

# CUSTOMS FOR DISPLAY

- ★ Display the flag from sunrise to sunset on buildings or flagstaffs 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 245 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

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# *Our* AMERICAN FLAG

ITS HISTORY  
AND CUSTOMS



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

# Our AMERICAN FLAG

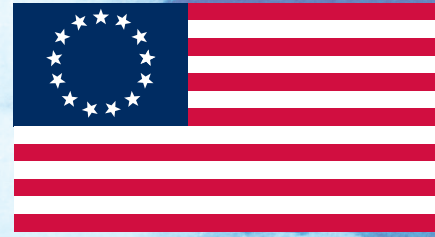
The origins of the Stars and Stripes are deeply ingrained in American folklore. It is widely believed that Betsy Ross made the first American flag. However, various towns in colonial America have claimed to be the birthplace of our flag.

Before the Declaration of Independence, each colony's vessels flew flags of their own design. On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress passed the Flag Resolution, adopting the Stars and Stripes as the official flag of the United States of America. Thirteen stripes, alternating red and white, and 13 stars, white in

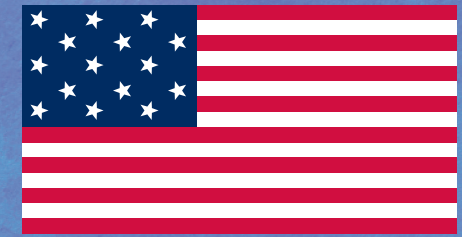
a blue field, represented the new union of the 13 original states.

The colors were significant: red symbolizes valor and bravery, white signifies purity and innocence and blue stands for vigilance, perseverance and justice.

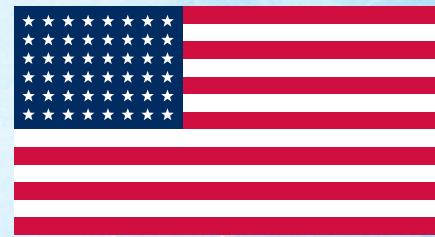
As the composition of the United States evolved over time, so too has our flag's design. In 1818, Congress decided to retain the flag's original 13 stripes and add new stars to reflect each new state that entered the union. The flag was last modified on July 4, 1960, when Hawaii was incorporated as a state.



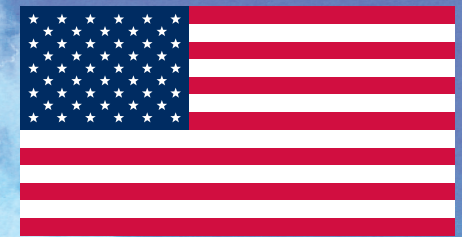
**The "Betsy Ross" Flag**  
In use June 14, 1777 – May 1, 1795



**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*

