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USAGov's Guide to Displaying the American Flag

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Every Fourth of July all across the country, people show their love for America by displaying flags along streets, hanging them from porches, and proudly carrying them in the town parade. Old Glory is everywhere. But did you know there are official rules on properly displaying the U.S. flag? This guide from [USAGov](#), based on the [Federal Flag Code](#) (PDF, [Download Adobe Reader](#)), can help you show respect for the flag as you celebrate this Fourth of July:



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- **When:** You can display the flag outside from sunrise to sunset. If you want to fly it after dark, it will need to be lit. Don't fly the flag during inclement weather, unless it's an all-weather flag.
- **On the porch:** The union of the flag--the blue section with white stars--should be placed at the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff. When the flag is suspended from a rope on a pole extending from a house, the flag should be hoisted out, union first, from the building.
- **On the wall or the window:** When the flag is displayed on a flat surface like a wall, the union should be at the top left.
- **On the street:** The flag should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street. The flag should never touch anything beneath it, so make sure it's hoisted at the proper height.
- **At the office:** Suspend the flag vertically with the union to the observer's left upon entering. If the building has more than one main entrance, the flag should be suspended vertically near the center of the corridor or lobby with the union to the north when entrances are to the east and west, or to the east when entrances are to the north and south. If there are entrances in more than two directions, the union should be to the east.
- **On a vehicle:** The staff should be fixed firmly on the right side of the vehicle. Do not drape the flag over the hood, top, sides, or back of a vehicle or a boat.
- **Half-staff:** During periods of mourning, it is common to see the flag flying at half-staff. Only presidents can [proclaim such periods for a national remembrance](#) (PDF, [Download Adobe Reader](#)). Governors can also declare mourning periods at a local level. In some cases, heads of federal agencies can order the flag flown at half-staff on grounds under their supervision. Traditionally, states and local governments follow the president's proclamation during a period of national mourning.

Take care of your flag. Many dry cleaners will clean U.S. flags for free during the months of June and

July. Store your flag in a well-ventilated area. If it gets wet, make sure it's completely dry before storing it. If the flag is damaged or worn out, it should be burned and disposed of with dignity. [Learn more about the flag](#), its history, protocol, and ways to pay your respects, including the [proper way to fold it](#).

This [Independence Day](#), show your patriotism by proudly displaying the old Red, White and Blue while celebrating the nation's 240th birthday.

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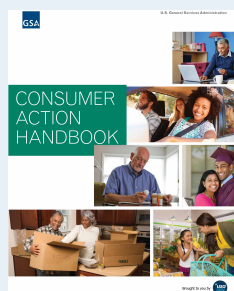
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