



FLAG DAY & US ARMY BIRTHDAY

OLD AND GLORIOUS

You may be familiar with the United States Flag's nickname 'Old Glory' but there is an interesting origin to the moniker. American sea captain William Driver (1803-1886) always flew his personal American Flag high on his ship during his time at sea. Driver's mother had sewed him this flag and as he left port in 1824 it's claimed he dramatically unfurled the flag and proclaimed 'Behold Old Glory!', which was the first time the flag was referred to as such. Throughout his voyages to China, India, and the South Pacific, Old Glory flew. After one excursion from Salem, Driver's ship was the sole surviving vessel of six that departed that same day. When Driver retired to Nashville in 1837 he took that lucky flag with him. He flew it during all holidays, heedless of weather. The flag itself was gigantic, requiring a pulley to hoist it between his attic window and a nearby locust tree. The first iteration of Old Glory had only 24 stars (The National Flag at the time had 24 States, the most recent being Missouri in 1821), but his wife and daughters refurbished the flag in 1860, adding ten additional stars and adding a small white anchor to symbolize Driver's maritime career. When Tennessee seceded from the Union in 1861, Tennessee Governor Isham G. Harris sent soldiers to Driver's house to confiscate the flag. 'If you want my flag you'll have to take it over my dead body', Driver had said. He kept the flag hidden until the area was liberated in 1862 by the Union forces. Driver went to the State Capitol and presented his flag to the Union Brigadier General William "Bull" Nelson, who led the 6th Ohio Infantry. They then proceeded to hoist the flag on the Capitol flagstaff. Ohio would later adopt 'Old Glory' as their state slogan. Shortly before his death in 1886 Driver entrusted his prized flag to his daughter saying 'Mary Jane, this is my ship flag, Old Glory, it has been my constant companion. I love it as a mother loves her child. Cherish it as I have cherished it. The original Old Glory flag now rests at the rests at the [Smithsonian Museum](#) in Washington DC, having been donated by Driver's descendants (click the red text to learn more).

ANATOMY OF A FLAG

In 1955 Secretary of the Army Wilbur M. Brucker requested an Army specific flag to be used in joint operations and ceremonies. The Flag, featuring a blue war seal on a white backdrop was first unveiled to the public in June of 1956 at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, 181 years after the Army's founding.



Flag Day is the day we honor the official adoption of the Flag of the United States. In June of 1777 the Second Continental Congress's Resolution read "That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation." Having been modified 26 different times, today it stands as a note of reflection for the banner that provides shelter and faith for all who fly it and soars steadfast as a beacon of freedom and liberty for the whole world.

The drum here represents the message to the public on the army's purpose and will to serve the American People

The rattlesnake and 'This we'll defend' banner' is a message common on early colonial flags expressing readiness to defend the United States

This 'Phrygian Cap' is often referred to as the 'Cap of Liberty'


The flags and cords presented are a representation of the national color of the Revolutionary War and the American Flag.


These weapons, a sword, a spear, musket, and canon artillery with bombs are representative of the US Army's arsenal



The year that the Continental Army was founded

This Roman style cuirass symbolizes strength and stalwart defense

 The Blue represents truth, loyalty, vigilance, and perseverance.

 White represents valor and deeds that need to be honored and remembered.

 The red represents fortitude, courage and zeal.

On June 14th we recognize the founding of the US Army, the United State's first National Institution. The birth of our first Continental Army was a response to series of over reach and egregious Acts imposed on the thirteen colonies by the British Empire and enforced by Lt. Gen. Thomas Gage. Predating the first official army, the colonies had to rely on local militia organization. When the Massachusetts Provincial Congress began amassing arms and artillery 20 miles from Boston, Gage sent an expeditionary force to seize and destroy the stockpile. The defense by militia men of these caches signaled the start of the Revolutionary War in April of 1775.

DO YOU KNOW YOUR ARMED FORCES FLAGS?



Officially adopted on June 12th, 1956 by President Dwight E. Eisenhower's Executive Order 10670 the Army Flag was unveiled on the 181st anniversary of the Army's founding.



Adopted on April 24th, 1959, the US Navy Flag bears the official seal of the U.S. Department of the Navy. This flag is primarily used on land indoors and by ships at port. It is not used at sea or to identify naval installations.



The scarlet and gold Marine Corps flag was officially adopted in January of 1939. Sometimes called the marine 'standard' or 'battle color'. The indoor and parade versions are bordered by gold fringe while outdoor ones are plain.



Little confirmed about the origins of the Coast Guard standard. Alexander Hamilton is depicted flying a flag of similar design in an 1840 painting. Officially adopted in January of 1964, 'Semper Paratus' translates to 'Always Ready'.



President Harry S. Truman adopted the official Airforce flag in 1951. The flag bears the US Air Force crest and shield designed by Arthur E. Dubois. The stars represent the original 13 British colonies. The specific shade of color is called 'Ultramarine Blue'



The newest branch of the armed forces; this design has the 'Delta Wing' (the arrow shape in the center), surrounded by the globe, an elliptical orbit, the North Star, and a stellar cluster. The Roman Numerals are the Space Force's founding year; 2019.

FLAG DAY TRIVIA

- In 1950 it seemed inevitable that Alaska would end up joining the United States. Ohio Student, Bob Heft used his mother's sewing machine to modify the family's flag to have 50 stars. He turned in this flag for a history project at school, predicting that Hawaii would soon join as well. His History teacher was nonplussed. Heft mailed the flag to his local Congressman, Walter Moeller, who then presented the flag to President Eisenhower after both states DID join the Union. On July 4th 1960, Eisenhower presented the new flag alongside Heft who designed it to the whole nation. Heft had gotten a B- on his project.
- When flags are removed from the flagstaff it is not permitted for them to touch the ground or the floor and should be transported carefully. Carpets and Rug that bear the flag are considered taboo and are against the Flag Code. You can check out all the different rules and procedures outlined by the Flag Code [here](#).
- While the common story we hear is that Betsy Ross created the flag, most of the evidence is apocryphal. In 1870 her grandson, William Canby, held a press conference to announce that there was no proof of this. The story went that George Washington himself and two members of the congressional committee (Robert Morris & George Ross) to discuss what the flag should look like, but there is no corroborating evidence. Most modern historians credit New Jerseyan Francis Hopkinson as the creator of the first American Flag.
- There is a specific way one is supposed to fold an American Flag. You will need two people. Face one another, each holding a corner of the flag's shorter sides. Lift and fold the part that hangs on the bottom overtop the side with the blue field of stars. Fold the flag lengthwise next so the stars are visible on the outside. Make a triangular fold and bring one corner up to meet the edge. Continue to fold until all the triangle shows is the blue field of stars. Check out a video of the process [here!](#)

EVOLUTION OF THE US FLAG

1775-
1777



The 'Grand Union Flag', also, known as the Continental Colors, features the familiar 13 red & white stripes. It was similar to the British East India Company flag. It was retired in June of 1777.

1777-
1795



The iconic 'Betsy Ross' flag, representing a star for each of the 13 colonies. This flag was supposedly sewn by Betsy Ross in 1776.

1777



New Jersey's own Francis Hopkinson was a Naval Flag designer and a signatory of the Declaration of Independence. This is the first flag with the familiar star arrangement we see today.

1837



1863



The flags flown in different US territories & states were not always constant, given the breadth of the country and long time it took to communicate across long distances. As more and more states were added to the flag, designs would often become atypical.

1959



This is the current design, Hawaii being the final state added. It can be difficult to imagine given how ubiquitous the design is today, but you may know someone who lived when the flag was only 48 stars!