Thirteen Folds Ceremony

A ceremonial reading presented by Honoring America's Veterans

As we prepare for the thirteen folds, I invite the flag detail to move into position and ask everyone to remain respectfully attentive. The traditional flag-folding ceremony uses thirteen folds and ends with the blue field and stars visible. Although many symbolic scripts have developed over time, the detailed meaning assigned to each fold is not part of the U.S. Flag Code. Today's reading has been selected for this gathering and will be offered in a spirit of dignity, remembrance, and peace.

THE FLAG FOLDING CEREMONY

01 The First Fold

The first fold represents the values that guide American citizens in times of peace and in times of conflict: faith, conscience, reflection, and the hope for wisdom as we seek the path of peace.

02 The Second Fold

The second fold is represented by the color red, symbolizing courage, sacrifice, and the cost borne by those who have served in defense of the nation's freedom.

03 The Third Fold

The third fold is represented by the color white, reflecting the nation's early ideals of freedom, justice, and equality for all its people.

04 The Fourth Fold

The fourth fold is depicted with the color blue, symbolizing both justice and loyalty.

05 The Fifth Fold

The fifth fold highlights our nation's commitment to justice, fairness, trust, and stability, principles that guide government institutions in serving the people.

06 The Sixth Fold

The sixth fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veterans who have left us, recognizing that they gave a portion of their lives in defense of our country and in pursuit of peace throughout the world.

07 The Seventh Fold

The seventh 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.

08 The Eighth Fold

The eighth fold is a tribute to our Armed Forces, whose service helps protect our country, our people, and the freedoms represented by our flag.

09 The Ninth Fold

The ninth fold is a tribute to women and to mothers, whose faith, love, loyalty, and devotion have helped shape the character of generations who served, sacrificed, and strengthened this country.

10 The Tenth Fold

The tenth fold is a tribute to men and to fathers, whose love, guidance, and sacrifice have helped strengthen families, communities, and the nation.

11 The Eleventh Fold

The eleventh fold honors our parents and families, whom we love and respect. We salute them for the strength, patience, and support they give to those who serve and to the communities that remember them.

12 The Twelfth Fold

The twelfth fold honors the United States Constitution, the supreme law of the land, which protects the basic rights and liberties of the American people.

13 The Thirteenth Fold

The thirteenth fold comes when the flag is completely folded and the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, "In God We Trust."

Remember • Honor • Serve