

What Does "Hashtag" Mean & How Do You Use One?

How to Use Hashtags Correctly in Your Online Posts

If you're new to social media, you might not know what the all-important hashtag is. Here, you can find out what "hashtag" means and how you use these very important tools to help people find your posts. Additionally, you can use them to find posts that you are interested in reading.

You make a hashtag by putting the number symbol in front of a word or combination of words with no spaces between them.

What Does Hashtag Mean, Anyway?

According to Merriam-Weber, the definition of a hashtag is:

a word or phrase preceded by the symbol # that classifies or categorizes the accompanying text

So what does that mean?

Hashtags are words or multi-word phrases that categorize content and track topics on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest. Hashtags are preceded by the # symbol, like #picoftheday or #sweepstakes.

People can use hashtags to search for posts with a specific theme. Using them helps people find posts and tweets that interest them. And if you want your own posts to be found, adding a hashtag or two will help you find your audience.

You will find them on the deptofmiauxprograms facebook page and you can look up the programs under topics and pick the # to look what has been posted for you chairmanship.

How to Use Hashtags in Your Posts

Add hashtags to your tweets, pins, or posts by using the pound symbol (#) followed by a word or phrase that defines the tweet's topic.

Don't use any spaces in your hashtag. If you want to use more than one word, simply run them together. If it's hard to read the meaning of the phrase without spaces, you can capitalize each of the words. #throwbackthursday and #ElectionNight are examples of popular multi-word hashtags.

How do you decide which hashtags to use? You can come up with a phrase that you find appropriate or you can use hashtags that you've seen other people put in their posts. If you're looking to attract readers, you can use a site like [Hashtags.org](https://www.hashtags.org/) to find hashtags that are currently popular (trending) on social media.

Hashtags don't have to be about a topic; they can also encapsulate a mood in your post. For example, if you post about winning a prize, you could use the hashtags #soexcited and #lovewinning! Hashtags can also be sarcastic, ironic, or funny.

You can insert a hashtag at the beginning, middle, or end of your post.

Why Do People Use Hashtags in Their Posts?

With so many people posting on social media, it can be hard to find the posts you want to read and the people who discuss topics that interest you. There's so much information being posted at any one time that wading through it all is time-consuming and the chance of overlooking something interesting is high.

Hashtags make it easy to search for Tweets with topics that are interesting to you. Some hashtags that sweepstakes fans might enjoy include:

- [#auxiliarypatriotism](#)
- [#Americanism](#)
- [#veteransandfamilysupport](#)
- [#scholarships](#)
- If you search Google or the internet for those hashtags, you'll receive a list of all the recent posts people have made about those subjects.
- **Conclusion**
- Hashtags are a quick and easy way to find like-minded people to follow, to attract more people to the posts you make, and to enter giveaways and win fun prizes, all while injecting more personality into your posts. Play around with them when you post on social media and see what a difference they make!

So remember that there is a outstanding use of the #AuxiliaryPatriotism hashtag in a social media post that you could win so take those pictures of Auxiliary traditions and Patriotic event and put the # on it.

Gold Star Banner



The gold star represents a family member killed during active duty and stands for sacrifice made for honor and freedom. Banners, also called service flags, containing two gold stars indicates two service members from that particular family were killed in combat. For families who've made the ultimate sacrifice, displaying the banners year-round is a solemn way to honor and pay tribute to their loved one(s).

Blue Star Banner



During World War I, Army Captain Robert L. Queisser sought a way to honor his sons' military service. Other families soon adopted his **blue-star flag to indicate active duty service in the war**. Sadly, many also displayed gold stars on those flags, symbolizing the death of the service member. The Department of Defense eventually authorized the display of the flags during times when the country is engaged in hostilities or war.

Flying blue-star flags is limited to specific family members (the spouse; parents, including adoptive or stepparents; siblings; and children, whether natural-born, adopted, foster children or stepchildren, are entitled to display the window flags). The white field, edged with red, can hold up to five blue stars. The blue of those stars symbolizes hope and pride for the service of a family member.

HISTORY OF THE BLUE STAR BANNER



The history of the Blue Star Banner leads us back to World War I and Army Captain Robert. L. Queissner. Captain Queissner designed this service flag to represent his two sons which were serving on the front line during this war.

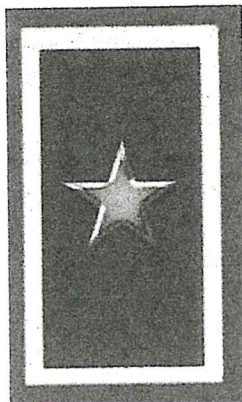
The Blue Star Banner became an unofficial way to show that your family had a child in the services. Over time the flag has transitioned to simply represent any family member who is serving in the Armed Forces at a time of war or hostility.

In 1918 President Wilson added, from a suggestion by the Women's Committee of the Council of National Defense, that if the family member was lost while serving that the blue star was to be covered with a GOLD STAR. The blue would be symbolic of hope and the gold would symbolize sacrifice for freedom.

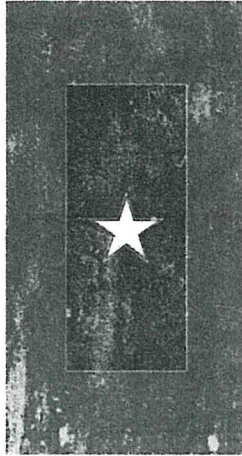
In World War II, the Blue Star Banner became very popular and could be seen in almost every window in which it was applicable. The Banner is traditionally hung in the window of a home as to allow all who pass the residence to view it and know the family has a member at war. It is known that only immediate family members of the person serving in the United States Armed Forces are to display the flag.

The list of expectable relation includes: grandparents, wife, husband, mother, father, step parent, adopted parent, foster parent, child, stepchild, adopted child, brothers, sisters, and half brothers and sisters. In 2001 on the historic day of 9/11, this flag became an official representation for a family to display to symbolize a serving member in the Armed Forces and was to be hung through the duration of a period of war or hostility.

Silver Star Banner



The silver star indicates a family member wounded or injured in a war zone.



White Star Families

The White Star designation recognizes families who have lost a service member to suicide, whether they were military or a first responder. 22KILL honors the sacrifices of both the service member and their family by providing outreach and support programs. These include family counseling and workshops, resource education, need assessments, peer retreats, and other services as necessary.

How to recognize Gold Star Families

How can you demonstrate your love and respect for those loved ones who died while serving in the military on this day, set apart to remember? Here are ways you can reach out to Gold Star Families and honor their loved ones today:

1. Remember the families.

Families want to know they are seen and remembered. Offer part of your heart in a card, a letter, a phone call or a visit in person. No words can take away the pain. But it will mean so much to know you care.

2. Take them out for a meal.

Take a Gold Star Family to their loved one's favorite restaurant or find a restaurant that serves their loved one's favorite meal or dessert. Share a meal, a smile and maybe a tear or two.

3. Plant a plant or tree in their honor.

Maybe a tree can be planted in a special place the family has set aside to go where they remember their loved one. If the family member is unable to plant it him or herself, offer to plant it for them while you're visiting.

4. Work on an art/craft project together.

It could be a special ornament for a Christmas tree. It could be a picture frame. Maybe you can spend time breaking glass together to turn into something new – a symbol of how there is beauty in the brokenness. Working with your hands and being creative can often provide very real healing.

5. Light a candle.

There is light in the darkest parts of our lives. Remind Gold Star Families their loved one's life will always be remembered.

6. Look at pictures of their loved one, ask about their favorite hobbies, sports teams or talents.

Make space to hear stories about the loved one who died. Looking through pictures can bring up so many happy memories and can remind the family to celebrate the life that was lived instead of the death. Don't be afraid to say their loved one's name.

Reach out to Gold Star Mothers and Families throughout the year. Holidays, birthdays and anniversaries of the death can be difficult. And a note or call from someone in the community can be so comforting. But don't neglect saying something on other days too. You'd be surprised when you show care on a random weekday how many surviving military families will likely say, "Thank you. I really needed to hear that today."

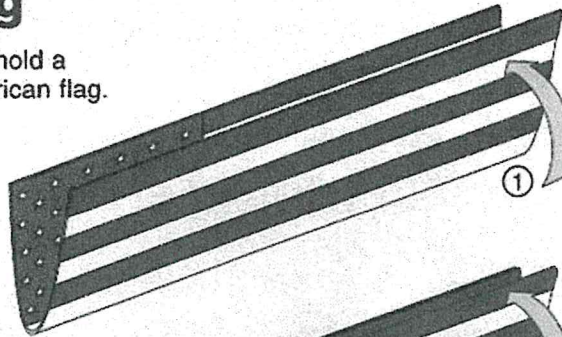
Gold Star Families can reach out, too. I hope we will reach out to one another and connect on this sacred day. Many of us care deeply for each other. Expressing our love and care communicates those deep connections and an understanding that we are not alone.

The correct way to fold the American flag

Our flag case is shaped to hold a properly-folded 5x9½' American flag. Here's how it's done.

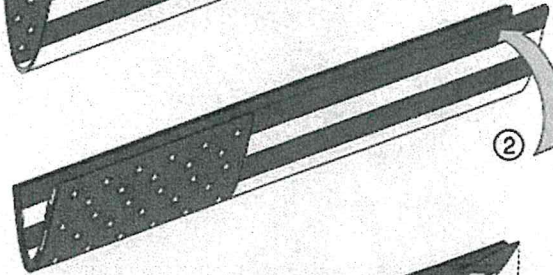
Step 1

Fold the flag in half. You now have open and closed edges.



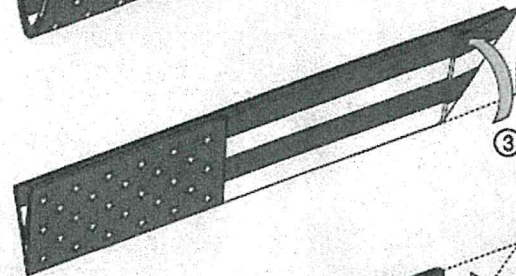
Step 2

Fold in half again toward the open edge.



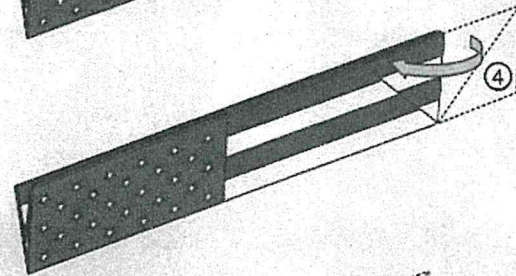
Step 3

Fold the closed corner toward the open edge, forming a triangle.



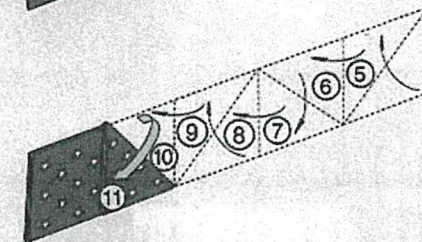
Step 4

Fold the point of the triangle toward the blue field.



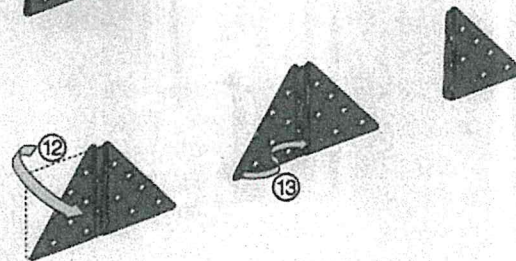
Steps 5-11

Continue folding until you have one square of the field left.



Steps 12-13

Fold the open corner of the square toward the closed edge. Tuck the resulting triangle into the rest of the flag.



THE MEANING BEHIND THE 13 FOLDS OF THE UNITED STATES FLAG

BY: NATIONAL FLAG FOUNDATION

If you've ever attended a military funeral, perhaps you noticed that the honor guards pay meticulous attention to folding the U.S. flag that once draped the casket. Guards make crisp, precise folds a total of 13 times to complete the ceremony. Much like every other aspect of our nation's greatest symbol, each of the 13 folds holds a special significance.

Flag etiquette dictates that every time an American flag is to be stored or presented during a ceremony, its handlers should fold it in half twice lengthwise; then starting with the end opposite the blue field, make a taut triangular fold. Handlers continue to fold the flag in triangles until the flag has formed a triangular "pillow" with the blue field showing on the outside. It's a dignified way to treat the flag, and gives a powerful touch to patriotic ceremonies.

This 13-fold procedure was common long before the more modern assigned meanings. The source and date of origin of the meanings is unknown, but for those who participate or witness a formal flag folding ceremony, whether it be on Flag Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Veterans Day, or at a military funeral, the 13 meanings can create an uplifting experience.

This is what the 13 folds mean:

1. The first fold of our flag is a symbol of life.
2. The second fold signifies our belief in eternal life.
3. The third fold is made in honor and tribute of the veteran departing our ranks, and who gave a portion of his or her life for the defense of our country to attain peace.
4. The fourth fold exemplifies our weaker nature as citizens trusting in God; it is to Him we turn for His divine guidance.
5. The fifth fold is an acknowledgement to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right, but it is still our country, right or wrong."
6. The sixth fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we 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.
7. The seventh fold is a tribute to our armed forces, for it is through the armed forces that we protect our country and our flag against all enemies.
8. The eighth fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor our mother, for whom it flies on Mother's Day.
9. The ninth fold is an honor to womanhood, for it has been through their faith, love, loyalty, and devotion that the character of men and women who have made this country great have been molded.
10. The 10th fold is a tribute to father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since he or she was first-born.
11. The 11th fold, in the eyes of Hebrew citizens, represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies, in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
12. The 12th fold, in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost.
13. The last fold, when the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, "In God We Trust."

US Flag Retirement and Disposal Ceremony

American Flag Disposal

The United States Flag Code states:

"The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning." The Flag Code does not actually give specifics on how to destroy the flag. One should use common sense making sure the procedure is in good taste and shows no disrespect for the flag. Many of the following organizations have collections in your local community to collect and perform a flag burning ceremony: American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of America, Mayor, City Hall or other patriotic organizations.

Before the ceremony...

Invite your guests to bring worn or tattered American flags, POW/MIA flags and State flags

Invite Active-Duty Servicemembers to appear in uniform

Invite members of Service Organizations to appear in uniform

Invite Veterans to wear baseball-style caps that display either the name or the official Seal of the Branch of the Military they served in

Ask guests to bring lawn-chairs or blankets

Assemble the following items...

An American flag of at least 3' x 5' affixed to a sturdy stand or a weighted, portable flag pole

Two large picnic tables or something similar

A small table to be used as a podium

At least 3 large flashlights that can stand upright to illuminate the flag

At least 2 all-purpose, fully-charged fire extinguishers

A garden hose and spray-nozzle if water is available at the site

A small shovel in case a piece of flag becomes airborne and lands outside the fire pit

A portable CD player with quality speakers

Copy music on Page 9 to CDs, preferably one song per disc

A portable microphone

A small amount of kerosene and 2 suitable spray dispensers

Arrange for a suitable place to bury the ashes and unburned eyelets the next morning

Secure the following volunteers...

A Master of Ceremonies, preferably a Veteran wearing a Military baseball-style cap

A Color Guard comprised of four adults, preferably Veterans wearing Military baseball-style caps

A Chaplain to deliver the Invocation

At least one person responsible for fire-control

Prepare the fire pit...

Ideally, the fire pit will be a large oval completely surrounded by a wall of stones at least 2-feet high

There should be no dead or green grass, or any other combustible material, within 3-feet of the outside of the pit

Ashes and any unburned material from previous fires should be removed from the pit

Insert and level several inches of clean fill dirt into the pit to make it easier to remove ashes from the flags and all unburned material (brass eyelets, melted clumps of nylon, etc.) from the pit the next morning for proper burial in another location

Immediately prior to the ceremony...

Light the fire in the pit and be certain it is constantly supervised

Have the Color Guard volunteers circulate among the guests to find out if anyone has a POW/MIA flag or a State flag to be retired

If there are flags from more than one State, write down the names of the States so the flags may be retired in the correct order (according to the State's admittance into the Union ... see Page 8)

If any of your disabled guests have flags for retirement, ask if they would like someone else to present the flag so they don't have to roll a wheelchair across soft ground during the ceremony

The Flag Retirement and Disposal Ceremony...

The United States Flag should already be raised and secured on the flag pole. The Master of Ceremonies (MC) starts the CD player and plays You're A Grand Old Flag to announce the beginning of the ceremony.

The MC takes his position behind the podium, facing the audience. The four members of the Color Guard stand at Parade Rest (At Ease, with their hands clasped behind their backs), in between the large tables and the first row of chairs, facing the audience, two members on either side of the center aisle.

MC: Ladies and Gentlemen, please take your seats. (Pause)

Tonight we honor the symbol of our American freedom, the American Flag, as we retire her from duty.

As long as Americans cherish liberty more than life itself, the Stars and Stripes shall continue to be the enduring banner of the United States of America. Look at her with renewed allegiance, honor her, respect her, and defend her.

Please rise and remove your hats for the Invocation. Remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance and the playing of our National Anthem.

The Chaplain moves to the podium.

Chaplain: Lord, we thank You for our Country, its Flag, and the liberty for which it stands. We humbly ask You to watch over our Servicemembers now serving under our Flag. We commit these Flags, worn-out in worthy service, to a clean and purging flame. As they yield their substance to the fire, may Thy holy light spread over us, bring warmth to our Prisoners-Of-War, provide a beacon for our Missing-In-Action to return home, and bring renewed devotion to God and Country. Amen.

The MC returns to the podium.

MC: Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Color Guard! At-ten-TION! A-bout FACE!

Servicemembers and Veterans wearing appropriate covers, At-ten-TION!

The members of the Color Guard pivot to face the raised Flag. The MC and any other members in the "stage area" also pivot to face the raised Flag. All place their right hand over their hearts and say the Pledge aloud with the MC.

MC: 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.

Pause to allow everyone to drop their right hand.

MC: Color Guard! Servicemembers! Veterans! Pre-sent ARMS!

The Color Guard, Servicemembers and Veterans wearing appropriate covers raise their right hand to salute the Flag.

The MC plays The Star Spangled Banner. At its conclusion...

MC: Color Guard! Servicemembers! Veterans! Or-der ARMS!

Color Guard! A-bout FACE! Pa-rade REST!

The members of the Color Guard pivot to face the audience once again at Parade Rest (At Ease, with their hands clasped behind their backs). The MC and any other members in the "stage area" also pivot to face the audience again.

MC: Please be seated. (Pause)

The United States Code stipulates, "When a U.S. flag is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, it should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning."

We gather these Flags of our Country and of our States, which have been determined to be no longer serviceable. They have reached their present state in a proper service of respect, tribute, and in the memory of all who have served America. What we are about to do is evidence of our utmost respect and undying honor for the Flag.

All those who have flags to be retired may bring them forward at this time, beginning with the first row. As the people from each row return to their seats, the next row should come forward.

The MC begins playing The National Emblem March and replays it as many times as necessary until all flags have been brought forward.

One member of the Color Guard stands in front of each of the two tables to receive flags from people as they approach. American Flags are placed in one section of each table, POW/MIA Flags in another section, and State Flags in another. Nylon flags and paper flags should be rotated with cloth flags to facilitate burning.

The other two members of the Color Guard stand behind each table and spray each cloth flag with kerosene as it is laid on the table (because most cloth flags have been treated with a fire-retardant).

When all flags have been brought forward and the MC has finished playing The National Emblem March...

MC: The Color Guard will now begin retiring the flags we honor here tonight. American Flags will be disposed of first, followed by POW/MIA Flags, State Flags in the order they were admitted into the Union, and, finally, Service Flags of the U.S. Army, the U.S. Marine Corps, the U.S. Navy, the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Color Guard collects the flags in the order of preference, takes them to the fire pit and holds them over the fire until they ignite (or gently places them into the fire).

MC: The Color Guard will maintain a vigil over the fire until no traces of the flags remain. Tomorrow morning, the ashes and the top layer of soil will be collected and properly buried.

Please rise as The Stars and Stripes Forever plays to recognize that the Flags we retire here tonight have been replaced by new Flags and the new Flags will someday be replaced themselves in a cycle that will never end as long as Americans cherish liberty more than life itself.

When The Stars and Stripes Forever finishes, the Honor Guard continues placing flags into the fire as the ceremony concludes...

MC: Ladies and Gentlemen, that concludes tonight's ceremony. Thank You and May God Bless America.

The MC plays Patriotic Medley on a continuous loop until the audience disperses.

Order of Precedence for Flags ...

United States Flags

POW/MIA Flags

State Flags (in order of admission into the Union)

Service Flags

U.S. Army

U.S. Marine Corps

U.S. Navy

U.S. Air Force

U.S. Coast Guard

State Flag Precedence ...

In order of admission into the Union

1 - Delaware

2 - Pennsylvania

3 - New Jersey

4 - Georgia

5 - Connecticut

6 - Massachusetts

7 - Maryland

8 - South Carolina

9 - New Hampshire

10 - Virginia

11 - New York

12 - North Carolina

13 - Rhode Island
14 - Vermont
15 - Kentucky
16 - Tennessee
17 - Ohio
18 - Louisiana
19 - Indiana
20 - Mississippi
21 - Illinois
22 - Alabama
23 - Maine
24 - Missouri
25 - Arkansas
26 - Michigan
27 - Florida
28 - Texas
29 - Iowa
30 - Wisconsin
31 - California
32 - Minnesota
33 - Oregon
34 - Kansas
35 - West Virginia
36 - Nevada
37 - Nebraska
38 - Colorado
39 - North Dakota
40 - South Dakota
41 - Montana

42 - Washington

43 - Idaho

44 - Wyoming

45 - Utah

46 - Oklahoma

47 - New Mexico

48 - Arizona

49 - Alaska

50 – Hawaii

Flag Presentation or Raising Ceremony

TWO CEREMONIES FOLLOW FOR YOUR PERSONALIZED (CUT AND PASTE) USE FOR YOUR CEREMONY. [You can be creative as long as you have the basics in place: Greeting, Colors, Invocation, Introductions, Speaker, Pledge of Allegiance, National Anthem, Benediction.]

CEREMONY #1 - FLAG PRESENTATION CEREMONY

MC: Good afternoon. I'm _____. It is truly an honor for me to serve as the master of ceremonies for this event. We are gathered here for an important patriotic and solemn purpose – to witness the dedication/presentation of the Flag of our country, "Old Glory" to _____ by _____.

PRESENTATION OF COLORS [OR HAVE COLORS IN PLACE – AND GO DIRECTLY TO INVOCATION]

Now, please rise for the presentation of our Colors and remain standing for the Invocation. All veterans may salute; all others, please place your hand over your heart.

"Color Guard, Advance the Colors" RETIRE HONOR GUARD [OR SKIP IF COLORS WERE IN PLACE]

INVOCATION

MC: Let us stand while _____ pronounces the invocation (local minister).

MC: Thank you _____. (minister)

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

I'd like to recognize our guests on stage, and distinguished guests in the audience:

READING

EMCEE: I'd like to introduce _____ who will give us a reading of "Your Flag and My Flag," by Wilbur D. Nesbit. (Check school or local library for other appropriate verse on the Flag.)

PURPOSE OF PRESENTATION

CHAIR OR OTHER DESIGNATION PERSON: A brief explanation of purpose of presentation, the organization or person presenting the Flag and the organization or individual to whom the Flag is to be presented.

PRESENTATION OF FLAG

Person making the presentation should have the Flag ready. Be sure Flag has been properly folded

in form of colonial hat with only the blue field and stars thereon showing. Person who is to receive the Flag is called from the front of the audience, and after a few well-chosen words by the presenting person, receives the Flag.

(EXAMPLE: It is a great privilege and pleasure to have the honor of presenting this beautiful symbol of our country, the Flag of the United States of America, "The Stars and Stripes," to _____, on behalf of _____. May it always fly over our land, representing a government instituted by our founding fathers, that will always champion Freedom and Justice.)

ACCEPTANCE OF THE FLAG

Person receiving Flag makes acceptance speech.

(EXAMPLE: With sincere thanks and appreciation, I accept this beautiful and precious Flag on behalf of _____. Thank you.)

PROGRAM CAN BE EXTENDED HERE, if more elaborate program is desired, such as RAISING THE FLAG ON A FLAGPOLE. If a Flag raising is included in the ceremony, it's recommended an Honor Guard, consisting of at least 7 riflemen, 2 Color Bearers carrying the American Flag (and organization flag, if any), and 2 organization members to raise the Flag, be marched to the flagpole. (A 150-foot distance is recommended, although this will vary as space permits.) After the Flag is raised and/or National Anthem is played/sung, the Honor Guard should fire one volley as a salute to the Flag. If a band is not available to play the National Anthem, a bugler could be substituted to play, "To the Colors."

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

EMCEE: Would everyone please stand and join me in the Pledge of Allegiance and remain standing for the singing of "The Star-Spangled Banner" (or "America" or other appropriate patriotic song, depending on whether you used the longer program and already sang The National Anthem.)

BENEDICTION

EMCEE: Let us stand while _____ pronounces the invocation (local minister).

FLAG CEREMONY PROCEDURES

Flag ceremonies provide an opportunity to show respect for the national emblem in a formal way. Often used to open civic and governmental events, such as city council meetings or Memorial Day rallies, these ceremonies are also a key tradition among the VFW.

A flag ceremony can involve either the unfolding and raising of a flag or the lowering and folding of a flag. If the VFW Post has a color guard, it should consist of a flag bearer and an even number of guards, typically four or six, in addition to the caller who runs the ceremony. The size of the Color Guard should depend on how many flags will be in the ceremony for raising or lowering the flag for unfolding or folding, to make sure no flag touches the ground.

Items Needed for a Flag Ceremony

- American flag
- State, organization, scout or military service flags (optional)
- Caller (ceremony leader)
- Color bearer for each flag used
- 2 to 4 color guards
- Microphone (if gathering is large)
- Printed caller instructions
- Patriotic music or poetry (optional)
- "Taps" recording or live performance (optional)

1 Decide who participates. Choose a caller, a color bearer for each flag, and two to four color guards.

2 Choose a patriotic song or poem to sing or recite. It's appropriate, but not necessary.

3 Inspect the flag. If it's in poor condition -- with holes, tears or stains -- retire it and find another to use. Your local Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts council can help.

4 Decide where to post the colors. The American flag should fly in the center, or to the right of any other flags, and should fly highest.

CEREMONY #2

DEDICATION OF COLORS

EMCEE: "The assemblage will rise. Color Guard, display the colors." (Colors will be advanced to a position in front of the stage or platform and will halt within 10 paces of the emcee.

EMCEE: "The bugler will sound 'To the Colors' and the audience will stand at salute or attention." (The organizational flag, if applicable, will be dipped at a 45-degree angle in salute, during the music).

EMCEE: In the name of _____, I dedicate these Colors. May they fly perpetually as the emblem of the cause for which our country has fought and continues to fight. Here is the Flag of our Country; safe within its folds is the freedom and fealty of our nation. (Beside it is the flag of [organization][brief description of flag]. I dedicate these Colors to the purposes of [our organization], community, state and Nation, and with them I dedicate this organization to the faithful service of our Nation, our people, and our Flag. Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Caller Commands: Closing

1 Say, "Please rise for the retrieval of the colors."

2 Say (if it's a scout meeting), "Scout attention."

3 Say, "Color guard attention."

4 Say, "Color guard approach." The color guard walks to the flag area. Play a recorded or live version of "Taps" if you wish.

5 Say, "Color guard, honor your colors." The color guard salutes, or they place their hands over their hearts.

6 Say, "Color guard, retrieve the colors." The color bearers remove or lower the flags.

7 Say, "Color guard dismissed." The color guard carries the flags to a rest or storage area, ending the ceremony.

5 Place everyone in position with the flags. The caller stands near the flagpole or stand. The color guard stands in the rear of the area, forming a double line behind the U.S. flag bearer.

Caller Commands: Opening

1 Say to the audience, "Please rise for the presentation of the colors."

2 Say, "Please remove any hats that are not part of a scout or military uniform."

3 Say (if it's a VFW Ceremony), "Attention." This signals anyone in uniform to salute.

4 Say, "Color guard attention."

5 Say, "Color guard, advance." The color guard should walk slowly to the flagpole or stand.

6 Say, "Color guard, post the colors." The color bearer raises the flag or places it in the stand.

7 Say, "Color Guard, honor your colors." The color guard salutes, or if not in uniform, they place their hands over their hearts if civilians, but Veterans may salute.

8 Address the audience: "Please place your right hand over your heart and join me in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance: 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."

9 Say, "At Ease" This is a traditional signal to lower your hands.

10 Say, "Color guard dismissed." The color guard walks to the back of the area.

11 Say, "You may be seated."

Patriotic Holidays

February 3 Four Chaplains Day

February 4 Birthday of the USO

Third Monday in February George Washington's Birthday

March 25 Medal of Honor Day

March 29 Vietnam Veterans Day,

Month of May National Military Appreciation Month

May 6 National Day of Prayer

May 8 V-E Day (Victory in Europe Day)

Third Saturday in May Armed Forces Day

May 30 Memorial Day

June 6 D-Day

June 14 Flag Day and Birthday of the Army

July 4 Independence Day

July 27 Korean War Armistice Day

August 4 Birthday of the Coast Guard

August 7 Purple Heart Day

August 15 Japan surrenders WWII

September 2 V-J Day

September 11 Patriot Day

September 17 Constitution Day and Citizenship Day

September 18 Birthday of the Air Force

Third Friday in September National POW/MIA Recognition Day

Last Sunday in September Gold Star Family Day

October 13 Birthday of the Navy

Month of November Military Family Month

November 10 Birthday of the Marine Corps

November 11 Veterans Day

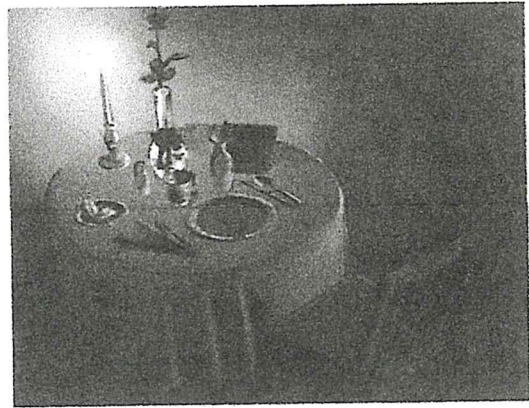
December 7 Pearl Harbor Day

December 13 Birthday of the National Guard

December 20 Birthday of the Space Force

POW/MIA Remembrance

*Ceremony Saves a Place
for the Missing Man*



- The single red rose in a vase is there as a reminder of the lives of each of the missing and their loved ones who keep the faith, still waiting for answers.
- The red ribbon tied around the vase shows our continued determination to account for the missing.
- A lemon slice at each bread plate is to remind us of the bitter fate of those captured and missing in a foreign land.
- A pinch of salt recalls the tears endured by those missing and their families who seek answers.
- The Bible represents the strength gained through faith to sustain those lost from our country, which was founded as one nation under God.
- An inverted glass symbolizes their inability to share in the day's toast.
- The chairs at each place stand empty to express their absence.

TABLE SET UP:

1. A small, round bistro table
2. White tablecloth
3. Single place setting, preferably all white
4. Wine glass - inverted
5. Salt shaker
6. Slice of lemon on bread plate with a pile of spilled salt
7. Small bud vase with a single stem red rose
8. RED ribbon tied around the vase
9. Candle - lit
10. Empty chair
11. Bible

"The POW MIA Remembrance Ceremony"

As you entered the banquet hall this evening, you may have noticed a small table in a place of honor. It is set for one. This table is our way of symbolizing the fact that members of our profession of arms are missing from our midst. They are commonly called POWs or MIAs, we call them "Brothers." They are unable to be with us this evening and so we remember them.

This Table set for one is small -- Symbolizing the frailty of one prisoner alone against his oppressors. Remember!

The Tablecloth is white -- Symbolizing the purity of their intentions to respond to their country's call to arms. Remember!

The single Red Rose displayed in a vase reminds us of the families and loved ones of our comrades-in-arms who keep the faith awaiting their return. Remember!

The Red Ribbon tied so prominently on the vase is reminiscent of the red ribbon worn upon the lapel and breasts of thousands who bear witness to their unyielding determination to demand a proper accounting of our missing. Remember!

The Candle, the candle is lit -- Symbolizing the upward reach of their unconquerable spirit. Remember!

A Slice of Lemon is on the bread plate to remind us of their bitter fate. Remember!

There is Salt upon the bread plate -- Symbolic of the families tears as they wait. Remember!

The Bible represents the strength gained through faith to sustain those lost from our county, which was founded as one nation under God.

The Glass is inverted -- They cannot toast with us this night. Remember!

The Chair -- The chair is empty. They are not here. Remember!

Remember! -- All of you who served with them and called them comrades, who depended upon their might and aid, and relied upon them, for surely, they have not forsaken you. Remember!

Remember! -- Until the day they come home, Remember!

Let us now raise our water glasses in a toast to honor America's POW/MIAs and to the success of our efforts to account for them.

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Go to **AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT of MICHIGAN** under programs and then Americanism and at the bottom of the page you can find all these resources. It has flag Citations, flag education for kids, understanding Auxiliary Traditions. Lots of printable items to pass out at schools and parades.

You can also go Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Auxiliary National Organization (vfwauxiliary.org) for lots more resources.

National Awards

- *Americanism Award for Members No. 1 – Entry Form*
- *Americanism Award for Auxiliaries No. 1 – Entry Form*

Flag Education

- *Flag Education for Kids*
- *Flag Exchange Card (Fillable PDF)*
- *Flag Etiquette at Parades*

POW/MIA Recognition

- *Missing Man Table Ceremony*

Promote Patriotism

- *Patriotic Appreciation Citation Option 1 – General (Fillable PDF)*
- *Patriotic Appreciation Citation Option 2 – General (Fillable PDF)*
- *Respect for Flag Letter to Schools (Word doc)*
- *Respect for Flag Citation Option 1 – Sports (Fillable PDF)*
- *Respect for Flag Citation Option 2 – Sports (Fillable PDF)*
- *National Anthem/Pledge of Allegiance Bookmarks Option 1*
- *National Anthem/Pledge of Allegiance Bookmarks Option 2*
- *America's Patriotic Days*
- *Understanding VFW Auxiliary Traditions (PDF)*
- *Understanding VFW Auxiliary Traditions (video)*