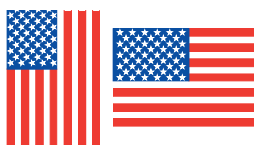
From half-staff, flag should be raised to the peak before lowering.

### CROSSED ON WALL



U.S. flag outside, on observer's left.

### FLAT ON WALL



Union always on top, to observer's left.

### ON SAME STAFF AS OTHER FLAGS



U.S. flag at peak, above any other flags.

### ON SPEAKERS PLATFORM

Flag above and behind speaker or on STAFF to his right.



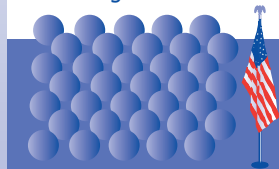
### IN CHURCH

When displayed from a staff in a church or auditorium, should be placed to right of clergyman or speaker as he faces the congregation.



### IN AUDIENCE

In front of audience and to speaker's right when facing audience.





# CARE OF OUR FLAG...



**FOLDING** Fold flag in fourths lengthwise. Then make successive diagonal folds, ending with union outside.

**DISPOSAL** To destroy an old flag the approved way, by burning the flag. This is the most dignified and preferred way.

**WEATHER** Unless using an all weather flag, do not expose our flag to bad weather.

## IN PROCESSION WITH OTHER FLAGS

U.S. flag to marchers' right  
(observer's left).



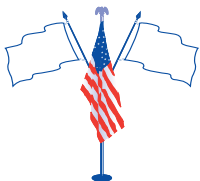
## IN PROCESSION WITH OTHER FLAGS

U.S. flag at front  
and center of line.



## GROUPED

U.S. flag in center,  
or at highest point.



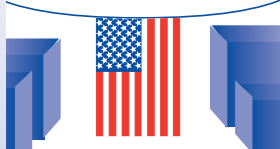
## GROUPED

U.S. flag goes to its own  
right, is hoisted first.  
Flags of different nations  
flown at same height.



## OVER A STREET

Flag vertical; union  
faces north on east-west  
streets, or east on  
north-south streets.



## FUNERAL DISPLAY

May cover a casket but  
not a statue. Bunting may  
be used for decoration.  
Flag must be removed  
before placing into grave.

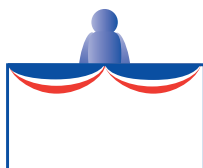


## MILITARY FUNERAL

For member of Armed  
Forces or of recognized  
military organizations.  
Flag draped lengthwise,  
union over deceased's left  
shoulder. Casket carried  
foot first. Don't lower  
flag into grave or let it  
touch ground.

## AS DECORATION

Use bunting, never the  
flag. (Blue on top, then  
white, then red.)



Elks

# How To Pledge Allegiance To Our Flag:

## Did You Know?

The pledge was first published in 1892. It was reworded in 1923, and 1954. We use the 1954 version today.

## PREPARATION...

### Head Bare

**Women leave hats on.**

**Military Personnel, Veterans and First Responders may render a military salute to the Flag.**

### Right Hand Over Heart Standing At Attention

*"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."*

*“...conceived in liberty  
and dedicated to  
the proposition  
that all men are  
created equal.”*



# Flag Facts:

## **1905 TRADEMARK ACT**

**Forbids the use of the flag in  
any registered trademark.**

## **1942 CODE OF FLAG DISPLAY AND USE**

**Brought together existing rules and  
customs for flag use and display  
(amended in 1976)**

## **1949 NATIONAL FLAG DAY BILL**

**Officially designated June 14th as Flag  
Day. This bill was signed by President  
Harry S. Truman, who was an Elk.**

## **1953 UNITED NATIONS ACT**

**Permits the U.N. flag to be displayed  
above the U.S. and other national  
flags at U.N. headquarters.**

*Elks*

# How Our Flag Was Born:

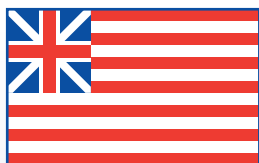


## PRE-REVOLUTION

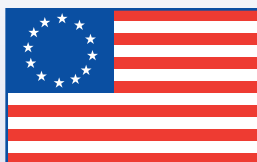
The colonies had many local flags, one of the most famous was the "RATTLESNAKE FLAG," with the slogan "Don't tread on me," as a warning to the British.



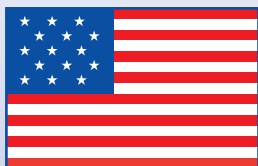
**1775** The "PINE TREE BANNER" FLAG was used on America's first fleet of warships which engaged the British in battle November – December 1775.



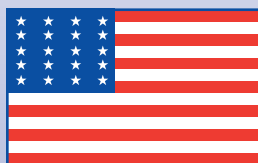
**1775-1776** The "CONGRESS COLOR," or "GRAND UNION" FLAG, had 13 alternating red and white stripes represented the 13 original colonies. The flag used in early battles with the British.



**1777** FIRST AUTHORIZED AMERICAN FLAG, established by Congressional Resolution on June 14; we celebrate FLAG DAY on that date.



**1794** The SECOND CONGRESSIONAL FLAG Act added 2 stars and stripes to represent admission of Vermont and Kentucky to the Union.



**1818** PRESENT FLAG established by Congress, from then on, stripes would stay at original 13, but a new star would be added for each state that joined the Union added on July 4 following admission. Note: only 20 stars in 1818.

## STATE BY STATE...

### ★ 1777: 13 Stars

Delaware  
Pennsylvania  
New Jersey  
Georgia  
Connecticut  
Massachusetts  
Maryland  
South Carolina  
New Hampshire  
Virginia  
New York  
North Carolina  
Rhode Island

### ★ 1795: 15 Stars

Vermont  
Kentucky

### ★ 1818: 20 Stars

Tennessee  
Ohio  
Louisiana  
Indiana  
Mississippi

### ★ 1819: 21 Stars

Illinois

### ★ 1820: 23 Stars

Alabama  
Maine

### ★ 1822: 24 Stars

Missouri

### ★ 1836: 25 Stars

Arkansas

### ★ 1837: 26 Stars

Michigan

### ★ 1845: 27 Stars

Florida

### ★ 1846: 28 Stars

Texas

### ★ 1847: 29 Stars

Iowa

### ★ 1848: 30 Stars

Wisconsin

### ★ 1851: 31 Stars

California

### ★ 1858: 32 Stars

Minnesota

### ★ 1859: 33 Stars

Oregon

### ★ 1861: 34 Stars

Kansas

### ★ 1863: 35 Stars

West Virginia

### ★ 1865: 36 Stars

Nevada

### ★ 1867: 37 Stars

Nebraska

### ★ 1877: 38 Stars

Colorado

### ★ 1890: 43 Stars

North Dakota  
South Dakota  
Montana  
Washington  
Idaho

### ★ 1891: 44 Stars

Wyoming

### ★ 1896: 45 Stars

Utah

### ★ 1908: 46 Stars

Oklahoma

### ★ 1912: 48 Stars

New Mexico  
Arizona

### ★ 1959: 49 Stars

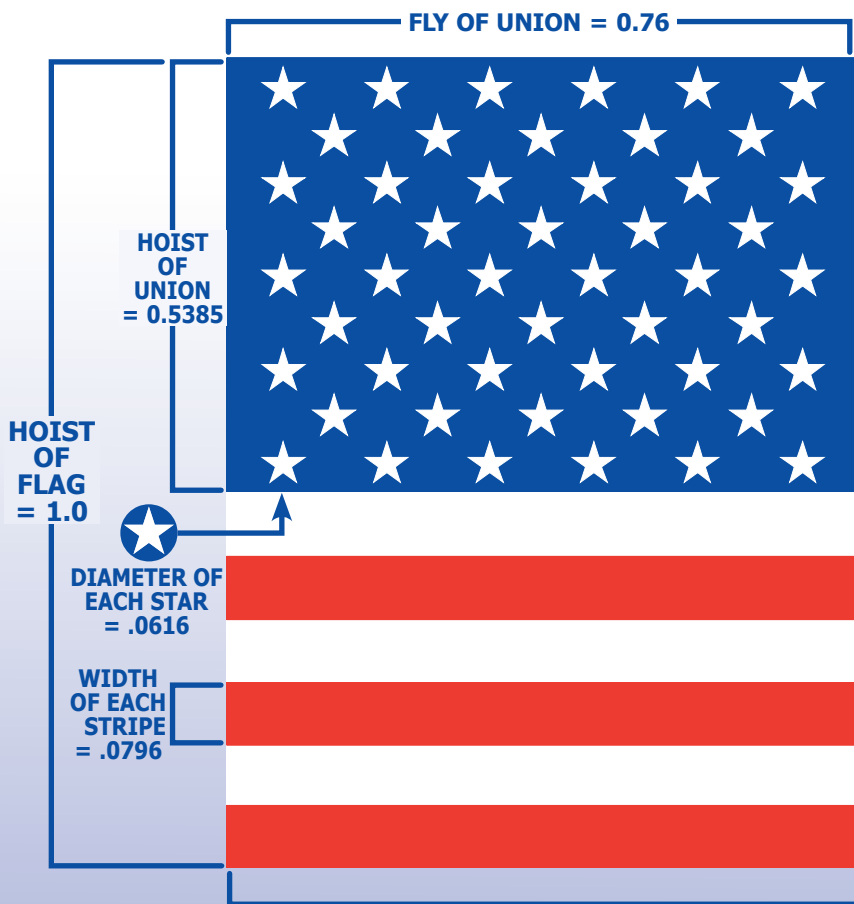
Alaska

### ★ 1960: 50 Stars

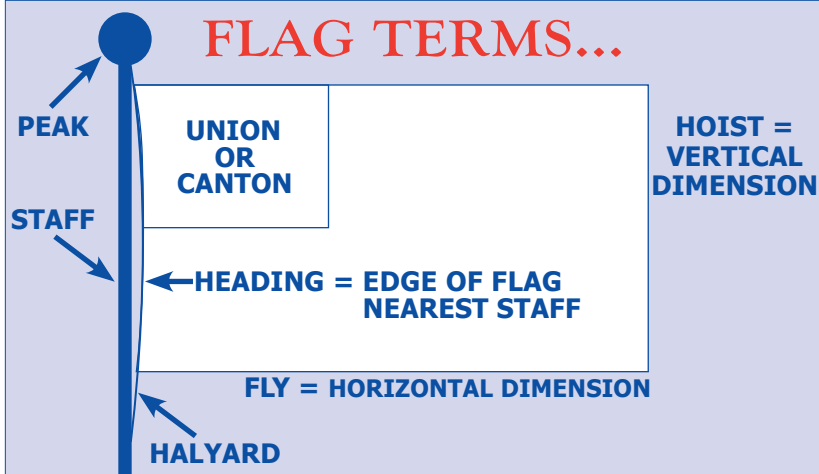
Hawaii

# Official Specifications Of Our Flag:

PER EXECUTIVE ORDER  
AUGUST 21, 1959



## FLAG TERMS...



FLY OF FLAG = 1.9

Elks

# About Our Flag...



**Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, USA**  
**Grand Lodge Headquarters**  
**2750 N. Lakeview Avenue • Chicago, IL 60614-1889**