

## WHY THE AMERICAN FLAG IS FOLDED 13 TIMES

Here is the meaning of each fold:

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 in the defense of our country and to attain peace throughout the world.

The fourth fold represents our weaker nature. We turn to God in times of peace, as well as in times of war, for divine guidance.

The fifth fold is made as a tribute to our country. To paraphrase 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 represents where our hearts lie. It is with our hearts that we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of American, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The seventh fold is made in tribute to our armed forces. It is these brave men and women who protect our country against her enemies, foreign or domestic.

The eighth fold is in honor of mothers, for whom the flag flies on Mother's Day.

The ninth fold is a tribute to womanhood. The faith, love, loyalty, and devotion of women helped to mold the character of countless men and women who have made this nation great.

The tenth fold is a tribute to fathers. They, too, have given their sons and daughters for the defense of our country.

The eleventh fold represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon, glorifying the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The twelfth fold represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

The thirteenth fold brings the stars uppermost, reminding us of our nation's motto, "In God We Trust."

The flag of the United States of America is ceremoniously folded 13 times when lowered or handed to the next of kin at the burial of a veteran.

When our flag is completely folded, it takes on the appearance of a tri-corner hat, reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington, the sailors and marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, and all who followed in the U.S. armed forces. They have preserved the rights, privileges, and freedoms we enjoy and celebrate today.

The next time you observe a flag ceremony honoring someone who has served our country in the armed forces, the police department or fire department, keep in mind all the important reasons behind each and every fold. And remember those who sacrificed so much for us by honoring our flag and our country.

**Source:** A folded card handed out on Memorial Day 2006 in Rochester, MI compliments of John Garfield, State Representative – 45<sup>th</sup> District. [johngarfield@house.mi.gov](mailto:johngarfield@house.mi.gov)