

# STARS AND STRIPES FOLDING CEREMONY

(Author Unknown)

**Use this ceremony with the How to Fold the U.S. Flag handout (page 25). Great for school programs.**

The Flag Folding Ceremony represents the same religious principles in which our Country was originally founded.

**The Flag:** The portion of the flag denoting honor is the canton of blue containing the stars representing states where our veterans served in uniform. The canton field of blue dresses from left to right, and only is inverted when draped as a pall on a casket of a veteran who has served our country honorably in uniform.

In the evening, in the Armed Forces of the United States, at the ceremony of retreat after taps has been sounded, the flag is lowered and 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, at the ceremony of reveille, and run up 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 the eternal life.

The third fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veterans departing our ranks who gave a portion of his life for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world not to have been in vain and shall never be forgotten.

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

The fifth fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of the immortal 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 where our hearts lie - and it is with our hearts 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 these same armed forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

The eighth fold is a tribute to the One who entered on the valley of the shadow of death, that we see the light of day, and this fold is made to honor Mother, for whom it flies on Mother's Day.

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

The tenth fold is a tribute to Father, for he too has given of his sons for the defense of our country, since he was first born.

We fold from the stripes toward the stars, for whereas the stripes represent the thirteen original colonies that founded our republic, and they are embodied in the fifty sovereign states represented by the stars, so that the stars cover the stripes.

The eleventh fold for in the eyes of a Hebrew citizen, this represents the lower portion of the Seal of King David and King Solomon, and glorifies in their eyes the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

The twelfth fold for in the eyes of a Christian citizen, this represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies in their eyes God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost.

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

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on an appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the Soldiers who served under General George Washington, and the Sailors and Marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, and they, followed by their comrades and shipmates in the armed forces of the United States, have preserved for us the rights, privileges, and freedom which we are enjoying today.