

## COLOR GUARD COMMANDER LESSONS TO SHARE WITH TROOP

The Color Guard Commander should choose lessons to share with the troop periodically. It is best to choose a lesson that has not been covered for a while or that the Commander has noticed as needing a refresher.

**What does the command "Two" mean?**

When we say "Two" we are referring to Position Two, still at attention, with hands at sides. (Position One is a stance at attention with either a salute or Scout sign displayed.) Sometimes Scouts mistake the "Two" command as meaning the troop is at ease. This is not the case.

**Why do we not add award ribbons or medals to the American flag like we can to our troop flag.**

We don't add ribbons, words, drawings, or alterations to the American flag. A lot of thought has been given to its design, and it is just as intended. We do sometimes add an eagle or other patriotic symbol to the top of the flagpole to honor the flag. If this is done, the eagle should always appear to fly upright and forward when the flag is carried.

**Why is the American flag in a certain position when paraded and posted?**

The American flag is given a place of honor compared to other flags. When paraded, it is on the right. When displayed, it is on its own right (the audience's left). This requires crossing flags to the other sides of the room when nearing the front. The American flag is crossed first or in front of the other flag. When flown on outdoor poles with other flags, it is flown on the center or highest pole.

**Why is the American flag folded into a triangle shape?**

The American flag is folded into a triangular shape to symbolize the tricorne hats worn by patriots during the Revolutionary War. These are the first Americans, who risked or sacrificed their lives for our freedoms.

**Why do those carrying and raising the flag not salute?**

The first duty of those carrying and raising the flag is to honor and protect the flag. While attending to those duties, they stand at attention but do not salute.

**Do we only salute when in uniform?**

Yes, but remember that a Class B or activity uniform, like worn at summer camp, is also a uniform of our organization. Therefore, we still salute when raising a flag while on a campout or at summer camp.

**Do Scouts remove their hat when flags are paraded?**

Scouts may continue to wear official BSA or troop hats that are part of the uniform. No other head coverings are worn when parading, saluting, or honoring the flag.

**Do we salute historical U.S. flags if they are displayed?**

The only historical flag it is appropriate to salute is the Star-Spangled Banner, the flag that was flying at Fort McHenry at the time the national anthem was written. All other historical flags have been decommissioned and are, therefore, not saluted.

**What do the colors of the American flag represent?**

According to the book 'Our Flag' published by the U.S. House of Representatives in 1977, white signifies purity and innocence, red signifies hardiness and valor, and blue signifies vigilance, perseverance, and justice.

**Why were stars and stripes chosen to adorn the American flag?**

According to the book 'Our Flag' published by the U.S. House of Representatives in 1977, the star is a symbol of the heavens and the divine goal to which man has aspired from time immemorial, and the stripe is symbolic of the rays of light emanating from the sun.

**What does it mean when a flag is flying at half-staff?**

The American flag is flown at half-staff by order of the President as an indication that the nation is mourning. This is the case in the event of the death of a principal government official, and sometimes to acknowledge other events of significant tragedy and loss. If the American flag is lowered to half-staff, other flags displayed nearby are also moved to a level lower than the American flag.

**Why do flags on the sleeves of BSA uniforms fly in the opposite direction of those on military uniforms?**

Following the guidelines of the United States Flag Code, the flag patch on a Scout uniform shirt sleeve is placed with the blue field to the flag's own right. Flag patches on military uniforms fall under Department of the Army regulations stating that "When worn on the right sleeve, it is considered proper to reverse the design so that the union is at the observer's right to suggest that the flag is flying in the breeze as the wearer moves forward."