United States Flag Retirement

When the United States flag (Old Glory) becomes worn, torn, faded or badly soiled, it is time to replace it with a new flag, and the old flag should be “retired” with all the dignity and respect befitting our nation’s flag. The traditional method of retirement is to incinerate the flag, but this does not mean that one should simply drop the entire flag (intact) into a fire. Though I disagree with burning a flag for a political statement and truly feel it is a dishonorable act, I also feel that freedom of speech must be protected. However, today we are not burning a flag we are retiring a symbol of America’s honor, courage, and strength. Therefore we I request that all remain silent during this ceremony.

A flag ceases to be a flag when it is cut into pieces. In addition, it is easier to completely incinerate the flag, if it is cut into smaller pieces. A flag should never be torn up like an old bed sheet. It should be cut up with scissors or shears in a methodical manner. The corners of the flag should be stretched out over a table top and someone should cut the flag stripe by strip and then star by star.
Note: Some organizations do not like the stars separated because the blue star field is it represents the union of the fifty states and one should never let the union be broken. Others feel that each state is equal to the others and therefore should have the dignity of the state’s name being read.

Leader: “The U.S. flag is more than just some brightly colored cloth... it is a symbol of our nation.”

Scout #1: “Seven red stripes and six white strips; together represent the original 13 colonies that gained us liberty. The red stripes remind us of the lifeblood of brave men and women who were ready to die for this, their country.”

Scout #2: "The white stripes remind us of purity and cleanliness of purpose, thought, word and deed. The blue is for truth and justice, like the eternal blue of the star-filled heavens."

Scout #3: "The stars represent the fifty sovereign states of our union. The American Creed states, "it is my duty to my country to love it, to respect its Constitution, to obey its laws, to respect its flag, and to defend it against all enemies."

Leader: "The U.S. flag should be treated with respect when it's flying, and should be treated with respect when it's being retired."

Scout #4: "Therefore, we retire flags with dignity and respect when they become worn, torn, faded, or badly soiled. A flag ceases to be a flag when it is cut into pieces. We separate the 13 strips that represents the original 13 colonies, and the 50 stars to pay homage to the 50 states that together make up this great nation.

NOTE: Place each stripe one at a time in the already going fire with a stick. You can either read the 13 colonies names in alphabetical order or the following sayings as you place each stripe in the fire.

Have the Scouts line up behind the already prepared flags and have them enter one at a time in a slow solum manner. When the stripe is placed on the fire the Master of Ceremonies reads the state or the a Scout reads the saying. It is best to not have the Scout placing the strip to read the saying.

If you have more than one flag, separate them before into files. Place a stripe from each flag in each of the 13/50 piles. Place all corresponding stripes in the fire simultaneously.

WARNING: Nylon flags ignite fast!

It might be illegal to burn Nylon in your state, check before doing so.

First Stripe “The thirteen stripes stand for the thirteen original colonies which are:

Table 1:

Order	State	Settled	Capital	Entered Union
1	Delaware DE	1638	Dover	Dec. 7, 1787
2	Pennsylvania PA	1682	Harrisburg	Dec. 12, 1787
3	New Jersey NJ	1660	Trenton	Dec. 18, 1787
4	Georgia GA	1733	Atlanta	Jan. 2, 1788
5	Connecticut CT	1634	Hartford	Jan. 9, 1788
6	Massachusetts MA	1620	Boston	Feb. 6, 1788
7	Maryland MD	1634	Annapolis	Apr. 28, 1788
8	South Carolina SC	1670	Columbia	May 23, 1788
9	New Hampshire NH	1623	Concord	June 21, 1788
10	Virginia VA	1607	Richmond	June 25, 1788
11	New York NY	1614	Albany	July 26, 1788
12	North Carolina NC	1660	Raleigh	Nov. 21, 1789
13	Rhode Island RI	1636	Providence	May 29, 1790

Second Stripe “The white stands for purity”

Third Stripe “The red stands for courage”

Fourth Stripe “Give me liberty or give me death”

Fifth Stripe "One if by land, two if by sea"

Sixth Stripe "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessing of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution on the United States of America."

Seventh Stripe "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal. They are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights. Among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Eighth Stripe "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Ninth Stripe "Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech or press."

Tenth Stripe "Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

Eleventh Stripe "One Nation under God."

Twelfth Stripe "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

Thirteenth Stripe "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Note: If you have separated the 50 stars: Now have the Scouts one-at-a-time take a star and a stick then place the on the fire. As the Scout places the star on the fire an adult read each state in the order they entered the union. The stands by the fire until the state is read. Then he returns to the end of the line. The next Scout does not enter the fire ring until the previous Scout leaves. Continue this for all 50 states.

If you have left the field intact place them on the flame and then read the 50 states.

Table 2:

Order	State	Settle	Capital	Entered Union
1	Delaware DE	1638	Dover	Dec. 7, 1787
2	Pennsylvania PA	1682	Harrisburg	Dec. 12, 1787
3	New Jersey NJ	1660	Trenton	Dec. 18, 1787
4	Georgia GA	1733	Atlanta	Jan. 2, 1788
5	Connecticut CT	1634	Hartford	Jan. 9, 1788
6	Massachusetts MA	1620	Boston	Feb. 6, 1788
7	Maryland MD	1634	Annapolis	Apr. 28, 1788
8	South Carolina SC	1670	Columbia	May 23, 1788
9	New Hampshire NH	1623	Concord	June 21, 1788
10	Virginia VA	1607	Richmond	June 25, 1788
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Table 2:

Order	State	Settle	Capital	Entered Union
14	Vermont VT	1724	Montpelier	Mar. 4, 1791
15	Kentucky KY	1774	Frankfort	June 1, 1792
16	Tennessee TN	1769	Nashville	June 1, 1796
17	Ohio OH	1788	Columbus	Mar. 1, 1803
18	Louisiana LA	1699	Baton Rouge	Apr. 30, 1812
19	Indiana IN	1733	Indianapolis	Dec. 11, 1816
20	Mississippi MS	1699	Jackson	Dec. 10, 1817
21	Illinois IL	1720	Springfield	Dec. 3, 1818
22	Alabama AL	1702	Montgomery	Dec. 14, 1819
23	Maine ME	1624	Augusta	Mar. 15, 1820
24	Missouri MO	1735	Jefferson City	Aug. 10, 1821
25	Arkansas AR	1686	Little Rock	June 15, 1836
26	Michigan MI	1668	Lansing	Jan. 26, 1837
27	Florida FL	1565	Tallahassee	Mar. 3, 1845
28	Texas TX	1682	Austin	Dec. 29, 1845
29	Iowa IA	1788	Des Moines	Dec. 28, 1846
30	Wisconsin WI	1766	Madison	May 29, 1848
31	California CA	1769	Sacramento	Sept. 9, 1850
32	Minnesota MN	1805	St. Paul	May 11, 1858
33	Oregon OR	1811	Salem	Feb. 14, 1859

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Table 2:

Order	State	Settle	Capital	Entered Union
34	Kansas KS	1727	Topeka	Jan. 29, 1861
35	West Virginia WV	1727	Charleston	June 20, 1863
36	Nevada NV	1849	Carson City	Oct. 31, 1864
37	Nebraska NE	1823	Lincoln	Mar. 1, 1867
38	Colorado CO	1858	Denver	Aug. 1, 1876
39	North Dakota ND	1812	Bismarck	Nov. 2, 1889
40	South Dakota SD	1859	Pierre	Nov. 2, 1889
41	Montana MT	1809	Helena	Nov. 8, 1889
42	Washington WA	1811	Olympia	Nov. 11, 1889
43	Idaho ID	1842	Boise	July 3, 1890
44	Wyoming WY	1834	Cheyenne	July 10, 1890
45	Utah UT	1847	Salt Lake City	Jan. 4, 1896
46	Oklahoma OK	1889	Oklahoma City	Nov. 16, 1907
47	New Mexico NM	1610	Santa Fe	Jan. 6, 1912
48	Arizona AZ	1776	Phoenix	Feb. 14, 1912
49	Alaska AK	1784	Juneau	Jan. 3, 1959
50	Hawaii HI	1820	Honolulu	Aug. 21, 1959

If you have a small number of flags, or one that has seen special service it is nice to give its history: First Raised (when): At (location): Memorable event or fact:

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Remember Me?

Some people call me Old Glory, others call me the Star Spangled Banner, but whatever they call me, I am your Flag, the Flag of the United States of America... Something has been bothering me, so I thought I might talk it over with you... because it is about you and me.

I remember some time ago people lined up on both sides of the street to watch the parade and naturally I was leading every parade, proudly waving in the breeze, when your daddy saw me coming, he immediately removed his hat and placed it against his left shoulder so his hand was directly over his heart...remember?

And you, I remember you. Standing there straight as a soldier. You didn't have a hat, but you were giving the right salute. Remember little sister? Not to be outdone she was saluting the same as you with her right hand over her heart...remember?

What happened? I'm still the same old Flag. Oh, I have a few more Stars since you where a boy. A lot more blood has been shed since those parades of long ago.

But now I don't feel as proud as I used to. When I come down the street you just stand there with your hands in your pockets and I may get a small glance and then you look away. Then I see the children running around and shouting...they don't seem to know who I am...I saw one man take his hat off, then look around, he didn't see anyone else with theirs off so he quickly put his back on.

Is it a sin to be patriotic anymore? Have you forgotten what I stand for and where I've been?...Anzio, Guadalcanal, Korea, Vietnam, and now the Persian Gulf. Take a look at the Memorial Honor Rolls sometimes, of those who never came back to keep this Republic free... One Nation Under God...when you salute me, you are actually saluting them.

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Well, it won't be long until I'll be coming down the street again. So when you see me, stand straight, place your right hand over your heart...and I'll salute you, waving back...and I'll know that...

You Remembered!

All: "Say pledge of allegiance while flag burns."

Followed by a Taps and then a moment of silence

Note: The Scouts maintain a vigil over the fire until all traces of the flag remnants are destroyed. Then, the fire is extinguished and the ashes are buried before sunset the following day. The ashes and the metal grommets are buried in separate unmarked graves. The burial can be completed with a moment of silence while taps is played by a bugler.

Note: This Retirement Ceremony was giving to our Troop by a retired Marine and much of the text was taken from postings on the InterNet