

Basics for Flag Ceremonies

PEOPLE

Scout in charge -- gives all vocal commands and leads audience in pledge and a song if desired.

Color Guard -- 2, 4, or more in front, behind or both of flag bearers. They help the Flag Bearer carry, raise, or lower the flag. (If necessary in an outdoor ceremony.)

Flag Bearers -- one for each flag. They carry the flag with the pole on their hip, unless a belt is worn. All flag bears should carry flags in a marching manner.

FLAG ETIQUETTE

1. American flag is always on its own right. (P. 41 WTE Handbook)
2. Accompanying flag or flags are placed in their stands first.
3. American flag is removed from its stand first.

Basic Commands--[all or part of these commands may be used as fits the particular ceremony].

1. Ladies and Gentlemen, the flag of our country, please stand and remain standing. (This may be necessary admonition.)
2. Color Guard, attention. Color Guard, advance.
3. Color Guard, present the colors. (The flag bearer raises the flag upward and outward toward the audience.)
4. Please join me in saying the Pledge of Allegiance (to the audience) (the Color Guard DOES NOT say the pledge or put their hands over their hearts at this time.) (A song may be sun before or after the pledge if desired.)
5. Color Guard, post the colors. See No. 2 and No. 3 of Flag Etiquette.
6. Color Guard, honor the colors. (Now the C. G. places their hand over their heart briefly, drops it and remains in this position.) (A quiet voice or hand signal from the Scout in charge will facilitate all girls making the salute at the same time.)
7. Color Guard, retreat or retire. See No. 5 of retiring colors.

RETIRING COLORS

1. Ladies and Gentlemen, please stand.
2. Color Guard, advance.
3. Color Guard, honor the colors (see No. 6 of Basic Commands--honors, steps forward and wait for next command).
4. Color Guard, retrieve the colors (see No. 3 of Flag Etiquette).
5. Color Guard, retire the colors. "Color Guard, make an aisle for Flag Bearer to pass through and then follow in orderly manner."
6. Color Guard, dismissed. Girl Scouts, dismissed.

FLAG CEREMONIES

OUR RULES OF FLAG ETIQUETTE HELP US HONOR OUR FLAG

The U.S. Flag always occupies a position of honor:

The U. S. Flag is to the right of other flags.

Or it is in front of other flags.

The U.S. Flag flies longer than other flags:

Indoors, it is posted last, presented first (it is “flying” when it is held)

Outdoors, it is raised first, retired last.

The Color Guards protect the flags:

They prevent it from touching the ground.

They assist in posting it in its stand.

They do not participate in speaking or singing because their job is to guard the flag at all times.

The spoken and sung ceremony is held while the flag is flying:

Indoors, it takes place while the flag is held for presentation.

Outdoors, it takes place after the flag is flying from the pole.

Saluting the flag is a special way to honor it:

Everyone except the Color Guard salutes when the flag passes indoors, as it is raised outdoors and during the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Color Guard salutes quickly after posting or raising the flag, before presenting or retiring it.

FOLDING THE FLAG

1. Two persons, facing each other, hold the flag waist high and horizontally between them.
2. They fold the lower striped section, lengthwise, over the blue field. Hold bottom to top, edges together, securely.
3. Then fold the flag again, lengthwise, folded edge to open edge.
4. A triangular fold is made by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to meet the open edge.
5. Outer point is turned inward, parallel with open edge, forming a second triangle.
6. Repeat the triangular folding until entire length of the flag is folded.
7. When the flag is completely folded, only the triangular blue field should be visible.

GIRL SCOUT FLAG CEREMONY

All those present should either form a horse shoe or stand at attention in place. The person calling the commands is referred to as the “caller”. She is responsible for leading the group through the ceremony (Pledge of Allegiance, songs, poems).

The Color Guard is made up of the flag bearer(s) and the guards (one bearer for each flag and one to three guards for each bearer). The color bearer may wear a red sash over her right shoulder in the same position as the badge sash with a square knot on the left side of the waist. The Color Guards may wear red sashes around the waist with the square knot on the left side.

OUTDOOR - RAISING OF THE FLAG

COMMANDS

Girl Scouts, attention
Color Guard, attention
Color Guard, advance

Color Guard, present the colors

Color Guard, salute

Girl Scouts, the flag of your country ---
Pledge of Allegiance

(Optional: The Girl Scout Promise can be recited or a song may be sung. The caller announces.)

Color Guard, dismissed
Girl Scouts, dismissed

ACTIONS

All come to attention
Color Guard comes to attention
Color Guard comes forward with colors
stops at least two feet from pole or stand.
Flag Bearer and guard raises or posts the
colors. Participants salute as flag is
attached to first eyelet.
Color Guard take one step back, salute and
return to attention.
The Pledge of Allegiance is recited by all
but Color Guard.

Guards go into formation and leave.
All leave in appropriate order.

OUTDOOR - RETIRING THE FLAG

COMMANDS

Girl Scouts, attention
Color Guard, attention
Color Guard, advance

Retire the colors

Color Guard, dismissed
Girl Scouts, dismissed

ACTIONS

All come to attention.
Color Guard comes to attention
Guard approaches flag and takes position
In front of it.
Color Guard, (Pledge of Allegiance,
Promise, or song) guard salutes. Flag
is lowered from the pole and folded.
Guards go into formation and leave.
All leave in appropriate order.