

THE MEANING BEHIND THE 13 FLAG FOLDS

The flag-folding ceremony represents the same religious principles on which our great country was originally founded.

- ❖ The 1st fold of our flag is a symbol of life.
- ❖ The 2nd fold is a symbol of our belief in eternal life.
- ❖ The 3rd 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 4th fold represents our weaker nature; as American citizens trusting in God, it is Him we turn to in times of peace, as well as in times of war, for His divine guidance.
- ❖ The 5th fold is a tribute to our country. 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 6th 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 7th 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 8th 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 9th fold is a tribute to womanhood. It has been through their faith, love, loyalty and devotion that has molded the character of the men and women who have made this country great.
- ❖ The 10th fold is a tribute to father, who has also given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since he or she was first born.
- ❖ The 11th fold represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- ❖ The 12th fold represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies God the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost.
- ❖ The 13th and last fold, when the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, "In God We Trust."

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it has the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under Gen. George Washington and the sailors and Marines who served under Capt. John Paul Jones and were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the U.S. Armed Forces, preserving for us the rights, privileges and freedoms we enjoy today.

The source and the date of origin of this Flag Folding Procedure is unknown. However, some sources attribute it to the Gold Star Mothers of America while others to an Air Force chaplain stationed at the United States Air Force Academy. Some sources also indicate that the 13 folds are a nod to the original first 13 colonies. The flag folding ceremony is provided as a patriotic service.

<https://www.military.com/flag-day/meaning-behind-13-flag-folds.html>