

Clements Buckaroos

Flag Protocol



March 2023

A Clements Buckaroos queen represents the Clements Buckaroos organization at all times while “on duty” at parades, rodeos or other events, regardless of where the event is held. While representing the Clements Buckaroos, a queen is expected to look the part, display good conduct at all times, refrain from foul language, and generally speaking, be friends with the world. Now, on to flag carrying protocol...

In 1923, the US National Flag Code was created. The code became **Public Law (94-344)** in 1942, and became the US Flag Code we know today. The **US Flag Code (Title 4, US Code, Chapter 1)** specifies ways to display and respect the flag of the United States. The code sections refer to all parades / processions, as well as everyday household and business display of the flag, and including the retirement requirements of worn or tattered flags.



Below are some protocols and guidelines for flag carrying. The majority are laws from the US Flag Code. Others have been developed over the years to advise flag carriers of the basic expectations and requirements while carrying a flag:

- * On horseback, flags are carried on the rider’s right side. Riders should use a flag boot (flag carrier) to hold the bottom of the flag pole. Secure the flag boot to the fender above the stirrup.
- * An experienced flag carrier should carry the US flag to ensure it is not dropped.
- * If you must drop the flag, remember your safety comes first! The world will not end if you accidentally drop the flag. Stay composed, pick it up as quickly as possible, shake off any excess dirt, and resume with your ride as though it never happened!

* If in an even, horizontal line of horses (riding abreast, as in a parade) with multiple flags, the US flag should be on the marching right (rider’s far right side) of all other flags in the line. The far right (rider’s view) is considered a position of prominence. **OR...** The US flag carrier may ride in front and center of other flag carriers. At no time may another rider in the group be in front of the American flag. No other flag or pennant should be placed above or to the right of, the US flag.



* In a parade, the order of flags from the rider’s right, as applicable: US flag (Old Glory), POW-MIA flag, State flag, Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Clements Buckaroos club flag, other sponsor flags or pennants. In times of war only, the Coast Guard flag flies before the Air Force flag. If the flags are distributed over multiple ‘lines’ of horses, flag order always starts to the rider’s far right in each line and continues to the rider’s left.

* All flags should enter and leave the arena in proper order of precedence. Even if entrance is 'backwards', exit must always follow proper protocol order, as specified above (1- National, 2- State, 3- Military in order of creation date, and 4- Other). The US flag should always be the first to leave the arena.

* The US flag should be taller and larger than all other flags in the group. It is acceptable to be the same height or size as other flags, but never shorter or smaller. Generally on horseback, the American flag is on a 9' or 10' pole (usually 4'x6' flag with eagle topper), and all other flags use an 8' pole (usually 3'x5' flag with various toppers, if desired). Shorter poles may create a safety issue when the wind blows the flag across the rider's face and obstructs the rider's view. Make sure the eagle topper (finial) faces forward; and if using a flat spear topper, it should 'cut the wind'. Flagpoles may be marked to help line up the topper.



* **Never** back up with the US flag. The American flag retreats from no one. You can circle or turn around with the US flag, but you must **never** back up.

* During a parade, all flags are held straight up, except... All non-US flags should dip in deference to the US flag when stopped, at rest, or during the national anthem. Also, when passing the announcer's stand at a parade, all non-US flags in your group should dip in deference to the US flag at the moment you are at and passing the announcer's stand. Elbow bent and flag straight up for the US flag, while arms are fully extended to dip all other flags. All non-US flags are dipped forward, even if the US flag is alongside on the rider's far right. The US flag must always be shown respect.



* Never dip the US flag, not even during the national anthem. The US flag stays straight up at all times. If you have to go under a gateway and must tip the US flag to get under, you should tip the top of the flagpole back as it goes under the gateway. Tipping the US flag forward is seen as dipping the flag, which is not allowed. Exception: It may only be dipped by a ship ensign responding to a salute from a ship of a foreign nation.

* Never let the flag touch the ground, the floor, water, merchandise, or anything else beneath it.

* All flags should be allowed to hang freely.

* Flags should be clean, neat, and in good condition before using.

* When multiple horses are riding abreast, a non-flag carrier may ride on the outsides of the flag line. It is allowed to have a 'guard' on each side.

* When done using, the flag may be wrapped carefully and neatly around its flag pole. Most poles unscrew in the middle for easier storage and transporting.

* Parade flags often use sleeved (indoor) flags because of the neat appearance, but grommet (outdoor) flags may also be used.



* Staffs (poles and finials/toppers) should always be upright and not leaning. Be sure to always face the eagle on the US flag forward.

* When displayed on a float, the US flag should be straight on a pole and high enough to not touch anything beneath it, or suspended so it falls free.

* It is recommended that you do not wear a flag shirt when carrying a flag, unless all in the group are doing so. It takes attention away from the flag. It is recommended for the US flag carrier to wear a solid red, white or blue shirt. Feel free to place patriotic tack on your horse, if desired.

* Remember to smile and enjoy the moment!! If you are not carrying a flag, remember to wave to the crowd (queen wave).

* Plan to always bring a flag boot with you and your horse to events, even if you are not bringing a flag. You never know when someone has a flag for you to carry. Your flag boot should be able to accommodate up to a 1 1/4" pole. Flag pole sizes range from 1" to 1 1/4" diameter.



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#### Other Flag Facts:

\* When the initial (first) US flag is passing in a parade or in review, all persons present in uniform should render the military salute. Members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may give the military salute. All other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, or if applicable, men should remove any non-religious headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, with the right hand being over the heart. Ladies may remove headwear, if desired, but are not required. Those mounted on horses do not remove their hats. Citizens of other countries present should stand at attention. All such conduct toward the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag is passing.

\* When displayed horizontally or vertically, the blue (union) portion of the flag must be on the viewer's left, with the stars and stripes to the right.

\* Never display the flag upside down. It should always be displayed upright and free. An upside down flag (the blue union down) represents distress / emergency.

\* The US flag should flow freely in the wind or in a lobby with a passing breeze as people walk by. It is not to be 'held captive' by metal arm spreaders.

\* If flags are displayed behind a speaker, the US flag should be on the audience's far left (speaker's right), with other flags on the opposite side.

\* Service flags are always displayed in order of service precedence: Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard. (Reiterating from above. It's important!)

\* It is the universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and stationary flagstaffs in the open. However, the flag may be displayed 24 hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness, and may be displayed during inclement weather if made of weatherproof fabric.

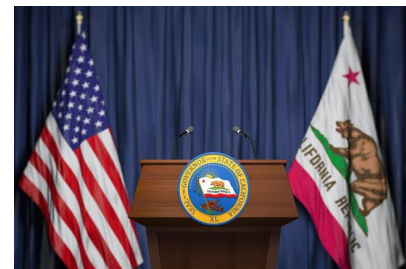
\* If not on a pole, it is proper to fold the US flag according to protocol before storing.

\* Worn or tattered flags may only be destroyed in a dignified manner, preferably by burning. It may also be buried in a box, as long as the flag itself never comes in contact with the ground. Some state and county offices, police stations, and Veterans of Foreign Wars buildings have disposal boxes. Various organizations, such as American Legions, VFW's, and boy scout and girl scout troops, regularly collect flags and hold "flag retirement" ceremonies.



\* The US flag shall be thirteen horizontal stripes, alternate red and white (stripes representing the original 13 colonies); and the canton shall be a blue union with a white star for each state (50 stars for 50 states). The white stripes represent purity; the red stripes represent valor and hardiness; and the blue union represents vigilance, perseverance and justice. There are 7 red stripes alternating with 6 white stripes. A red stripe is on the top and bottom.

\* Fun fact: At the Olympics parade, every nation's flag dips for the host country's governing officials, all except for the US flag. The US flag does not dip for anyone or anything. The US Flag Code prohibits it (excepting by a ship ensign responding to a salute from a ship of a foreign nation, as mentioned above).



### Recommended Sources:

<https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title4/chapter1&edition=prelim>

<https://www.military.com/flag-day/us-flag-code.html#:~:text=The%20flag%20should%20never%20touch,apparel%2C%20bedding%2C%20or%20drapery.>

[https://californiastatehorsemen.org/Drill\\_Team/manual/FLAG-PROTOCOL.pdf](https://californiastatehorsemen.org/Drill_Team/manual/FLAG-PROTOCOL.pdf)

<https://www.vfw.org/community/flag-etiquette>

<https://www.americanflags.com/blog/post/parade-flag-etiquette>

<https://www.ushistory.org/betsy/faq.htm>

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