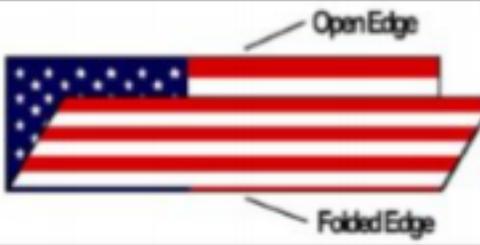
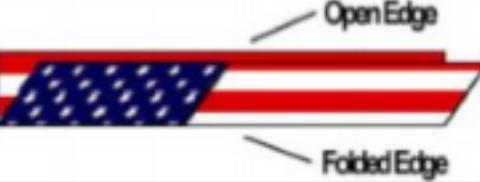
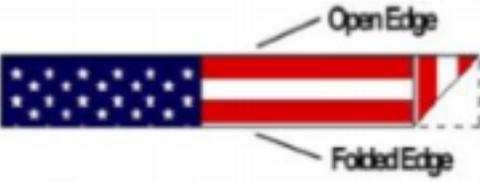


Correct Method for Folding the American Flag

Start		
Step 1		Fold the lower striped section of the flag over the blue field.
Step 2		Folded edge is then folded over to meet the open edge.
Step 3		A triangular fold is then started by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to the open edge.
Step 4		Outer point is then turned inward parallel with the open edge to form a second triangle.
Step 5		Triangular folding is continued until the entire length of the flag is folded in the triangular shape with only the blue field visible.
Completed		

Flag fold directions provided by the [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#).

Symbolism for the Folds of the Flag

There are several scripts that may be used when folding the American flag—or none at all. There are no “official” scripts to read during a flag folding, though various organizations have their own to recite during ceremonies.

Below are two different scripts, one provided by the American Legion and one from the Air Force.

Depending on the organization and the circumstance, a script may or may not have religious references or assign meaning to specific folds. Some, such as the American Legion’s script, does both. Conversely, other scripts, such as the 2005 version of the Air Force script below, focuses on the history of the flag as a whole and its significance to the U.S. Air Force.ⁱ

American Legion Script:

The flag folding ceremony represents the same religious principles on which our country was originally founded. The portion of the flag denoting honor is the canton of blue containing the stars representing the states our veterans served in uniform. The canton field of blue dresses from left to right and is inverted when draped as a pall on a casket of a veteran who has served our country in uniform.

In the Armed Forces of the United States, at the ceremony of retreat the flag is lowered, folded in a triangle fold and kept under watch throughout the night as a tribute to our nation's honored dead. The next morning it is brought out and, at the ceremony of reveille, run aloft as a symbol of our belief in the resurrection of the body.

The **first** fold of our flag is a symbol of life.

The **second** fold is a symbol of our belief in eternal life.

The **third** fold is made in honor and remembrance 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 throughout the world.

The **fourth** fold represents our weaker nature; as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace, as well as in times of war, for His divine guidance.

The **fifth** fold is a tribute 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.”

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.

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, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

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.

The **ninth** fold is a tribute to womanhood, for it has been through their faith, love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great have been molded.

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.

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.

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.

When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, "In God We Trust."

Air Force Script

For more than 200 years, the American flag has been the symbol of our nation's unity, as well as a source of pride and inspiration for millions of citizens.

Born on June 14, 1777, the Second Continental Congress determined that the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternating between seven red and six white; and that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field representing a new constellation.

Between 1777 and 1960, the shape and design of the flag evolved into the flag presented before you today. The 13 horizontal stripes represent the original 13 colonies, while the stars represent the 50 states of the Union. The colors of the flag are symbolic as well; red symbolizes hardiness and valor; white signifies purity and innocence; and blue represents vigilance, perseverance and justice.

Traditionally, a symbol of liberty, the American flag has carried the message of freedom, and inspired Americans, both at home and abroad.

In 1814, Francis Scott Key was so moved at seeing the Stars and Stripes waving after the British shelling of Baltimore's Fort McHenry that he wrote the words to The Star Spangled Banner.

In 1892 the flag inspired Francis Bellamy to write the "Pledge of Allegiance," our most famous flag salute and patriotic oath.

In July 1969 the American flag was "flown" in space when Neil Armstrong planted it on the surface of the moon.

Today, our flag flies on constellations of Air Force satellites that circle our globe, and on the fin flash of our aircraft in harm's way in every corner of the world. Indeed, it flies in the heart of every Airman who serves our great Nation. The sun never sets on our US Air Force, nor on the flag we so proudly cherish.³

Since 1776 no generation of Americans has been spared the responsibility of defending freedom. Today's Airmen remain committed to preserving the freedom that others won

for us, for generations to come.

By displaying the flag and giving it a distinctive fold we show respect to the flag, and express our gratitude to those individuals who fought, and continue to fight for freedom, at home and abroad.

Since the dawn of the 20th century, Airmen have proudly flown the flag in every major conflict on lands and skies around the world. It is their responsibility ... our responsibility ... to continue to protect and preserve the rights, privileges and freedoms that we, as Americans, enjoy today.

The United States flag represents who we are. It stands for the freedom we all share and the pride and patriotism we feel for our country. We cherish its legacy, as a beacon of hope to one and all. Long may it wave.

ⁱ American Legion, <https://www.legion.org/flag/folding>

U.S. Air Force Honor Guard Manual, <https://www.honorguard.af.mil/Portals/21/images/Base-Honor-Guard/2016%20BHG%20MANUAL.pdf>