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We have all seen the folding of the American Flag, but do you know what it really means?

Symbolism of Folding the American Flag

Properly folding the Stars & Stripes may look complicated, but it is not. Here is a lesson in the symbolism of folding the flag as described in the U.S. Flag Folding Ceremony.

- Fold #1** - The symbol of life.
 - Fold #2** - A symbol of our belief in the eternal life.
 - Fold #3** - Made in honor and remembrance of the veteran departing our ranks and who gave a portion of life for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.
 - Fold #4** - This fold represents our weaker nature, for 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.
 - Fold #5** - 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."
 - Fold #6** - This fold stands 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.
 - Fold #7** - 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.
 - Fold #8** - 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 Mothers Day.
 - Fold #9** - A tribute to womanhood, for it has been through women's faith, love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great have been molded.
 - Fold #10** - 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.
 - Fold #11** - In the eyes of Hebrew citizens, this fold 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.
 - Fold #12** - In the eyes of Christian citizens, this fold represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.
- When the flag is folded completely, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, "In God We Trust."

After the flag is folded completely and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat. This reminds us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington and the sailors and Marines who served under Captian John Paul Jones, who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the armed forces of the United States, preserving for us the rights, privileges and freedoms we enjoy today.

The simple act of folding the national flag requires a unique ritual with its own rules and regulations. If the end result isn't a neat triangle (supposedly reminiscent of our forefathers' tricorner hats), you've done it wrong. Proper procedures for folding and properly displaying the American flag.

The colors presented in our great flag also have meaning. The red stands for hardiness and valor. The white symbolized hope, purity and innocence. The blue stands for reverence to God, loyalty, vigilance, perseverance and justice.

Other words for the American flag include: "colors," "standard," "ensign," "old Glory" and "the stars and stripes."



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