

CUSTOMS FOR DISPLAY

- ★ Display the flag from sunrise to sunset on buildings or flagstaves and at night, only if properly lighted.
- ★ The flag should be raised and lowered by hand and never raised furled.
- ★ Always hoist the flag briskly and lower it ceremoniously.
- ★ The flag may be displayed on any day, but especially on national holidays.
- ★ On Memorial Day, display the flag at half-mast until noon only; then hoist it to the top of the staff.
- ★ When carried, the flag should be held aloft, never flat or horizontal.
- ★ Salute a flag when it passes by in a parade, during the Pledge of Allegiance or National Anthem and in a ceremony raising or lowering it.
- ★ The flag should never be allowed to touch the ground or floor, nor brush against any objects, nor be used as drapery of any sort.
- ★ The flag should never be displayed with the union down except as a signal of distress in instances of extreme danger.
- ★ When a flag is no longer in a condition to be displayed, it should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

A message from
**Speaker of the Assembly
Carl E. Heastie**

Dear Friend,

The American flag has stood as a symbol of freedom and justice for more than 240 years. Through war and peace, the sight of the American flag has shown friend and foe alike that the spirit of democracy lives on.

I have prepared this brochure to help you better understand the history and significance of the American flag and its customs. As always, if you have any questions or comments about this or any other community issue, please contact my district office.

Sincerely,



Carl E. Heastie
Speaker of the Assembly

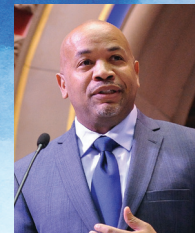
District Office:
250 Broadway, Suite 2301
New York, NY 10007
212-312-1400

Albany Office:
Room 932, LOB
Albany, NY 12248
518-455-3791

Email:
speaker@nyassembly.gov

Our AMERICAN FLAG

ITS HISTORY
AND CUSTOMS



courtesy of
**Speaker of the Assembly
Carl E. Heastie**

Our AMERICAN FLAG

The origins of the Stars and Stripes are deeply ingrained in American folklore. It is widely believed that Betsy Ross made the first American flag. However, various towns in colonial America have claimed to be its birthplace.

We know that on June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes as the official flag of the United States of America.

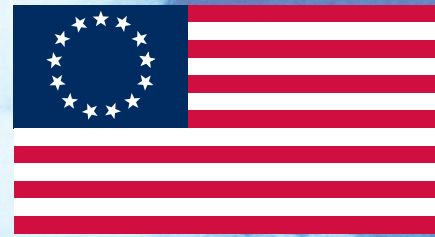
The Declaration of Independence made this resolution necessary. Previously, each colony had its own flag, which they flew on colonial vessels. England considered these armed vessels pirate ships and hanged their crews if they were captured.

The American flag was designed to represent the new union of the

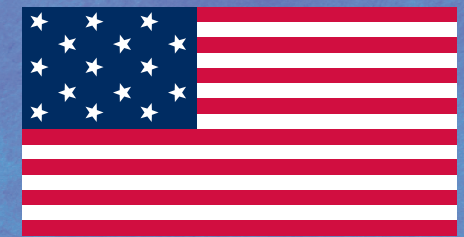
13 original states: it would have 13 stripes, alternating red and white, and 13 stars, white on a blue field.

One of the first flags had the stars arranged in a circle, based on the idea that all colonies were equal. The 13 stripes, resting side by side, symbolized the struggle for independence. The flag's color scheme also has symbolic meaning: red stands for valor and bravery, white signifies purity and innocence and blue represents vigilance, perseverance, and justice.

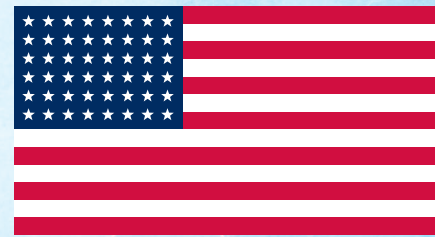
In 1818, after a few design changes, Congress decided to retain the flag's original 13 stripes and add new stars to reflect each new state that entered the union. The flag was last modified on July 4, 1960, when Hawaii was incorporated as a state.



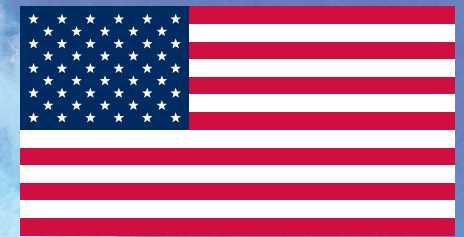
The "Betsy Ross" Flag
In use June 14, 1777 – May 1, 1795



The 15-Star, 15-Stripe "Star Spangled Banner" Flag
In use May 1, 1795 – July 3, 1818



The 48-Star Flag
In use July 4, 1912 – July 3, 1959



The 50-Star Flag
In use July 4, 1960 – present

IMPORTANT MOMENTS IN *Flag History*

