

FLAG CEREMONY

A Flag ceremony is a way of showing love and respect for one's country. Flag ceremonies may be used for:

- Opening or closing meetings and/or special events
- Beginning or closing a day
- Honoring a special occasion or person
- Retiring a worn flag



Flag ceremonies may take place in meeting rooms, in outdoor settings, in large auditoriums, on stage, or even on horseback.

All flag ceremonies share one thing in common – respect for the flag.

Flag Protocol:

1. The American flag always has the position of honor.
2. Hold the American flag higher or in front of all other flags.
3. Carry or place the American flag to the right of all other flags. If carried, hold the flag staff outstretched and straight.
4. The American flag should be at the center when grouped with a number of flags.
5. During a flag ceremony, all persons present should face the flag and stand at attention.
6. When reciting the pledge of allegiance, place the right hand over the heart.
7. Citizens of other countries should stand at attention and be respectful during presentation of the American flag and reciting of the pledge of allegiance.
8. Members of the Color Guard do not speak. They do not join in the Pledge or Promise or any other spoken portion of the flag ceremony. Their undivided attention is on the flag to protect it.

Flag Ceremony Guidelines:

Keep it simple. Emphasis should be on respect for the flag rather than on commands or techniques.

Ask these questions before planning:

1. Who will carry the flag? Flag Bearer is needed for each flag.
2. Who will be the color guards? This team guards the flag(s); any even number of guards may be used but usually 4-6
3. Who will give the directions for the ceremony? Caller or Girl-Scout-in-Charge?
4. What song will be sung? Who will sound the pitch and start the song?
5. Will a poem or quotation be included? Who will say it or read it?
6. After the Pledge of Allegiance, will the Promise & Law be said?
7. In what order will the parts of the ceremony take place?
8. When will the group practice?
9. Where will the flags be placed at the end of the ceremony?

Basic Flag Ceremony:

1. **"Will you please stand for the flag of our country."**
2. **"Color Guard, advance."** (Flag Bearers and Color Guard proceed to the open end of the horseshoe.)
3. **"Girls Scouts, the flag of your country, pledge allegiance."** (All except Flag Bearers and Color Guard salute the flag by placing their right hand over their heart.)
4. **"We will now say the Girl Scout Promise."** (Raise right hand and extend middle three fingers.)
5. **"We will now say the Girl Scout Law."** (Raise right hand and extend middle three fingers.)
6. **"We will now sing"** choice of patriotic song. (optional)
7. **"Color Guard, dismissed."** (Flag Bearers and Color Guard exit the horseshoe.)

To Post the Colors (optional)

1. "Will you please stand for the flag of our country?"
2. "Color Guard, advance." (Flag Bearers and Color Guard proceed to the open end of the horseshoe.)
3. "Girls Scouts, the flag of your country, pledge allegiance." (All except Flag Bearers and Color Guard salute the flag by placing their right hand over their heart.)
4. "We will now say the Girl Scout Promise." (Raise right hand and extend middle three fingers.)
5. "We will now say the Girl Scout Law." (Raise right hand and extend middle three fingers.)
6. "We will now sing" choice of patriotic song. (optional)
7. "Color Guard, post your colors." (Place flags in stands, if available. American flag is posted *last*.)
8. "Color Guard, honor the flag of your country." (Color Guard salutes the flag in unison)
9. "Color Guard, dismissed." (Flag Bearers and Color Guard exit the horseshoe.)

To Retire the Colors:

1. "Color Guard, attention,"
2. "Audience, please stand."
3. "Color Guard, advance." (Color Guard approaches posted flags.)
4. "Color Guard, retire the colors." (Remove the American flag from the stand *first*.)
5. "Color Guard, dismissed." (Flag Bearers and Color Guard exit.)

For more information log onto www.girlscouts.org

Possible Flag Placements - American Flag -

"Own" Right



(Horseshoe)

Front



(Horseshoe)

Higher



(Horseshoe)