

Our flag....

When asked who designed the first American flag, many reply “Betsy Ross.” But historians say that’s not true and credit an obscure signer of the Declaration of Independence, Francis Hopkinson, who later became a congressman, with designing the stars and stripes that was eventually adopted by the Second Continental Congress in 1777. Betsy’s version was said to come later. And over the years, many other flags were used by the military and other entities, but only those approved by Congress are official emblems of the U.S.A.

Some of the other facts about our country’s flag and the ways in which we can show it proper respect can be found in other sections of this site.

The Field of Honor....

Murrieta Rotary honors the American flag and those who honor it with their service.

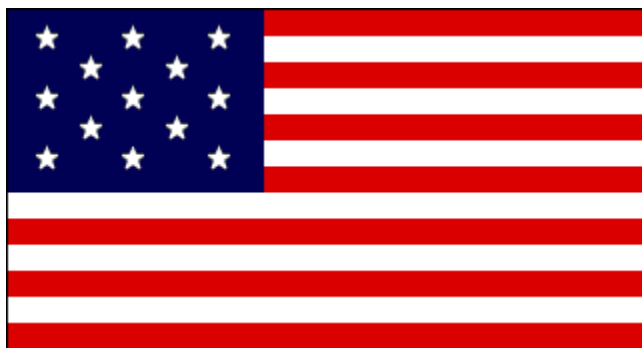
Field of Honor....

The Rotary Club of Murrieta created the Field of Honor in 2009 primarily to honor America’s flag and to pay tribute to its military veterans, past and present. It also recognizes the contributions of first-responders (emergency services people) as well as any others flag sponsors wish to remember. Yellow ribbons attached to the flags bear the names of those to whom they are dedicated.

The size of this honor field has grown to more than 2,000 flags that fly during the week of Veteran’s Day. Special sections pay tribute to Local Heroes -- those from this area who have died from injuries received in Iraq and Afghanistan -- and Californians who have over the years received the Medal of Honor, America’s highest military decoration.

This display also includes the 27 flags that have been adopted by Congress during the country’s history. These flags, and a few historical notes about the period of their adoption, are presented here.

Our official American flags



The 13-Star Flag

First official United States flag

Became official: June 14, 1777 (This is now Flag Day)

Historical notes:

- Each star and stripe represents one of the original 13 colonies. The flag's red color symbolizes hardiness and valor, the white represents purity and innocence and the blue vigilance, perseverance and justice.
- Evidence points to Congressman Francis Hopkinson as the designer of this flag.
- This flag was first flown by Capt. John Paul Jones on the USS Ranger.
- States represented by the original flag and the order in which each ratified the Constitution and became a state:
 - Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey (all in 1787)
 - Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, New York (all in 1788)
 - North Carolina (1789) and Rhode Island (1790)

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- George Washington



The 15–Star Flag

“The Star Spangled Banner flag”

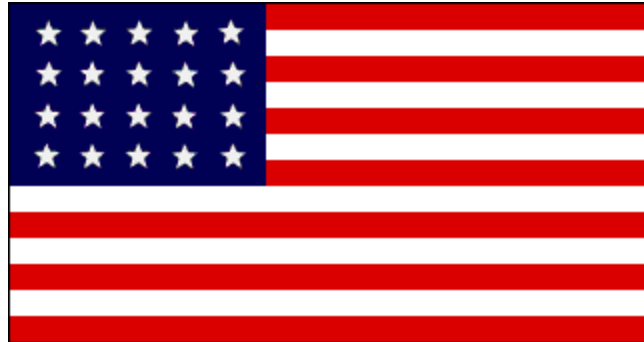
Became official: May 1, 1795

Historical notes:

- Two stars and stripes added for Vermont (1791) and Kentucky (1792).
- This was the only flag with more than 13 stripes.
- It was immortalized by Francis Scott Key in what became our national anthem, the Star Spangled Banner, as it flew over Ft. McHenry during the 1814 bombardment.
- Nation’s capital moved from Philadelphia to Washington (1800).
- U.S. buys Louisiana territory from France (1803).
- War of 1812 fought over British interference.

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe



The 20–Star Flag

“The 1818 flag”

Became official: April 13, 1818

Historical notes:

- Realizing adding a star and stripe for each new state was impractical, Congress returned the flag to 13 stripes and a star for each state.
- New states recognized in this flag were Tennessee (1796), Ohio (1803), Louisiana (1812), Indiana (1816), Mississippi (1817).
- Spain cedes Florida to U.S. (1819)

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- James Monroe



The 21-Star Flag

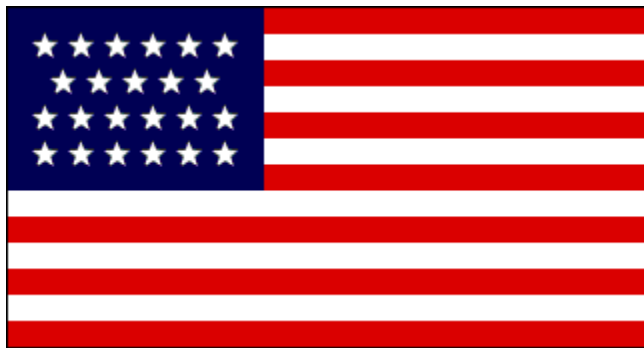
Became official: July 4, 1819

Historical notes:

- A star added for Illinois (1818)

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- James Monroe



The 23-Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1820

Historical notes:

- Stars were added for Alabama (1819) and Maine (1820).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- James Monroe



The 24-Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1822

Historical notes:

- A star was added for the admission of Missouri (1821).
- Law signed forcing removal of Native Americans from eastern U.S. to lands west of the Mississippi. By late 1830, nearly 50,000 had been relocated.
- Texan defenders in the Alamo all die under siege by Mexican Army (1836).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- James Monroe, John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson



The 25–Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1836

Historical notes:

- A star was added for Arkansas' admission (1836).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- Andrew Jackson, Martin Van Buren



The 26–Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1837

Historical notes:

- A star was added for Michigan's admission (1837).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- Martin Van Buren, William Henry Harrison, John Tyler, James Polk



The 27–Star Flag

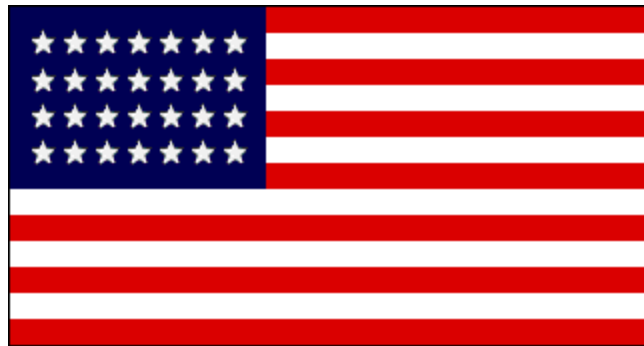
Became official: July 4, 1845

Historical notes:

- Florida's admission to the union added the 27th star (1845).
- Oregon Treaty fixes U.S.–Canadian border at 49th parallel; U.S. acquires Oregon territory (1846).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- James Polk



The 28–Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1846

Historical notes:

- A star was added when Texas was admitted (1845).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- James Polk



The 29-Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1847

Historical notes:

- A star was added for Iowa (1846).
- Mexican War ended (1848).
- Gold discovered in California (1848).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- James Polk



The 30-Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1848

Historical notes:

- Wisconsin was added to the union (1848).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- James Polk, Zachary Taylor, Millard Fillmore



The 31-Star Flag

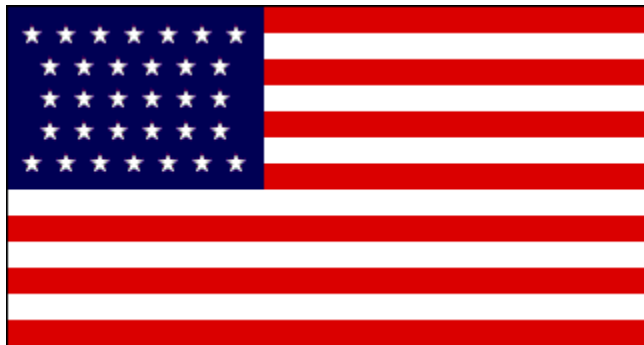
Became official: July 4, 1851

Historical notes:

- A star was added for California (1850).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- Millard Fillmore, Franklin Pierce, James Buchanan



The 32-Star Flag

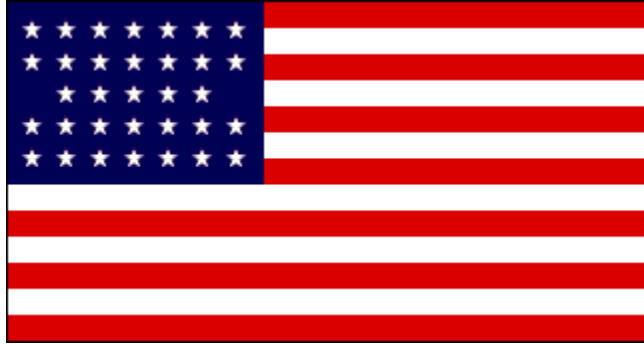
Became official: July 4, 1858

Historical notes:

- This star was added for Minnesota (1858).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- James Buchanan



The 33-Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1859

Historical notes:

- A star was added for Oregon (1859).
- Confederate States of America formed, leading to Civil War (1861).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- James Buchanan, Abraham Lincoln



The 34-Star Flag

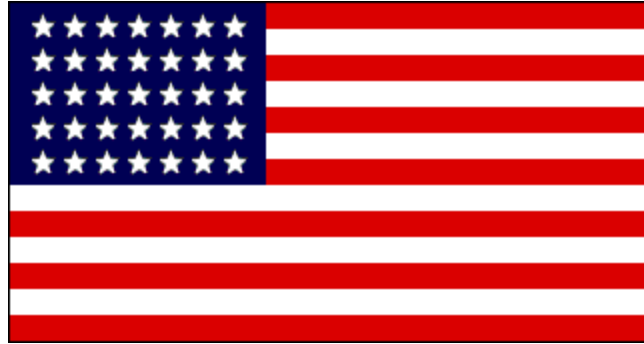
Became official: July 4, 1861

Historical notes:

- A star was added for Kansas (1861).
- Flew during the first portion of the Civil War.
- Emancipation Proclamation issued freeing slaves (1863).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- Abraham Lincoln



The 35-Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1863

Historical notes:

- West Virginia's admission added this star (1863).
- President Lincoln assassinated (1865).
- Flew as the Civil War ended.

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Johnson



The 36-Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1865

Historical notes:

- This star was added for Nevada (1864).
- 13th Amendment ratified prohibiting slavery (1865).
- U.S. acquires Alaska from Russia (1867).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- Andrew Johnson



The 37–Star Flag

The “Promontory Flag”

Became official: July 4, 1867

Historical notes:

- A star was added for Nebraska’s admission (1867).
- This flag flew over two locomotives as they slowly moved toward each other and linked railroad tracks, joining the continent from east to west (1869).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- Andrew Johnson, Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes



The 38-Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1877

Historical notes:

- Colorado gained this star (1876).
- President Garfield assassinated (1881).
- Statue of Liberty is dedicated (1886).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield, Chester A. Arthur, Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison



The 43-Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1890

Historical notes:

- Stars were added for North Dakota (1889), South Dakota (1889), Montana (1889), Washington (1889), Idaho (1890).
- Last major battle of Indian Wars occurs at Wounded Knee (1890).

- Census Bureau declares the West has been settled and the frontier is closed (1890).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- Benjamin Harrison



The 44-Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1891

Historical notes:

- A star was added for Wyoming (1890).
- Ellis Island opens as chief immigration station for U.S. (1892).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- Benjamin Harrison, Grover Cleveland



The 45-Star Flag

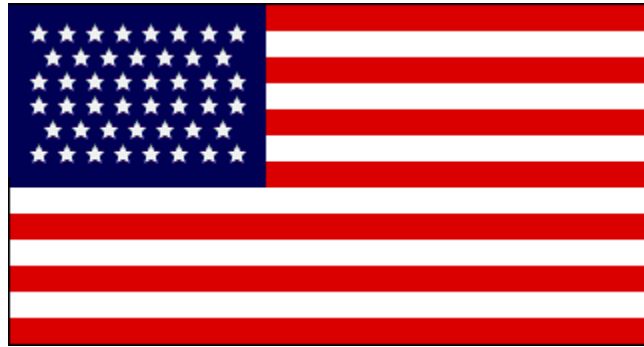
Became official: July 4, 1896

Historical notes:

- A star was added for Utah (1896).
- President McKinley assassinated (1901).
- U.S. acquires Panama Canal Zone (1902).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- Grover Cleveland, William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt



The 46–Star Flag

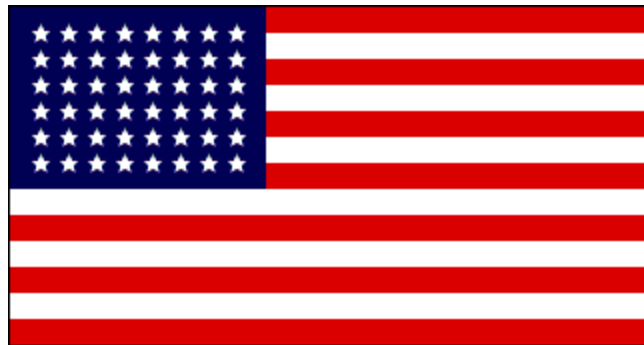
Became official: July 4, 1908

Historical notes:

- Oklahoma's was the 46th star (1907).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- Theodore Roosevelt, William H. Taft



The 48–Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1912

Historical notes:

- Stars were added for New Mexico (1912) and Arizona (1912).
- This flag flew through two World Wars and the emergence of the U.S. as a world leader.
- This is the flag that courageous American troops raised on Iwo Jima as they captured the islands in 1945, a scene depicted in a well-known Washington monument.

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- William H. Taft, Woodrow Wilson, Warren Harding, Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower



The 49-Star Flag

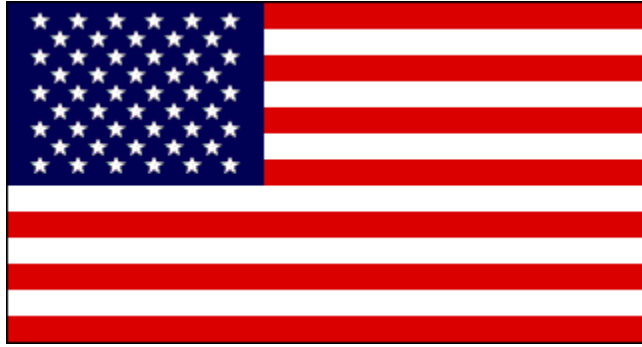
Became official: July 4, 1959

Historical notes:

- This star was added for Alaska (1959).

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- Dwight D. Eisenhower



The 50-Star Flag

Became official: July 4, 1960

Historical notes:

- This star honored Hawaii's admission (1959).
- Though this flag has flown longer than any other before another star was added, no U.S. flag ever becomes obsolete and may legally be flown at any time. That makes the 13-star flag the longest flying of any.
- President Kennedy assassinated (1963).
- U.S. leads coalition in Persian Gulf War (1991) and engages in Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts.

Presidents who served when this flag flew:

- Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard M. Nixon, Gerald R. Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald W. Reagan, George Bush, William J. Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama