

WHY THE AMERICAN FLAG IS FOLDED 13 TIMES

Have you ever noticed on TV or at military funerals that the honor guards pays meticulous attention to correctly folding the American flag 13 times?

I've known how the 21 gun salute was determined (adding the individual digits of 1776), but only recently learned why the flag was folded 13 times when it is lowered or when it is folded and handed to the widow at the burial of a veteran.

HERE IT IS:

The first fold of our flag is a symbol of life.

The second fold is a symbol of our belief in eternal life.

The third fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veterans departing our ranks who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.

The fourth fold represents our weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in time of war for His divine guidance.

The fifth fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our Country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but it is still our country, right or wrong."

The sixth fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States Of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.

The seventh fold is a tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they are found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

The eighth fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor mother, for whom it flies on Mother's Day.

The ninth fold is a tribute to womanhood; for it has been through their faith, their love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great has been molded.

The tenth fold is a tribute to the father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since they were first born.

The eleventh fold, in the eyes of a Hebrew citizen represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon, and glorifies in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The twelfth fold, in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit.

When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost reminding us of our nation's motto, "In God We Trust". After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington, and the sailors and marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for us the rights, privileges, and freedoms we enjoy today. There are some traditions and ways of doing things which have deep meaning. You will see many flags folded in the coming weeks, and now you will know why.