

FLAG DAY

June 14

“We take the stars from heaven, the red from our mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity, representing our liberty.”

—George Washington, attributed

“Resolved, that the flag of the thirteen United States shall be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union be thirteen stars, white on a blue field, representing a new constellation.”

—John Adams, June 14, 1777, at a meeting of the Continental Congress in Philadelphia

“The flag of the United States has not been created by rhetorical sentences in declarations of independence and in bills of rights. It has been created by the experience of a great people, and nothing is written upon it that has not been written by their life. It is the embodiment, not of a sentiment, but of a history.”

—John Adams, June 14, 1777, at a meeting of the Continental Congress in Philadelphia

O R I G I N

The United States of America celebrates its birthday annually on the fourth of July. Although not as well known or widely celebrated, Flag Day specifically honors the American Flag. What we now call “Flag Day” is believed to have first originated in 1885 in a public school in Fredonia, Wisconsin, when school teacher BJ Cigrand organized a group of students to observe June 14th (the anniversary of the official adoption of The Stars and Stripes in 1777) as “Flag Birthday.” In the following years Cigrand (now known as the “Father of Flag Day”) continued to promote June 14th as “Flag Birthday” or “Flag Day,” and in time other schools, communities, and states created their own ceremonies and activities to honor the American Flag.

After decades of state and local celebrations, Flag Day was officially declared on May 30, 1916 by President Woodrow Wilson, who issued a presidential proclamation establishing Flag Day to be observed on June 14th, in commemoration of the Flag Resolution of 1777. This holiday was celebrated in many communities, but it wasn't until August 3rd, 1949, that President Truman signed an Act of Congress appointing June 14th of each year as National Flag Day. However, it is not a federal holiday, and is only an official holiday in one state – Pennsylvania, where, according to legend, the first American flag was created by seamstress Betsy Ross. Today, many Americans celebrate Flag Day by displaying the American Flag in front of their homes and businesses, and many cities and towns hold festivals and parades to honor the American Flag.

SONGS & POEMS

The American Flag

By Joseph Rodman Drake

This is the most famous piece by poet Joseph Rodman Drake and was published on May 29, 1819, in the New York Evening Post. It almost instantly put Drake in the highest rank of American poets at the time. The following is just a part of the poem. The full version is [here](#).

When Freedom, from her mountain height,
Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night,
And set the stars of glory there;
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldrick of the skies,
And striped its pure, celestial white
With streakings of the morning light;
Then, from his mansion in the sun,
She called her eagle bearer down,
And gave into his mighty hand,
The symbol of her chosen land.

Majestic monarch of the cloud!
Who rear'st aloft thy regal form,
To hear the tempest-trumpings loud,
And see the lightning-lances driven
When strive the warriors of the storm,
And rolls the thunder-drum of heaven—
Child of the sun! to thee 't is given
To guard the banner of the free,
To hover in the sulphur smoke,
To ward away the battle-stroke,
And bid its blendings shine afar,
Like rainbows on the cloud of war,
The harbingers of victory! [...]

Flag of the free heart's hope and home,
By angel hands to valor given;
Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in heaven.
Forever float that standard sheet!
Where breathes the foe but falls before us,
With Freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And Freedom's banner streaming o'er us?

The Star Spangled Banner

Composed in 1814 by Francis Scott Key

Full lyrics can be found [here](#)

O say can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?



This is the original 15-star, 15-stripe banner flag that inspired Francis Scott as it flew over Fort McHenry in the Battle of Baltimore in the War of 1812.

You're a Grand Old Flag

By George M. Cohan

You're a grand old flag,
You're a high flying flag
And forever in peace may you wave.
You're the emblem of
The land I love.
The home of the free and the brave.
Ev'ry heart beats true
'neath the Red, White and Blue,
Where there's never a boast or brag.
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
Keep your eye on the grand old flag.

MORE SONGS & POEMS

Ragged Old Flag

By Johnny Cash. Check out this song [here](#).

I walked through a county courthouse square
On a park bench an old man was sitting there
I said, your old courthouse is kinda run down
He said, naw, it'll do for our little town
I said, your old flagpole has leaned a little bit
And that's a ragged old flag you got hanging on it

He said, have a seat, and I sat down
Is this the first time you've been to our little town?
I said, I think it is
He said, I don't like to brag
But we're kinda proud of that ragged old flag

You see, we got a little hole in that flag there when
Washington took it across the Delaware
And it got powder-burned the night Francis Scott Key
Sat watching it writing say can you see
And it got a bad rip in New Orleans
With Packingham and Jackson tuggin' at its seams

And it almost fell at the Alamo
Beside the Texas flag, but she waved on though
She got cut with a sword at Chancellorsville
And she got cut again at Shiloh Hill
There was Robert E. Lee, Beauregard, and Bragg
And the south wind blew hard on that ragged old flag

On Flanders field in World War one
She got a big hole from a Bertha gun
She turned blood red in World War Two
She hung limp and low a time or two
She was in Korea and Vietnam
She went where she was sent by Uncle Sam

She waved from our ships upon the Briny foam
And now they've about quit waving her back here at home
In her own good land here she's been abused
She's been burned, dishonored, denied, and refused

And the government for which she stands
Is scandalized throughout the land
And she's getting threadbare and wearing thin
But she's in good shape for the shape she's in
'Cause she's been through the fire before
And I believe she can take a whole lot more

So we raise her up every morning
We take her down every night
We don't let her touch the ground and we fold her up right
On second thought, I do like to brag
'Cause I'm mighty proud of that ragged old flag

"We identify the flag with almost everything we hold dear on earth. It represents our peace and security, our civil and political liberty, our freedom of religious worship, our family, our friends, our home. We see it in the great multitude of blessings, of rights and privileges that make up our country. But when we look at our flag and behold it emblazoned with all our rights, we must remember that it is equally a symbol of our duties. Every glory that we associate with it is the result of duty done. A yearly contemplation of our flag strengthens and purifies the national conscience."

—Calvin Coolidge



Check out the first US Flag stamp that was ever made—from 1957!

Did you know?

Flag Etiquette

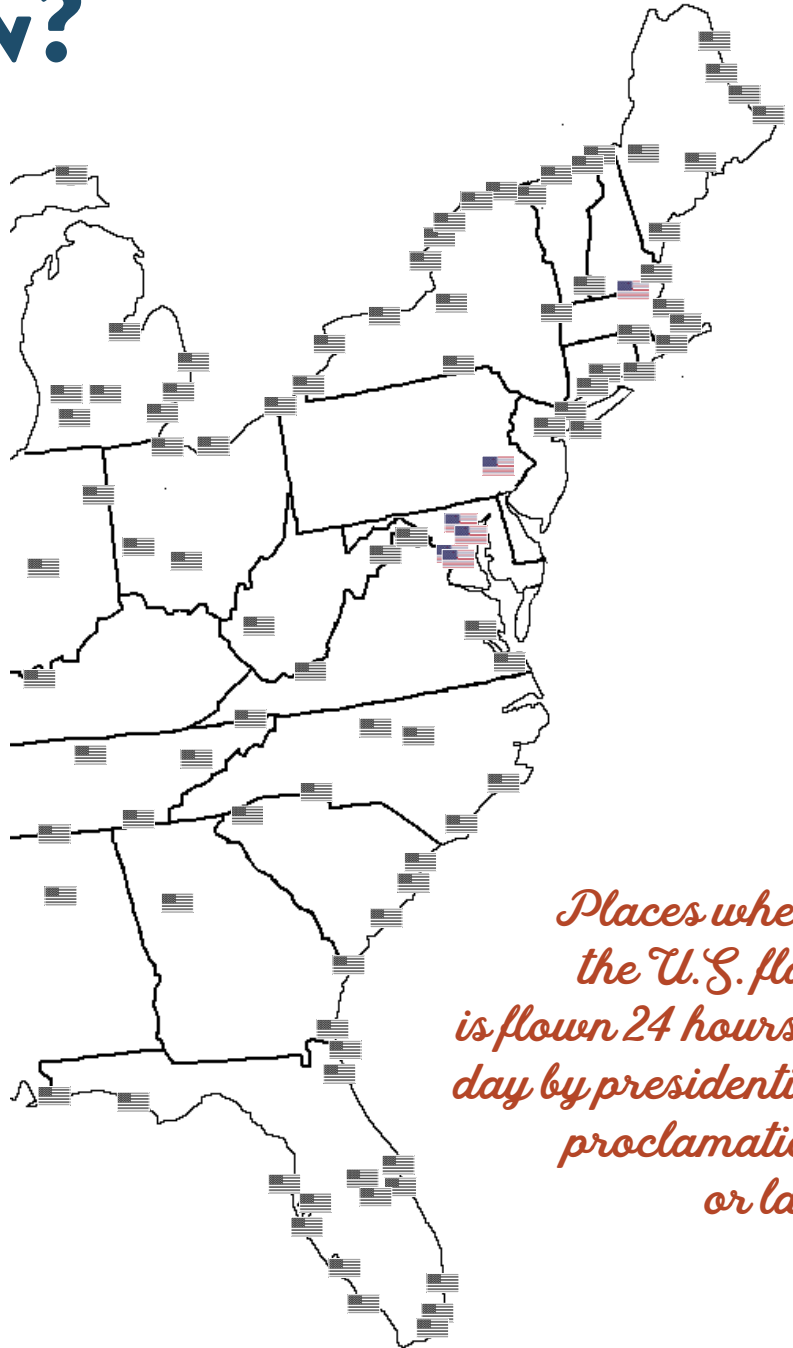
According to mrdonn.org, the following are not laws, they are examples of courteous flag etiquette:

1. Fly a U.S. flag above all other flags on a flagpole.
2. An upside-down flag is a sign of distress.
3. A flag at half-staff on land (or “half-mast” on a ship) is a sign of mourning.
4. When raising or lowering a flag half-mast, first raise the flag to the top of the flagpole.
5. It is unacceptable to lower a flag over a casket into a grave.
6. It is acceptable to display a flag at night if it is properly illuminated.
7. The blue portion of the flag will be visible on a properly folded flag.
8. Give a flag that’s beyond repair to your local American Legion Post—they will dispose of it properly.

Fun Facts

The first person to call the Flag “Old Glory” was a sea captain from Massachusetts named William Driver (1803-1886). As a large, 10x17 foot flag of the United States was hoisted to the masthead of his ship, he said, “I name thee Old Glory.”

Between 1777 and 1960 Congress passed several acts that changed the shape, design and arrangement of the flag and allowed stars and stripes to be added to reflect the admission of each new state.



*Places where
the U.S. flag
is flown 24 hours a
day by presidential
proclamation
or law*



On the Green of the Town of Lexington, Massachusetts



Grounds of the National Memorial Arch in Valley Forge State Park, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania



Fort McHenry, National Monument and Historic Shrine, Baltimore, Maryland



Flag House Square, Baltimore, Maryland



United States Marine Corps Memorial (Iwo Jima), Arlington, Virginia



The White House, Washington, D.C.



United States customs ports of entry



The United States Flag Code declares...

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag: “I 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,” should be rendered by standing at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. When not in uniform, men should remove any non-religious headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute. Members of the Armed Forces not in uniform and veterans may render the military salute in the manner provided for persons in uniform.

June 14th also holds great significance for the U.S. Army. Weeks after the Battles of Lexington and Concord began the American Revolution, Congress formally authorized the enlistment of soldiers to fight in what became known as the Continental Army. So June 14th is technically the birthday of the U.S. Army.

Flag Flying Holidays

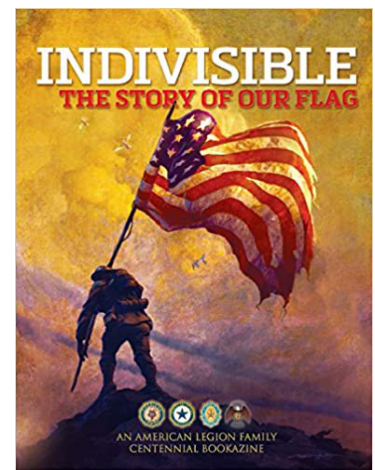
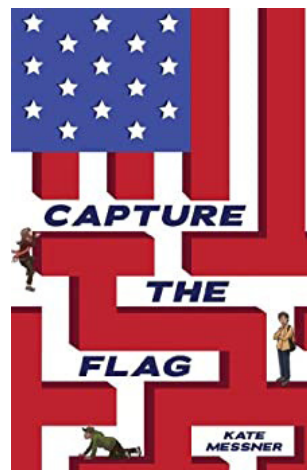
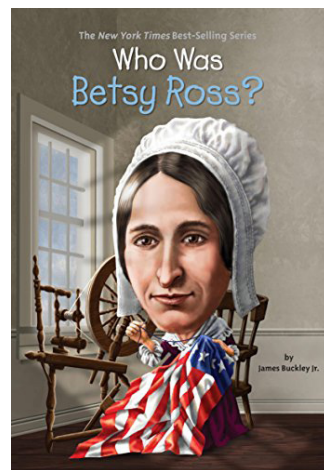
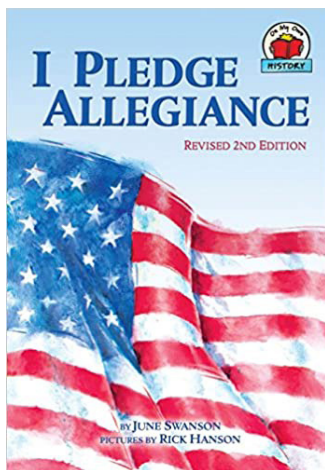
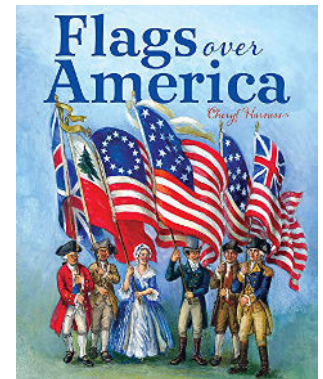
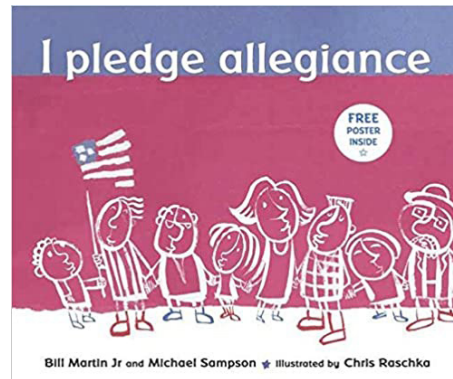
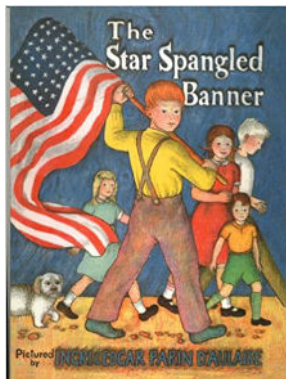
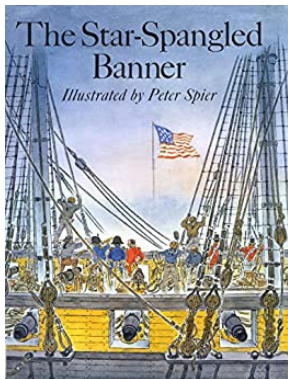
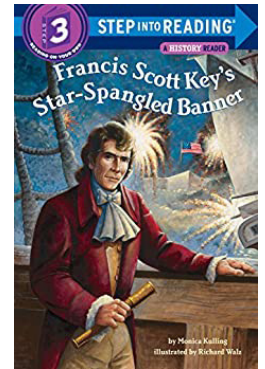
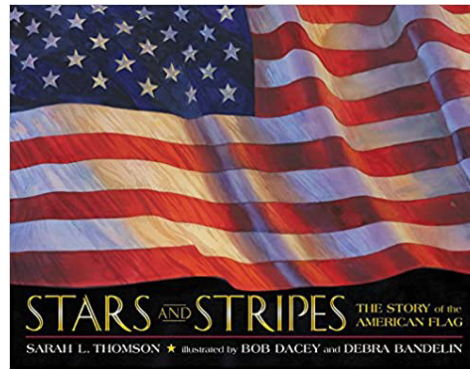
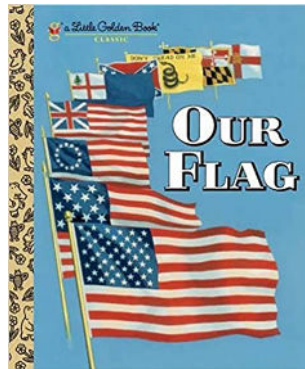
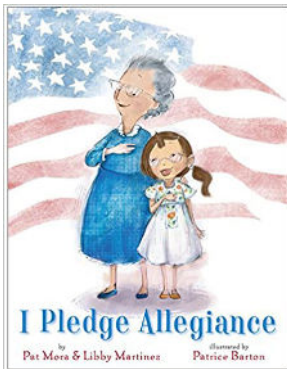
New Year’s Day (January 1)
Lincoln’s Birthday (February 12)
Washington’s Birthday (February 22)
V- Day, or Victory in Europe Day (May 8)
Armed Forces Day (third Saturday of May)
Memorial Day (last Monday of May)
Flag Day (June 14)
Independence Day (July 4)
Labor Day (first Monday in September)
Veterans’ Day (November 11)
Thanksgiving (fourth Thursday of November)
Pearl Harbor Day (December 7)
Christmas (December 25)
State Admission Day (varies)
Other days as proclaimed by the President

More Fun Facts

Today the flag consists of 13 horizontal stripes, seven red alternating with six white. The stripes represent the original 13 Colonies and the stars represent the 50 states of the Union. The colors of the flag are symbolic as well—red symbolizes hardiness and valor, white symbolizes purity and innocence, and blue represents vigilance, perseverance and justice.

The Pledge of Allegiance is an expression of allegiance to the U.S. Flag and the republic of the United States of America. Originally composed by Colonel George Balch in 1887, it was revised by Francis Bellamy in 1892, and formally adopted by Congress as the pledge in 1942. It was given the official name of The Pledge of Allegiance in 1945. On Flag Day 1954, the final change in the language was made when the words “under God” were added.

a small selection of books



SEE NEXT
PAGE FOR
DETAILS +
MORE

*parents +
educators:*

**PLEASE PREVIEW ALL MATERIALS BEFORE
SHARING WITH YOUR CHILD**

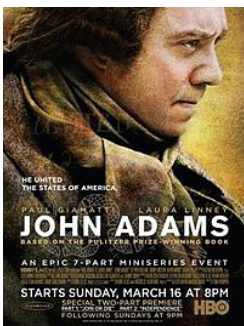
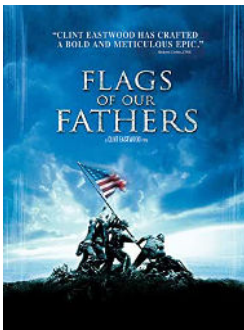
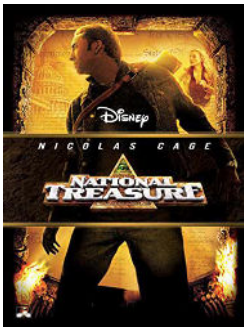
You are the best judge of what is appropriate for your child/ren and what they will enjoy. Try checking [goodreads.com](https://www.goodreads.com) for reviews.

a small selection of books

CONTINUED

TITLE	AUTHOR	LEVEL
<i>F is for Flag (Reading Railroad)</i>	Wendy Cheyette	PreK-K
<i>I Pledge Allegiance</i>	Lewison Pat Mora	PreK-Pri
<i>Our Flag (Golden Books)</i>	Carl Memling	PreK-Pri
<i>Flag Day (Rookie Read-About Holidays)</i>	Kelly Bennett	PreK-Pri
<i>Stars and Stripes: The Story of the American Flag</i>	Sarah L. Thompson, Bob Dacey, and Debra Bandelin	PreK-Pri
<i>Flag Day (First Step Nonfiction)</i>	Robin Nelson	PreK-Pri
<i>The Pledge of Allegiance</i>	Scholastic	PreK-Int
<i>Why Are There Stripes on the American Flag?</i>	Martha E.H. Rustad	K-Pri
<i>Our American Flag</i>	Mary Firestone	K-Pri
<i>Francis Scott Key's Star-Spangled Banner (Step into Reading)</i>	Monica Kulling	K-Pri
<i>The Boy Who Carried the Flag (We Both Read-Level 3)</i>	Jana Carson	K-Pri
<i>The Star-Spangled Banner</i>	Peter Spier	K-Int
<i>The Star-Spangled Banner</i>	Ingri & Edgar Parin D'Aulaire	K-Int
<i>I Pledge Allegiance</i>	Bill Martin, Jr. and Michael Sampson	Pri-Int
<i>I Pledge Allegiance (On My Own History)</i>	June Swanson	Pri-Int
<i>The Flag We Love</i>	Pam Munoz Ryan	Pri-Int
<i>Red, White, and Blue: The Story of the American Flag (Penguin Young Readers, Level 3)</i>	John Herman	Pri-Int
<i>Flags Over America: A Star-Spangled Story</i>	Cheryl Harness	Pri-LMS
<i>Betsy Ross: Designer of Our Flag (Childhood of Famous Americans)</i>	Ann Weil	Int-LMS
<i>Who Was Betsy Ross?</i>	James Buckley Jr.	Int-LMS
<i>Capture the Flag</i>	Kate Messner	Int-UMS
<i>Betsy Ross and the American Flag Graphic Novel</i>	Kay Melchisedech Olson	Int-UMS
<i>Indivisible: The Story of Our Flag Bookazine</i>	The American Legion	LMS and up

MOVIES + TELEVISION



- *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (Biography, Drama, Musical; NR; 1942)
- *Stars and Stripes Forever* (Biography, Comedy, Music; NR; 1952)
- *Johnny Tremain* (Adventure, Family, History; PG; 1957)
- *Rally 'Round the Flag, Boys!* (Comedy; NR; 1958)
- *Patton* (Biography, Drama, War; PG; 1970)
- *1776* (Drama, Family, History; PG; 1972)
- *Glory* (Biography, Drama, History; R; 1989)
- *D2: The Mighty Ducks* (Comedy, Family, Drama; PG; 1994)
- *Apollo 13* (Adventure, Drama, History; PG; 1995)
- *The Patriot* (Action, Drama, History; R; 2000)
- *National Treasure* (Action, Adventure, Family; PG; 2004)
- *Flags of Our Fathers* (Drama, History, War; R; 2006)
- *John Adams TV mini-series* (Biography, Drama, History; TV-14; 2008)
- *Captain America: The First Avenger* (Action, Adventure, Sci-Fi; PG-13; 2011)

parents + educators:

Please make your own determinations about age appropriate materials. Common Sense Media is a good online resource to see whether or not a movie is appropriate for your child.

One of the movies on our list, Apollo 13, is about the attempted 3rd mission to the moon that, due to machine malfunction, transformed into a saga about getting the 3-man crew back home. But don't forget: the first successful mission to the moon, Apollo 11, led to an American flag being planted on the lunar surface. It remains there to this day.



links

Arts and Crafts for multiple ages:

- [American Flag Pinwheels craft](#)
- [Mosaic American Flag made from Jellybeans](#)
- [Flag Day activities and crafts](#)
- [Flag Day Activities for kids](#)
- [30 American Flag crafts](#)
- [Flag Day activities and crafts from Enchanted Learning](#)
- [Flag Day for kids on Pinterest](#)

Multiple Ages

- [Fast Flag Facts–The video here gives all the facts and figures on “Old Glory”](#)
- [Guide to displaying the American Flag](#)
- [How to fold the American Flag](#)
- [Check out this Superflag! \(A giant sized American Flag\)](#)
- [Complete lyrics to The Star Spangled Banner](#)
- [The Star-Spangled banner interactive website](#)
- [Virtual tour of the Betsy Ross house](#)
- [Flag Day cake](#)
- [Or find a fancier version here](#)
- [The Story Behind The Star Spangled Banner – from the Smithsonian](#)
- [Removing 1.7 Million Stitches in Under a Year–This video from the Smithsonian is about preserving the Star-Spangled Banner flag](#)
- [The U.S. Flag Code](#)
- [Glossary of flag terms](#)
- [How to purchase a U.S. Flag that has flown over the Capitol](#)

Remember, Flag Day has been celebrated since the late 1800s. Check out these posters from 1917 and 1939!

