

About the American Flag



The Flag of the United States of America

VOCABULARY WORDS

- **Symbol:** A thing or object that represents or stands for something else.
- **Patriotism:** A feeling of love for one's country.
- **Dignitary:** A person who is considered important because of their high rank or office.

What is a flag?

A flag is a piece of cloth, often in the shape of a rectangle, that attaches by one side to a pole or rope. It is used as a **symbol** of the history, pride and principles of a country or group of people.



Largest American flag in the world displayed across the front of the U.S. Capitol, 1929

When was the American flag designed?

There have been 27 different versions of the American Flag since 1777. The 13 stripes symbolize the first 13 states in the union. The 50 stars symbolize the current 50 states. The blue stands for justice, the white stands for purity and the red stands for bravery. The current 50-star flag has been in use since July 4th, 1960.



Suffragists marched in Washington, D.C. for women's right to vote, 1913

How is the American flag used?

Many people and places fly the American flag as a sign of their **patriotism**. It flies at government buildings and national parks across the country. It flies at people's homes during holidays, like July 4th, Veterans Day and Memorial Day. It is often carried at marches and protests.



An American flag waves on the east side of the U.S. Capitol, 2022

Where is the American flag at the U.S. Capitol?

All around the building! They are flown above the Senate and the House chambers when they are in session. They are hung during special events and ceremonies, like the presidential inauguration. Flags flown at the U.S. Capitol may also be given as gifts of friendship to special guests, like visiting **dignitaries**.

Create the American Flag



YOU WILL NEED:

- Felt (Red, White, & Blue)
- Mini Wooden Dowel Rod
- Star stickers or star punch
- Card Stock
- Liquid Glue
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Pen

1. Using your ruler, measure and cut two rectangles (4" x 6") from the white felt.
2. Next, measure and cut two rectangles (2" x 2 1/2") from the blue felt.
3. Last, measure and cut one rectangle (4" x 6") from the red felt.
4. Take the 4" x 6" red felt piece and fold it in half lengthwise, (hot dog style) and cut along the crease. You'll have two pieces now.
5. Fold and cut those two pieces. You'll have four pieces now.
6. Keep cutting the stripes in half until you get a total of 16 thin red stripes.
7. Glue the 2" x 2 1/2" blue rectangle to the top left of the white felt.
8. Glue one red stripe to the bottom edge of the white felt. Then glue a second stripe to the top edge (there will be extra hanging off the side). Glue a third stripe in the middle next to the bottom edge of the blue felt.
9. Add four red stripes to the remaining white space, two in the top section and two in the bottom. Trim to length of the white base. Save 7 remaining stripes for Step 11.
10. Use a star punch to make stars out of card stock. Make and glue as many stars as you want. Or use stickers.
11. Repeat the whole process to make a second flag. Be sure to glue the blue felt in the upper right this time.
12. Measure and cut one rectangle (2" x 3 1/2") from the white felt. Add glue only on the two long sides and thin top side of the rectangle. Glue to the back of the first flag. This will make a pocket for the mini-dowel rod.
13. Glue both flags together, making sure that the bottom pocket is not glued shut. Let dry overnight.
14. Add the dowel rod in the pocket.
Now you can wave your own mini American flag!

