

United States Military Flags



Army Flag: With a white background and a blue rendering of the official seal of the US Army, this military flag is classic and recognizable. The seal on the US Army flag goes back to the American Revolution, when it was used to authenticate documents from what was then called the War Office. It bears the year of the Army's establishment in 1775 and a rattlesnake (hearkening back to the "Don't Tread on Me" rattlesnake) holding a scroll with the words "This We'll Defend" in its mouth. Also included in the seal are a Revolutionary War American Flag, a Roman cuirass, a musket, a cannon, a snake drum, mortar and two bomb shells. The US Army flag is to be displayed first of the American Services Flags in honor of its precedence in creation (it was the first service branch created by the United States Government).



Marine Flag: The US Marine Flag is second in order of precedence. In full parade form, this flag is visually stunning. It is a scarlet flag with the Corps Emblem in gray and gold, and bordered by a gold fringe. Battle streamers (long strips that commemorate achievements in military encounters) adorn the top, and the flag must be carried by the Color Sergeant, a man stipulated to be at least 6 foot 4 inches tall (he also serves as the bearer of the Flag of the President of the United States at state dinners). The Corps emblem bears an eagle on a globe before an anchor, and the Latin Inscription "Semper Fidelis"--Always Faithful.



Navy Flag: This dark navy blue flag features a yellow banner with the words "United States Navy" written below the seal of the Department of the Navy. The seal of the Navy was created in 1951 and placed on the flag two years later. It portrays an eagle with wings outstretched, seemingly defending a ship at sea. Similar to the other branches of the military, the Navy also utilizes battle streamers to signify their major battles. There are 28 streamers that date from the Revolutionary War through Desert Storm. The Navy flag is third in order of precedence on occasions of public flag displays.



Air Force Flag: Fourth in ceremonial order, this flag features the Air Force coat of arms on a blue background. It is surrounded by 13 white stars that represent the thirteen original colonies and above the coat of arms is the Air Force crest, a bald eagle whose wings frame three stars to represent the three branches of the National Defense establishment, which are the Army, Air Force and Navy. This flag was approved in 1951 and has not changed since.



Coast Guard Flag: Featuring a white background with the Great Seal of the United States, the banner reads "United States Coast Guard", and above are the words "Semper Paratus"--Always Ready. It also incorporates the date, 1790, which is in fact the year that the predecessor of the Coast Guard, the Revenue Cutter Service, was founded. The Coast Guard was officially formed in 1915 when the Revenue Cutter Service merged with the US Life Saving Service. The Coast Guard flag is normally displayed 5th in the line of precedence following the Air Force Flag. During wartime however, the Coast Guard falls under the Department of Defense and would therefore be move ahead of the Air Force Flag.

*The POW/MIA flag, Vietnam Veterans Flag and *Merchant Marine Flag would follow the five branch flags in any order. There is no specific order for these flags as dictated by the Institute of Heraldry.*

