

Flag Etiquette

A couple people suggested that I write an article on what is proper and not for the US Flag. After doing some on-research, here it is.

The US Flag must be flown at the top of the staff above any other flag or may be flown at half staff as decreed by a government official. When displayed over a street, it should be hung vertically with the union (stars) to the north or east. When flown indoors, the US Flag must be at its own right, or as viewed from the audience, it must be the left most flag. Other flags may be displayed but none may be larger nor higher.

When flown outside, the flag should be raised briskly and lowered slowly. Ordinarily it should be displayed only between sunrise and sunset. It should be illuminated if displayed at night. When carried in a procession, the flag should be carried by the right most of the marchers. When other flags are carried, the flag of the United States may be centered in its own row in front of the others. When the flag passes in a procession, or when it is hoisted or lowered, all should face the flag and salute. To salute, all persons stand 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. Veterans may render the hand salute. When the flag is in mourning (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. When used to cover a casket, the flag should be placed with the union (stars) at the head and over the left shoulder. It should not be lowered into the grave. During parades, all should stand at attention when the US Flag passes.

Now for some don'ts. The flag should never be dipped to any person or thing. The flag should never be used as drapery or for covering a speakers table. The flag should never be used for any advertising purpose. The flag should not be part of a costume or uniform, except that a flag patch may be used on the uniform of military personnel, fire fighters, police officers and members of patriotic organizations.

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. 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. Veterans' organizations such as the American Legion and VFW will properly destroy flags.