

Hi Pack 200 (and any other organization that needs a flag ceremony)!

This is the official Indoor Opening and Closing Flag Ceremonies for our Pack. This was accepted by the Pack Leadership at the November 2008 Leadership Meeting.

I put this together after a great deal of research on the web reviewing several flag ceremonies and after watching our own Pack for several years as all our dens conducted flag ceremonies. We all seemed to do them a little differently; then as Tigers started, they had to figure out what to do, too.

At the end of this document you'll also find some interesting information about the flag. I included the information I found on the Internet and references where applicable.

This ceremony has now been tested with both Webelos 2s and Tigers so it works well. We think the ceremony is good for few reasons:

- 1) It forces the scouts to coordinate crossing the flags; US Flag closer to the audience as done by convention.
- 2) It keeps the American Flag un-posted until after the "two" so that the person holding the flag and the rest of the color guard do not salute the flag since the color guard, by convention, does not salute the flag.
- 3) The ceremony is specific enough to teach even Tigers
- 4) It compels the audience to salute as the flag is moving into view. This proper flag etiquette as specified in the "Conduct during hoisting, lowering or passing of flag" section of the US Flag code.
- 5) It works for us. There appears to be no nationally specified or mandated flag ceremony or official BSA flag ceremony (that I can find); rather, different organizations seem to have their own variations as their convention and custom dictate. As long as all are based on guidance in the official US Flag Code.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_Flag\\_Code](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Flag_Code)  
<http://www.ushistory.org/betsy/flagcode.htm>

Comments or requests for revision are most welcome. We'll update this document as necessary.

Don Rowley  
Outgoing Committee Chair 2008  
Pack Training Leader  
Webelos Den Leader, Den 1

# **Opening**

**“Color Guard, Attention”**

**“Audience, Please Rise”**

**“Scout Salute. Those not in uniform, please place your right hand over your heart.”**

**“Color Guard, Advance”**

(wait until the color guard reaches the front of the room)\*

**“Color Guard, Halt”**

**“Color Guard, Cross the colors”**

**“Color Guard, Halt”**

**“Post the Pack Flag”**

**“Join me in the Pledge of Allegiance to the US Flag”**

**“Color Guard, Post the US Flag”**

**“Two”**

**“Scout Sign”**

**“Please join me in the Cub Scout Promise”**

**“Two”**

**“Color Guard, Return to Post”**

\* do not speak the word in parenthesis; these are reminders to the person reading or giving the commands for the ceremony.

## **Closing**

**“Color Guard, Attention”**

**“Audience, Please Rise”**

**“Color Guard, Advance”**

(wait until the color guard reaches the front of the room)\*

**“Color Guard, Halt”**

**“Color Guard, Retrieve the colors”**

**“Scout Salute. Those not in uniform, please place your right hand over your heart.”**


























**“Color Guard, Return to Post”**

\* do not speak the word in parenthesis; these are reminders to the person reading or giving the commands for the ceremony.

On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress passed a resolution authorizing a committee to devise a seal for the United States of America. This mission, designed to reflect the Founding Fathers' beliefs, values, and sovereignty of the new Nation, did not become a reality until June 20, 1782. In heraldic devices, such as seals, each element has a specific meaning. Even colors have specific meanings. The colors red, white, and blue **did not** have meanings for **The Stars and Stripes** when it was adopted in 1777. However, the colors in the Great Seal **did** have specific meanings. Charles Thompson, Secretary of the Continental Congress, reporting to Congress on the Seal, stated:

"The colors of the pales (the vertical stripes) are those used in the flag of the United States of America; White signifies purity and innocence, Red, hardiness & valour, and Blue, the color of the Chief (the broad band above the stripes) signifies vigilance, perseverance & justice." <http://www.usflag.org/colors.html>

These flags are not retired and should be treated in ceremony just like the current flag.

 <p><b>15 Stars</b> 1795-1818 (KY, VT)</p>	 <p><b>20 Stars</b> 1818-1819 (IN, LA, MS, OH, TN)</p>	 <p><b>21 Stars</b> 1819-1820 (IL)</p>	 <p><b>23 Stars</b> 1820-1822 (AL, ME)</p>	 <p><b>24 Stars</b> 1822-1836 (MO)</p>
 <p><b>25 Stars</b> 1839-1837 (AR)</p>	 <p><b>26 Stars</b> 1837-1845 (MI)</p>	 <p><b>27 Stars</b> 1845-1846 (FL)</p>	 <p><b>28 Stars</b> 1846-1847 (TX)</p>	 <p><b>29 Stars</b> 1847-1848 (IA)</p>
 <p><b>30 Stars</b> 1848-1851 (WI)</p>	 <p><b>31 Stars</b> 1851-1858 (CA)</p>	 <p><b>32 Stars</b> 1858-1859 (MN)</p>	 <p><b>33 Stars</b> 1859-1861 (OR)</p>	 <p><b>34 Stars</b> 1861-1863 (KS)</p>
 <p><b>35 Stars</b> 1863-1865 (WV)</p>	 <p><b>36 Stars</b> 1865-1867 (NV)</p>	 <p><b>37 Stars</b> 1867-1877 (NE)</p>	 <p><b>38 Stars</b> 1877-1890 (CO)</p>	 <p><b>43 Stars</b> 1890-1891 (ID, MT, ND, SD, WA)</p>
 <p><b>44 Stars</b> 1891-1896 (WY)</p>	 <p><b>45 Stars</b> 1896-1908 (UT)</p>	 <p><b>46 Stars</b> 1908-1912 (OK)</p>	 <p><b>48 Stars</b> 1912-1959 (AZ, NM)</p>	 <p><b>49 Stars</b> 1959-1960 (AK)</p>

# Flag Etiquette

## STANDARDS of RESPECT

The Flag Code, which formalizes and unifies the traditional ways in which we give respect to the flag, also contains specific instructions on how the flag is not to be used. They are:

- The flag should never be dipped to any person or thing. It is flown upside down only as a distress signal.
- The flag should not be used as a drapery, or for covering a speakers desk, draping a platform, or for any decoration in general. Bunting of blue, white and red stripes is available for these purposes. The blue stripe of the bunting should be on the top.
- The flag should never be used for any advertising purpose. It should not be embroidered, printed or otherwise impressed on such articles as cushions, handkerchiefs, napkins, boxes, or anything intended to be discarded after temporary use. Advertising signs should not be attached to the staff or halyard
- The flag should not be used as part of a costume or athletic uniform, except that a flag patch may be used on the uniform of military personnel, fireman, policeman and members of patriotic organizations.
- The flag should never have placed on it, or attached to it, any mark, insignia, letter, word, number, figure, or drawing of any kind.
- The flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.

When the flag is lowered, no part of it should touch the ground or any other object; it should be received by waiting hands and arms. To store the flag it should be folded neatly and ceremoniously.

The flag should be cleaned and mended when necessary.

When a flag is so worn it is no longer fit to serve as a symbol of our country, it should be destroyed by burning in a dignified manner.

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**Note:** Most American Legion Posts regularly conduct a dignified flag burning ceremony, often on Flag Day, June 14th. Many Cub Scout Packs, Boy Scout Troops, and Girl Scout Troops retire flags regularly as well. Contact your local American Legion Hall or Scout Troop to inquire about the availability of this service.

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## Displaying the Flag Outdoors

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

When it is displayed from the same flagpole with another flag - of a state, community, society or Scout unit - the flag of the United States must always be at the top except that the church pennant may be flown above the flag during church services for Navy personnel when conducted by a Naval chaplain on a ship at sea.

When the flag is displayed over a street, it should be hung vertically, with the union to the north or east. If the flag is suspended over a sidewalk, the flag's union should be farthest from the building.

When flown with flags of states, communities, or societies on separate flag poles which are of the same height and in a straight line, the flag of the United States is always placed in the position of honor - to its own right.

..The other flags may be smaller but none may be larger.

..No other flag ever should be placed above it.

..The flag of the United States is always the first flag raised and the last to be lowered.

When flown with the national banner of other countries, each flag must be displayed from a separate pole of the same height. Each flag should be the same size. They should be raised and lowered simultaneously. The flag of one nation may not be displayed above that of another nation.

### **Raising and Lowering the Flag**

The flag should be raised briskly and lowered slowly and ceremoniously. Ordinarily it should be displayed only between sunrise and sunset. It should be illuminated if displayed at night.

The flag of the United States of America is saluted as it is hoisted and lowered. The salute is held until the flag is unsnapped from the halyard or through the last note of music, whichever is the longest.

### **Displaying the Flag Indoors**

When on display, the flag is accorded the place of honor, always positioned to its own right. Place it to the right of the speaker or staging area or sanctuary. Other flags should be to the left.

The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of states, localities, or societies are grouped for display.

When one flag is used with the flag of the United States of America and the staffs are crossed, the flag of the United States is placed on its own right with its staff in front of the other flag.

When displaying the flag against a wall, vertically or horizontally, the flag's union (stars) should be at the top, to the flag's own right, and to the observer's left.

### **Parading and Saluting the Flag**

When carried in a procession, the flag should be to the right of the marchers. When other flags are carried, the flag of the United States may be centered in front of the others or carried to their right. When the flag passes in a procession, or when it is hoisted or lowered, all should face the flag and salute.

### **The Salute**

To salute, all persons come to attention. Those in uniform give the appropriate formal salute. Citizens not in uniform salute by placing their right hand over the heart and men with head cover should remove it and hold it to left shoulder, hand over the heart. Members of organizations in formation salute upon command of the person in charge.

### **The Pledge of Allegiance and National Anthem**

The pledge of allegiance should be rendered by standing at attention, facing the flag, and saluting.

When the national anthem is played or sung, citizens should stand at attention and salute at the first note and hold the salute through the last note. The salute is directed to the flag, if displayed, otherwise to the music.

### **The Flag in Mourning**

To place the flag at half staff, hoist it to the peak for an instant and lower it to a position half way 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. On Memorial Day the flag is displayed at half staff until noon and at full staff from noon to sunset.

The flag is to be flown at half staff in mourning for designated, principal government leaders and upon presidential or gubernatorial order.

When used to cover a casket, the flag should be placed with the union at the head and over the left shoulder. It should not be lowered into the grave.