

# RESPECT *for the* FLAG

Although the nation's high court has ruled that desecration of the flag is protected speech, Americans still deeply revere and honor the flag — and they expect you to, as well.

**The U.S. Congressional Research Service, a unit of the U.S. Congress, offers the following guidelines for the use and display of the flag:**

- ★ The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously. Think of it this way: up quickly and down slowly with great fanfare.
- ★ Display the flag when the weather is inclement (rain, snow, hail) only if the flag is an all-weather type.
- ★ The flag should be displayed each day, including holidays such as New Year's Day, Christmas Day and Thanksgiving, as well as on state holidays.
- ★ The flag should never be displayed with union down. However, there is one exception: as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.
- ★ The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, floor, water or merchandise. The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free. Remember, the idea is to fly the flag.
- ★ The flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding or drapery. It should never be festooned, drawn back or up. It should never be in folds and should always be allowed to fly free.
- ★ The flag should be displayed daily on or near the main administration building of every public institution. The flag should be displayed in or near every polling place on election days.
- ★ The use of the flag for advertising purposes is generally discouraged. Some jurisdictions, such as the District of Columbia, have restrictions on the use of the flag for commercial purposes. Commercial speech does carry restrictions. The flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discard. Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the flag is flown.
- ★ No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen and members of patriotic organizations. The flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing. Therefore, the lapel flag pin should be worn on the left lapel near the heart.
- ★ The flag code permits burning of an unserviceable flag. But — this is important — for individual citizens, it should be done discreetly so the act is not perceived as a protest, desecration or disrespect.



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