



A MESSAGE FROM
MAUREEN O'CONNELL
NASSAU COUNTY CLERK

Dear Children,

For more than 200 years, the American flag has been the symbol of our nation's strength and unity. It's been a source of pride and inspiration for millions of citizens. Our flag has been a prominent icon in our national history. Here are some ways you can show this symbol of freedom proper respect.

Sincerely,

Maureen O'Connell

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**CARING FOR
OUR
AMERICAN FLAG**



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HISTORY OF OUR AMERICAN FLAG...

Federal law establishes many aspects of flag etiquette, or ways we should show respect to our Flag.

In May of 1776, Betsy Ross reported that she sewed the first American flag. On June 14, 1777, in order to establish an official flag for the new nation, the Continental Congress passed the first Flag Act: "Resolved, That the flag of the United States be made of thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new Constellation."

Today, the flag consists of thirteen horizontal stripes, seven red alternating with 6 white. The stripes represent the original 13 colonies, the stars represent the 50 states of the Union. The colors of the flag are symbolic as well: Red symbolizes Hardiness and Valor, White symbolizes Purity and Innocence and Blue represents Vigilance, Perseverance and Justice.

WAYS TO SHOW RESPECT FOR OUR AMERICAN FLAG...

The flag should be lighted at all times, either by sunlight or by an appropriate light source.

The flag should be flown in fair weather, unless the flag is designed for inclement weather use.

The flag should never be dipped to any person or thing. It is flown upside down only as a distress signal.

The flag should not be used for any decoration in general. Bunting of blue, white and red stripes is available for these purposes. The blue stripe of the bunting should be on the top.

The flag should never be used for any advertising purpose. It should not be embroidered, printed or otherwise impressed on such articles as cushions, handkerchiefs, napkins, boxes, or anything intended to be discarded after temporary use. Advertising signs should not be attached to the staff or halyard.

The flag should not be used as part of a costume or athletic uniform, except that a flag patch may be used on the uniform of military personnel, fireman, policeman and members of patriotic organizations.

The flag should never have any mark, insignia, letter, word, number, figure, or drawing of any kind placed on it, or attached to it.

The flag should never be used for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.

When the flag is lowered, no part of it should touch the ground or any other object; it should be received by waiting hands and arms. To store the flag it should be folded neatly and ceremoniously.

The flag should be cleaned and mended when necessary.

When a flag is so worn it is no longer fit to serve as a symbol of our country, it should be destroyed by burning in a dignified manner.

Excerpted from US Flag, Flag Etiquette

*Courtesy of
Maureen O'Connell
Nassau County Clerk*