



Proper Flag Etiquette

When displaying the flag, DO the following:

- Display the U.S. flag from sunrise to sunset on buildings and stationary flagstaffs in the open. When a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed 24-hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.
- When placed on a single staff or lanyard, place the U.S. Flag above all other flags.
- When flags are displayed in a row, the U.S. flag goes to the observer's left. Flags of other nations are flown at same height. State and local flags are traditionally flown lower.
- When used during a marching ceremony or parade with other flags, the U.S. Flag will be to the observer's left.
- On special days, the flag may be flown at half-staff. On Memorial Day it is flown at half-staff until noon and then raised.
- When flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. By "half-staff" is meant lowering the flag to one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff.
- When the flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union (blue field of stars) to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.
- When placed on a podium the flag should be placed on the speaker's right or the staging area. Other flags should be placed to the left.
- When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall (or other flat surface), the union (blue field of stars) should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left.
- When displayed in a window it should be displayed in the same way -- with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.
- When the flag is displayed on a car, the staff shall be fixed firmly to the chassis or clamped to the right fender.
- When the flag is used to cover a casket, it should be so placed that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The flag should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.

When saluting the flag DO the following:

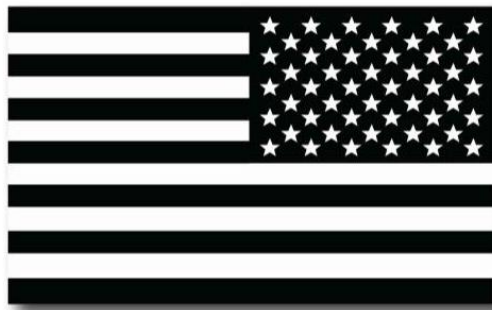
- All persons present in uniform (military, police, fire, etc.) should render the military salute. Members of the armed forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute.
- All other person's present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart with palm open, or if applicable, remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart.
- The American Legion National Headquarters has advised the following: The Post Officer's Guide and Manual of Ceremonies ask that those Legionnaires who are entering or exiting a meeting room salute the "station of the commander". An acceptable protocol for those who approach the podium is to also salute the colors. The National organization appreciates the demonstration of patriotism and respect given the colors by our ALA members when they have stopped and rendered a civilian hand salute.

When stowing or disposing of the flag, DO the following:

- Fold in the traditional triangle for stowage, never wadded up.
- It is important that the fire be fairly large and of sufficient intensity to ensure complete burning of the flag.
- Place the flag on the fire.
- The individual(s) can come to attention, salute the flag, recite the Pledge of Allegiance and have a brief period of silent reflection.
- After the flag is completely consumed, the fire should then be safely extinguished, and the ashes buried.
- Please make sure you are conforming to local/state fire codes or ordinances.

Quick list of Flag Etiquette Don'ts:

- Don't dip the U.S. Flag for any person, flag, or vessel.
- Don't let the flag touch the ground.
- Don't fly the flag upside down unless there is an emergency.
- Don't carry the flag flat or carry things in it.
- Don't use the flag as clothing.
- Don't store the flag where it can get dirty.
- Don't use it as a cover.
- Don't fasten it or tie it back. Always allow it to fall free.
- Don't draw on or otherwise mark the flag.
- Don't use the flag for decoration. Use bunting with the blue on top, then white, then red.



Why is the flag backwards on a military uniform? When the star field is first and foremost, it looks like the flag itself is storming into battle, much like our brave service men and women. If the flag were not mirrored on the Y axis, the star field would be on the left, making it look like the flag was retreating from battle instead of facing it head-on. This backwards American flag is called the Assaulting Forward. The flag faces forward for the battle the same as our troops do.

MOURNING FLAG, BUNTING & RIBBON ETIQUETTE

Many people wonder about proper etiquette when it comes to flying flags in periods of mourning. They want to show their respect, but they want to ensure that they are doing so appropriately.

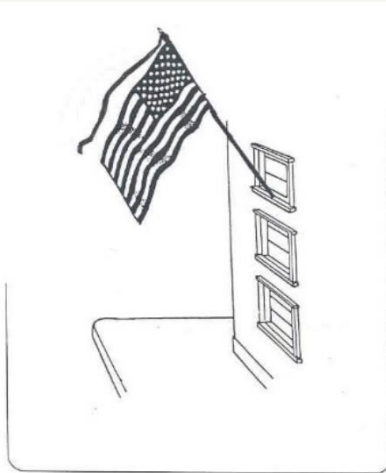
Mourning ribbons, buntings and flags are a great way to respectfully acknowledge a death, but how exactly should you go about displaying these items? How long should they remain on display for?

While mourning ribbon and flag etiquette varies depending on the specific scenario, there are a few general aspects of mourning protocol that it is important to be aware of. Here, we'll review the basics of mourning flag etiquette based on details provided by the Flag Research Center.

TRADITIONAL MOURNING FLAG, RIBBON & BUNTING ETIQUETTE

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The Flag Research Center often receives questions concerning proper protocol in regard to mourning.

In Western tradition black has always been considered the proper color to symbolize mourning. Occasionally white and/or purple have been associated with black, but they are neither standard nor recommended. Mourning bunting, pull-downs, drapery, ribbons, etc. of black are appropriate. Plain black flags are not recommended since they have also been used as a symbol of anarchism. American flags traditionally fly at half-staff as a symbol of mourning, but there are circumstances where this is inappropriate. When the length of a flagpole, the permanent attachment of a flag to a staff, or the

existence of obstructions such as shrubbery or a balcony make it difficult to half-staff, attaching black ribbons above a flag is an alternate mode of expressing mourning. A ribbon twice the flag length and no more than 10% the flag width should be tied in a bow above the flag and below the finial, such that the two resulting streamers correspond roughly to the flag length (see image below).

Public buildings of all kinds should express mourning only by the authority of appropriate authorities. For example, in the case of the death of the pope, mourning on public buildings in the United States (half-staffing, draping in black) should be undertaken only if the President issues an executive order authorizing it. The Flag Research Center will notify its paid clientele of such an eventuality.

FOLLOWING PROPER MOURNING PROTOCOL: DISPLAYING YOUR MOURNING FLAG, RIBBON & BUNTING CORRECTLY

With the mourning protocol above in mind, here are a few additional tips for making sure that your mourning flags, ribbons and buntings are displayed properly

Choose a Mourning Ribbon That is the Same Size as Your Flag

If you have chosen to display your flag with a mourning ribbon instead of lowering it to half-staff, you'll want to be sure you have chosen a mourning ribbon that is sized appropriately.

The mourning ribbon should be approximately as long as the flag itself, and should be no wider than 10% of the width of the flag.

The image to the right shows what a properly sized mourning ribbon should look like. Keep in mind that double mourning ribbons are available as well.



Display Mourning Buntings on Buildings and Grounds

Mourning flags and ribbons aren't your only options when it comes to showing your respect during periods of mourning. It is also appropriate to display mourning buntings and banners on the buildings and grounds. These buntings and banners are typically black and purple, and may feature other artwork such as the logo of a fire department or police department depending on the individual being mourned. These items can be used in funeral processions as well.

Information borrowed from Gettysburg Flag Works, Inc.
www.gettysburgflag.com/mourning-bunting-ribbon-protocol
(Use not intended as an endorsement by American Legion Auxiliary Department of Florida)

Salute the Colors

The American Legion National Headquarters has advised the following on this matter. The Post Officer's Guide and Manual of Ceremonies ask that those Legionnaires who are entering or exiting a meeting room salute the "station of the commander". An acceptable protocol for those who approach the podium is to also salute the colors. The National organization appreciates the demonstration of patriotism and respect given the colors by our ALA members when they have stopped and rendered a civilian hand salute.