

FOLDING THE AMERICAN FLAG

At funerals for firefighters, the Honor Guard pays meticulous attention to correctly folding the American flag 12 times. Here's what each fold symbolizes:

1. The first fold in our flag symbolizes life.
2. The second fold is a symbol of our belief in eternal life.
3. 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.
4. 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 times of war for His divine guidance.
5. The fifth fold is a tribute to our country and the loyalty we owe our country in good times and bad.
6. The sixth fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with the 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.
7. 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 of her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.
8. The eighth fold is a tribute to the one 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. The eleventh fold, in the eyes of the 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.
12. The twelfth fold, in the eyes of the Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

After the flag is folded completely and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat. This reminds 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 that we enjoy today.

The colors presented in our great flag also have meaning. The red stands for hardiness and valor. The white symbolized hope, purity and innocence. The blue stands for reverence to God, loyalty, vigilance, perseverance and justice.