

Flag Ceremonies on a Stage

Supplies You'll Need

- Decide what flags you will be using. This could include the US Flag, State Flag, Municipal Flag, Girl Scout Flags etc.
- Check that all flags are attached to poles and that the US Flag will stand taller than all other flags when posted.
- Check that all flags have a flag stand that they fit into. Set these up on the stage ahead of time. See US Flag Code section below for placement details.
- Set a uniform. Be sure to let participants know what they need and be prepared to provide any special items.
 - For troop meetings, this might just mean their vest of sash.
 - For community events, parades, or ceremonies, full uniform is recommended, meaning: khaki bottoms, white shirt, and vest/tunic/sash. Full uniform for a flag ceremony also includes white gloves, which you will likely need to supply.
 - For ceremonies in informal locations, like camp, where the girls are not going to be in any uniform, girls wear red sashes. This is to give a sense of uniform when girls would not be wearing their Girl Scout vest or sash.

Role of the Girls

Girls have different roles to fill during the ceremony. Each girl needs to know what she is responsible for doing, and what her cues are. You'll want to save time to practice ahead of time.

The **color bearer** (or flag bearer) is the person who carries the flag. There is one color bearer for each flag used in the ceremony. If using a red sash, wear it over their right shoulder and tied in a square knot on the left hip.

The **color guard** is a team that guards the flags. Any even number of guards may be used, but usually four or six girls are sufficient. If using a red sash, wear around the waist and tied in a square knot on the left hip.

The **Girl Scout in charge** (or caller) is a designated Girl Scout who announces or calls each part of the ceremony.

Reminders from the US Flag Code

Display of the American flag is governed by law to ensure that it will be treated with the respect due the flag of a great nation. This is known as the United States Flag Code. Some of the rules most useful for Girl Scouts posting the flags on stage are:

- When the flags are posted in stands or raised on a pole, the American flag is always kept higher than other flags.
- The American flag is placed in its stand after other flags are lowered into their standards.
- When it's time to retire the colors, the American flag is taken out of its stand first.
- The flag, when carried in a procession with other flags, should be either on the marching right or, if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.
- The flag should never be allowed to touch anything beneath it, nor should it ever be carried flat or horizontally—always aloft and free.
- When displayed on a stage where a speaker will be or action is taking place, the flag is placed on the speaker's right as they look out to the audience. All other flags can be displayed on the speaker's left.

**Additional Instructions for Opening & Closing Flag Ceremonies
on next pages**

Opening Flag Ceremony on a Stage

Caller says:	Color Bearer Actions	Color Guard Actions	Audience Actions
Girl Scouts, attention.	Holding their flag, standing still and ready	Standing still and ready behind their color bearer	Stands, quiets, is ready for the ceremony to begin. Remove any non-religious headwear at this time.
Color guard, advance.	Walks to stand near their flag stand.	Follows their color bearer to the flag stand.	As the flag passes them, they should place their hand on their heart. Remove any non-religious headwear at this time.
Color guard, post the colors.	Color bearer places the flagpole into the stand. Be sure the US flag is posted last, if other flags are also in the ceremony.	Standing next to their color bearer.	
Color guard, honor your flag.	Places her hand on her heart.	Places her hand on her heart.	
Please join us in saying the Pledge of Allegiance. (Proceed to lead the Pledge.)	Does not recite. Stands quietly.	Does not recite. Stands quietly.	With hand over their heart, recite the Pledge with the caller.
Please join us in saying the Girl Scout Promise. (Proceed to lead the Promise.)	Does not recite. Stands quietly.	Does not recite. Stands quietly.	Makes the Girl Scout Sign, recites the Promise with the caller.
Color guard, dismissed	Returns and walks back the way they came.	Follow the color bearer back the way they came.	
Girl Scouts, dismissed	Rejoins the audience	Rejoins the audience	The audience can be at ease and go off to their activities or wait for additional instructions.

Closing Flag Ceremony on a Stage

Caller says:	Color Bearer Actions	Color Guard Actions	Audience Actions
Girl Scouts, attention.	Standing still and ready	Standing still and ready behind their color bearer	Stands, quiets, is ready for the ceremony to begin. They should remove all non-religious headwear.
Color guard, advance.	Walks to stand near their flag stand.	Follows their color bearer to the flag stand.	
Color guard, honor your flag.	Places her hand on her heart for a moment.	Places her hand on her heart for a moment.	
Color guard, retire the colors.	Color bearer remove the flagpole from the stand. Be sure the US flag is removed first, if other flags are also in the ceremony.	Standing behind their color bearer.	Audience should place their hand over their heart when the flag is removed from the stand.
Color guard, dismissed	Returns and walks back the way they came, carrying their flag.	Follow the color bearer back the way they came.	The audience can remove their hand from their heart once the flag has passed them.
Girl Scouts, dismissed	Return the flag to it's safe-keeping location or to an adult. Then rejoins the audience.	Rejoins the audience	The audience can be at ease and go off to their activities or wait for additional instructions.