



What So Proudly We Hail

The
United States
Flag
___ & ___
The State Flag
of Ohio





Fellow Ohioans,

The American flag and the Ohio Burgee are poignant and powerful symbols that represent our shared history, ideals, and rights. How we conduct ourselves and display these symbols is important because it signals our respect for what they represent.

Flag etiquette covers everything from proper display to acceptable conduct, and the United States Flag Code provides us with a specific set of instructions. Ohio has also adopted several of these rules to serve as a guide for our own state flag.

As an Eagle Scout and later as a soldier, I was taught about our flag and my duty to serve our fellow citizens. I was also taught the importance of America's patriotic traditions and passing them on to future generations. It is my hope that the information in this guide will help educate you about proper flag etiquette and how to respectfully demonstrate your love for our country and state.

So much more than just pieces of cloth, the flags of our nation and our state are proudly stitched on the shoulders of those who serve our nation, state, and community. They fly proudly above our seats of government, sports stadiums, homes, and many thousands of places we hold dear. The flag is draped reverently over the casket of the fallen and tenderly placed in the loving arms of grieving families. They are somberly lowered to half staff as we mourn the loss of great Americans and then boldly returned to full as we carry on their lives' work together. Our flags represent our shared struggles and our hopes for the future. Our flags represent us—let's keep them flying proudly.

Yours in service,


Frank LaRose
Ohio Secretary of State

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The American flag appears backward on military uniforms because the canton or field of blue stars must be “assaulting forward” or facing forward to mirror the image of historical standard bearers bringing the flag into battle. It replicates the image of flags flying in the wind and symbolizes the admirable courage and commitment of military personnel.

Bartell, Brian. “Why are Military Flags Backward? Here’s the Reason.” *thesoldierproject*, www.thesoldiersproject.org/why-are-military-flags-backward. Accessed 10 March 2022.

Ohio Burgee History

Ohio's official flag was adopted by an act of the Ohio Legislature on May 9, 1902. The Ohio Burgee, as the swallow-tailed design is properly called, was drawn by John Eisenmann, architect and designer for the Ohio State Pan-American Exposition Commission.

It took
Ohio almost
100 years
to officially
adopt a flag.

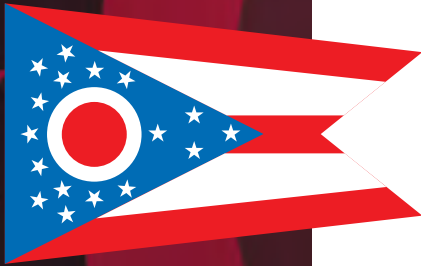
The Ohio flag has three red and two white horizontal stripes. At its staff end is a blue triangular field with the apex at the center of the middle red stripe. There are 17 white, five-pointed stars grouped around a red disc superimposed upon a white circle, representing the letter O.

Mr. Eisenmann explained the Ohio flag's symbolism most aptly:

"The triangles formed by the main lines of the flag represent the hills and valleys as typified in the State Seal, and the stripes the roads and waterways.

The stars, indicating the 13 original states of the Union, are grouped about the circle, which represents the Northwest Territory; and that Ohio was the seventeenth state admitted into the Union is shown by adding four more stars.

The white circle with its red center, not only represents the initial letter of Ohio, but is suggestive of its being the Buckeye State."



U.S. Flag History

On January 1, 1776, the Continental Army was reorganized in accordance with a Congressional resolution, which placed American forces under George Washington's control. On that New Year's Day, the Continental Army was laying siege to Boston, which had been taken over by the British Army. Washington ordered the Grand Union flag hoisted above his base at Prospect Hill. It had 13 alternate red and white stripes and the British Union Jack in the upper left corner (the canton).

On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress passed the first Flag Act to establish an official flag for the new nation:

"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."

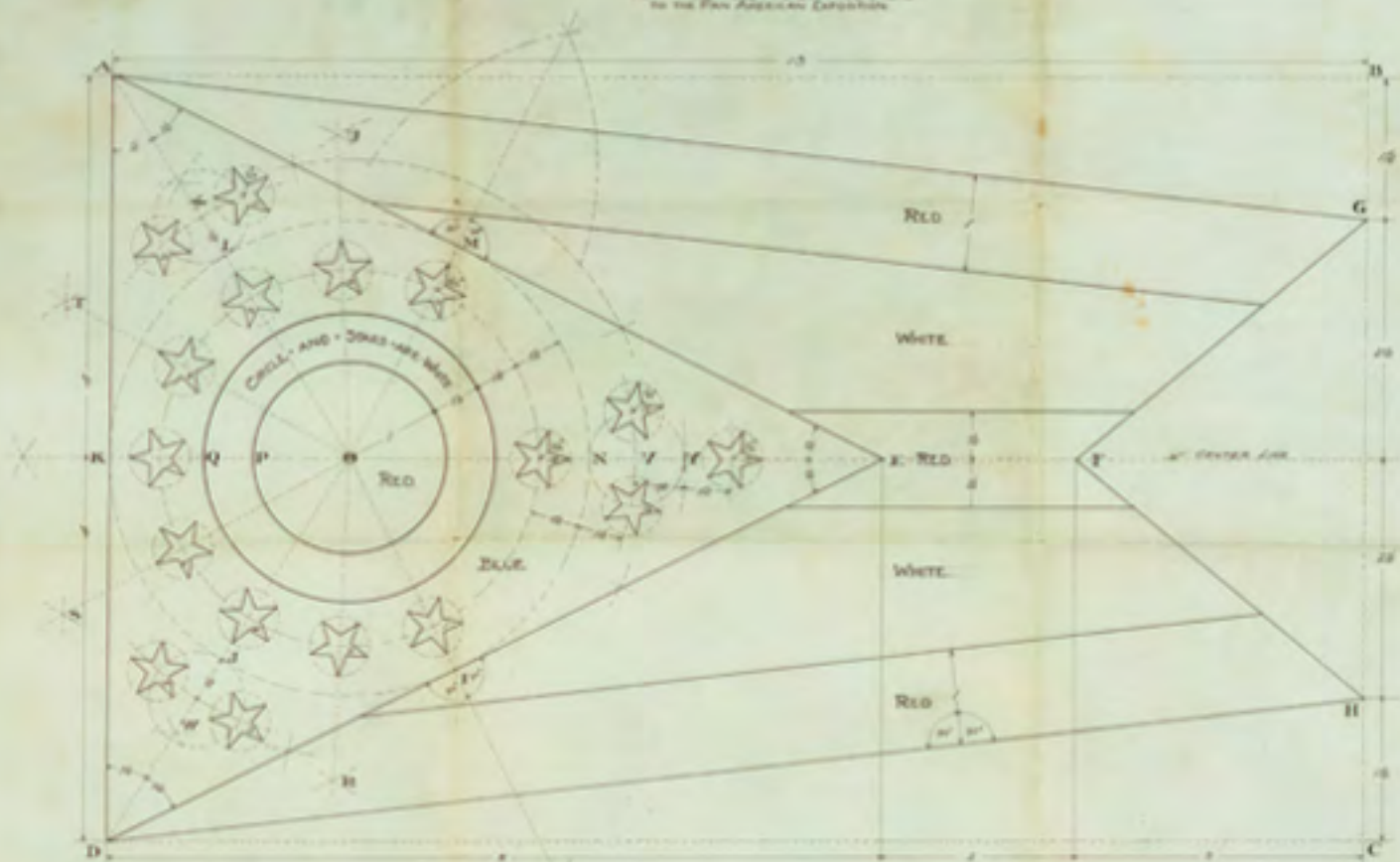
Today, the American flag consists of 13 horizontal stripes, seven red, alternating with six white. The stripes represent the original 13 colonies and the stars represent the 50 states of the Union. According to custom and tradition, white signifies purity and innocence; red, hardiness and valor; and blue, vigilance, perseverance, and justice.



The current American flag was designed by a 17-year-old named Robert Heft in 1958, on a hunch that Hawaii and Alaska would soon be added to the nation. While living with his grandparents in Lancaster, Ohio, Heft redesigned the flag for a school project, arranging the 50 white stars on a blue background in alternating horizontal rows, but received a B- for lack of originality. When told his grade would improve if Congress accepted his design, he submitted it to his Congressman. Two years later, Heft's 50-star flag design was adopted as the new United States flag on July 4, 1960, and his teacher changed his grade to an A.

THE OHIO STATE FLAG

DESIGNED BY
JOHN EISENMANN
ARCHITECT & ENGINEER
FOR THE OHIO STATE COMMISSIONERS
TO THE PAN AMERICAN EXPOSITION



PROPORTIONAL DIMENSIONS

THE RECTANGLE A.B.C.D. CONTAINS THE FLAG AND IS DIVIDED INTO THE FOLLOWING PARTS:
LENGTH = A.D. OR C.D. 12 PARTS
WIDTH = A.B. OR D.C. 10 "

ON B.C. LAY OFF B.E. = 15 PARTS
E.N. = 5 "
N.C. = 10 "
ALTITUDE Δ. E.N.F. = 3 "
DISTANCE E.F. = 2 "

THE RED STRIPES A.E.F. AND G.H. AND EACH ONE PART IN WIDTH FORMED BY DRAWING LINES PARALLEL TO THEIR RESPECTIVE SIDES.

THE TWO WHITE STRIPES TAKE UP EQUAL PORTIONS OF THE BALANCE OF THE FLAG.

THE BLUE TRIANGLE AT THE TOP OF THE FLAG IS AN EQUILATERAL TRIANGLE.
SIDE A.D. = 8 PARTS
ALTITUDE N.E. = 5 "

LOCATE A.E. AND D WITH INTERSECTION AT G, WITH G AS CENTRE AND O.P. AS RADIUS = 1 PART CONSTRUCT THE RED CIRCLE AND O.P. = QUARTER WAY OF BLUE RADIUS OR THE FIFTH LETTER OF THE STATE OF OHIO.

WITH O.K. AS RADIUS INSCRIBE THE CIRCLE L.I.L.E.N.R.

O.I. AND O.M. RADII AT RIGHT ANGLES TO D.E. AND E.I. RESPECTIVELY LOCATE THE POINTS OF INTERSECTION AT R, S, T, AND U.

WITH O.K. AS CENTER AND WITH A.R. AS ONE HALF A PART SHORTER THAN O.I. OR O.M. OR U CONSTRUCT CIRCLE AS WHERE IT INTERSECTS THE RADII, LINES L.I.B. O.K.T. O.K.N. WILL BE FORMED THE CENTERS OF THE STARS L.E. O.P. O.K. O.T. O.N. O.R.

LAY OFF I.G. A PART ON I.N. FROM WHICH FIND CENTERS OF STARS J AND J FROM L.N. FIND CENTERS OF STARS K AND L AND FROM S, T, U FIND CENTERS OF STARS O.U. AND IT AS SHOWN.

THE FIVE POINTED STARS ARE WHITE AND ARE CONSTRUCTED TO BE CONTAINED IN A CIRCLE WHOSE DIAMETER IS 1/5 OF A PART.

THE FIRST GROUP OF STARS SHOW THE ORIGINAL 13 STATED MEMBERS AND THE CIRCLE ON THE ORIGINAL TERRITORY OF OHIO.

AND THE GROUP OF FOUR (A) MARKS SEVENTEEN (17) IN ALL, THUS MAKING OHIO AS THE 17TH STATE IN ORDER OF ITS RE-ADMISSION INTO THE UNION.

Ohio Burgee Dimensions

For more than a century, the Ohio Burgee has endured, giving Ohio one of the most recognizable flags in North America. It remains the only non-rectangular U.S. state flag. Below are the proportional dimensions from Eisenmann's design.

The Rectangle A. B. C. D. contains the flag and is divided into the following parts:

Length = A. B or C. D 13 parts

Width = A. D or B. C 8 parts

On B.C. lay off B.G = $1\frac{1}{2}$ parts
 G.H = 5 parts
 H.C. = $1\frac{1}{2}$ parts

Altitude (angle symbol) G.H.F. = 3 parts

Distance E. F. = 2 parts

The red stripes A. G., E. F. and D. H. are each one part in width formed by drawing lines parallel to their respective lines.

The two white stripes take up equal portions of the balance of the flap.

The blue triangular union A. E. D

Base A. D = 8 parts

Altitude K. E = 8 parts

Bisect A. E. and D. with intersection at O, with O as centre and O. P. as a radius – 1 part construct the red circular disc = P. Q. = $\frac{1}{2}$ part = width of white annulus or the initial letter of the state of Ohio.

With O. K. as a radius inscribe the circle I. J. K. L. M. N.

O. I. and O. M. being at right angles to D. E. and A. E. respectively bisect angles from I. to M. at R. S. T and U.

With O. as a center and with a radius one half a part shorter than O. I or O. K. or O. M. or O. N. construct circle an where it intersects the radial lines I. J. R. S. K. T. L. U. M. N will be formed the centers of the stars 1-2-4-6-7-8-10-12-13-14.

Lay of $\frac{1}{2}$ a part on J. W. from which find centers of stars 5 and 3 from L. X. find centers of stars 9 and 11 and from N. V. Y. find centers of stars 15-16 and 17 as shown.

The five pointed stars are white and are constructed to be contained in a circle whose radius is $\frac{5}{16}$ of a part.

The first group of stars show the original 13 states surrounding the circle or the original territory of Ohio, and the group of four makes 17 in all typifies Ohio as the 17th state in order of its admission into the Union.

U.S. Flag Dimensions

Executive Order No. 10834

August 24, 1959

Part I — Design of the Flag

Section 1. The flag of the United States shall have 13 horizontal stripes, alternate red and white, and a union consisting of white stars on a field of blue.

Section 2. The positions of the stars in the union of the flag and in the Union Jack shall be as indicated on the attachment to this order, which is hereby made a part of this order.

Section 3. The dimensions of the constituent parts of the flag shall conform to the proportions set forth in the attachment referred to in Section 2 of this order.



Standard proportions of the U.S. flag

hoist (width) of flag	1.0
fly (length) of flag.....	1.9
hoist of union	0.5385 (7/13)
fly of union.....	0.76
diameter of star.....	0.0616
width of stripe	0.0769 (1/13)



The U.S. Flag Code

On June 22, 1942, Congress passed a joint resolution, later amended on December 22, 1942, that encompassed what has come to be known as the U.S. Flag Code. The Flag Code formalizes and unifies the traditional ways in which we give respect to the flag and also contains specific instructions on how the flag is not to be used.

In Congress' 1976 revision of the Flag Code, the U.S. flag is considered to be a living symbol representing a living country. This was added in response to Americans' strong feelings of respect and reverence for the flag. Therefore, the proper display and use of the U.S. flag is necessary from every American citizen. It should be pointed out that Ohio uses the U.S. Flag Code as a guide for the display and conduct around its own flag.

The first
flying of the
Ohio Burgee
was in
Buffalo, NY,
at the
Pan-American
Exposition.



Displaying the Flags

When the state flag is displayed, it may be flown every day when weather permits and shall be flown from sunrise until sunset on all national and state holidays and on any other days that the governor proclaims. The state flag may be flown at night when properly lighted. When the state flag is displayed outdoors, it shall be flown either from a flagpole or a staff. Any staff from which the state flag is flown shall be at least two and one-half times as long as the state flag.

The state flag shall be washed or dry cleaned when soiled and may be repaired.



When the flag of Ohio, or any state, is flown on the same halyard with the flag of the United States of America, the latter should always be at the peak. When flown from adjacent staffs, the stars and stripes should be hoisted first and lowered last.



When carried in a procession with the Ohio flag,
or any state flag, the flag of the United States
should be on the marching right.

The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day.

When a number of state flags are grouped and displayed from staffs with our national flag, the United States flag should be at the center or at the highest point of the group.



The flag should not be displayed on a float in a parade except from a staff.

When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size.

The flag should be displayed in or near every polling place on Election Days.



Ohio is the only state to have a swallow-tailed burgee, unlike the regular rectangular shape.

The flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides, or back of a vehicle or of a railroad train or boat. When the flag is displayed on a motorcar, the staff shall be fixed firmly to the chassis or clamped to the right fender.



When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the left, that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window, the union should be uppermost and left to the observer in the street.



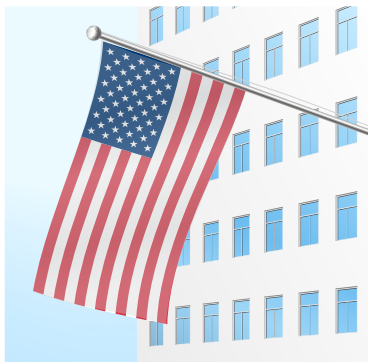
When displayed with another flag in a crossed-staff formation, the American flag should be on the observer's left and its staff should be in front of that of the other flag.



When used on a speaker's platform, the flag, if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker. When displayed from a staff in public, the flag of the United States of America should hold the position of superior prominence and any other flag that is being displayed should be placed to the right of the speaker, when viewed by the audience.



When the flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it 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.



When the flag of the United States is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from a windowsill, balcony, or front of a building, the union of the flag should be placed at the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff.

The flag of the United States should be at the center and the highest point of the group when a number of state flags, locality flags, or society pennants are grouped.



When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace.

When the flag is used to cover a casket, it should be placed that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder. The flag should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground.

The flag should form a distinctive feature of the ceremony of unveiling a statue or monument, but it should never be used as a covering for the statue or monument.

When the flag is suspended across a corridor or lobby in a building with only one main entrance, it should be suspended vertically with the union of the flag 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 and south. If there are entrances in more than two directions, the union should be to the east.



No other flag or pennant should be placed above or, if on the same level, to the right of the flag of the United States of America, except during church services conducted by naval chaplains at sea, where church pennant may be flown above the flag during church services for the personnel of the Navy. No person shall display the flag of the United Nations or any other national or international flag equal, above, or in a position of superior prominence or honor to, or in place of, the flag of the United States at any place within the United States or any Territory or possession thereof: Provided, that nothing in this section shall make unlawful the continuous of the practice heretofore followed of displaying the flag of the United Nations in a position of superior prominence or honor, and other national flags in positions of equal prominence or honor, with that of the flag of the United States at the headquarters of the United Nations.

**4 U.S.C. United States Code, 2011 Edition,
Title 4, Chapter 1, Section 7**

Respecting the Flags

The flag should never be displayed with the union down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.



The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water, or merchandise.

The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.

The flag should never be used as bedding, drapery, or worn as apparel. It should never be festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds, but always allowed to fall free. Bunting of blue, white, and red, always arranged with the blue above, the white in the middle, and the red below, should be used for covering a speaker's desk, draping the front of the platform, and for decoration in general.

The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used, or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.

The flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner. It should not be embroidered on articles such as cushions, handkerchiefs, or similar. The flag should never be printed or otherwise impressed upon paper napkins, boxes, or anything that is intended for temporary use and then disposal.

The flag should never be used as a covering for a ceiling.

Never place any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing of any nature on the flag.

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

No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen, and members of patriotic organizations. The flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing. Therefore, a lapel flag pin, should be worn on the left lapel near the heart.



Traditional flag etiquette prescribes that before an American flag is stored or presented, its handlers should twice fold it in half lengthwise; then, (from the end opposite the blue field) make a triangular fold, continuing to fold it in triangles until the other end is reached. This makes a triangular shape, reminiscent of a tricorner hat, with only the blue starred field showing on the outside. The process ultimately consists of 13 folds.

Folding the U.S. Flag

STEP 1



Fold the lower, striped section of the flag over the blue field.

STEP 2



Fold the lower edge to meet the top edge of the folded flag.

STEP 3



Begin a triangular fold by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to the top edge.

STEP 4



Turn the outer point inward, parallel with the top edge, to form a second triangle.

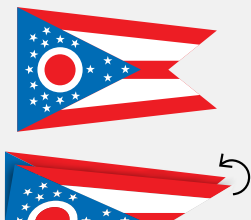
STEP 5



Continue until the final folds ensure that only the union (the blue portion with white stars) is showing and the open edges are folded in.

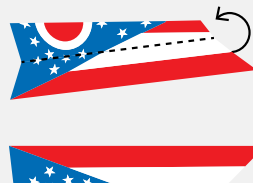
Folding the Ohio Burgee

STEP
1



Fold in half length-wise so the points are aligned.

STEP
2



Fold in half length-wise again, with the red disc facing down.

STEP
3



Fold pointed end back on itself.

STEP
4



Fold two inches of flag onto itself.

STEP
5



Repeat this fold 14 times, alternating to front and back of flag.

STEP
6



Wrap remaining length of flag around folds to make a rectangle.

Alex Weinstock, an Eagle Scout from Ohio's Junction City Troop 260, devised the method of folding the Ohio state flag as his Eagle project. The 17 folds symbolize that Ohio was the 17th state admitted to the Union. This procedure was signed into law by the governor in 2005.

Retiring the Flags

In 2021, the state legislature enacted Ohio Revised Code Section 5.015, creating voluntary ceremonial procedures for retiring the Ohio Burgee with respect and dignity. The procedures mirror those honors given while retiring United States flags.

Brandon Tolle, a Boy Scout from Columbia Station who was pursuing the rank of Eagle Scout, inspired the legislation.



The Flag code suggests that once a flag “has served its useful purpose, it should be destroyed, preferably by burning.” For individual citizens, this should be done discreetly so that the act of destruction is not perceived as a protest or desecration.

For those with concerns about burning the flag (whether environmental or safety-related), there are alternatives. If you don’t want to have your own ceremony, but still want to ensure that your flag will be properly retired, you can bring it to a flag retirement location, such as a VFW or American Legion, or others in your community. You can also send your flag in to be recycled. This is a particularly good option for petroleum-based materials like nylon, which can produce hazardous gases when burned.

Many Legion posts conduct disposal ceremonies on June 14 (Flag Day) each year. Such ceremonies create a particular dignified and solemn occasion for the disposal of unserviceable flags.



Additional Resources

The Flag Code

Title 4, Chapter 1, U.S. Code

Ohio Law

Ohio Revised Code 5.015 et seq.

Ohio Secretary of State

OhioSoS.gov

Boy Scouts of America Scoutbook

scouting.org/resources/scoutbook

U.S. Army Drill & Ceremony Guide

armypubs.army.mil

Liberty Flags (cover photo credit)

LibertyFlags.com

In 2002, in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the adoption of the Ohio flag, the Ohio General Assembly adopted a pledge to the Ohio flag for the first time in state history. which can be recited following the pledge of allegiance to the American flag.

“

**I salute the flag of the
state of Ohio and pledge
to the Buckeye State
respect and loyalty.**

”



Ohio Secretary of State

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