

THE CODE OF  
CONFEDERATE FLAG ETIQUETTE

A GUIDE TO THE RESPECTFUL USE AND DISPLAY OF THE  
FLAGS AND SYMBOLS OF  
THE CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA

ADOPTED BY THE MILITARY ORDER OF THE STARS AND BARS  
JULY 2011

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## PREAMBLE

The flag and other symbols of the Confederate States of America represent the dreams of a Southern nation for which our ancestors sacrificed their lives and their fortunes, and for the high and noble standards that we should once again strive for. The flags and other symbols of the Confederate States of America should be treated with the highest respect and never used or modified in a manner that diminishes the image of a great and noble South. Use of the Confederate flag should be held to the same high standards as any other national flag.

### DEFINITIONS

The Flag is defined as any of the flags used by the Confederate States of America. This includes:

- (a) First National or Stars and Bars
- (b) Second National or Stainless Banner
- (c) Third National
- (d) Bonnie Blue Flag
- (e) Confederate Battle Flag
- (f) Confederate Naval Jack
- (g) Any object which the average person seeing the same without deliberation may believe the same to represent the flag, colors, standard, or ensign of the Confederate States of America.

### MODIFICATIONS AND USE OF THE FLAG

The flag should never be modified in any way. It should be displayed as originally designed without alteration.

The basic flag design may be incorporated into the logo of an organization only if it is done in such a manner as to hold the Confederate States of America in the highest respect.

The flag, or design elements of the flag, should never be used to associate The South or the Confederate States of America with any other political or social agenda.

Examples of ACCEPTABLE incorporation into a design are:

- (a) Military Order of The Stars and Bars logo.

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- (b) Sons of Confederate Veterans logo
  - (c) United Daughters of The Confederacy logo
  - (d) State flags

Examples of UNACCEPTABLE incorporation into a design are:

- (a) Images of the Confederate flag, or design elements of the flag, combined with images of skulls, motorcycles, or other objects that detract from the honor and respect due the flag.

Examples of UNACCEPTABLE use of the flag:

- (a) The Confederate flag with images of skulls, motorcycles, or any other object.
- (b) The Confederate flag incorporated into any article of clothing. An exception to this is items such as neck ties and lapel pins that have traditionally been used to respectfully display patriotic symbols.

Examples of ACCEPTABLE use of the flag image:

- (a) Bunting or similar material used for patriotic decoration which includes design elements of the Confederate flag, or images of the flag such that it is clearly not being used as a flag. Examples would be the flag: depicted furled, on a staff, carried in battle, in a memorial arrangement.

#### DISPLAY OF THE FLAG

No disrespect should be shown to the flag of the Confederate States of America; the flag should not be dipped to any person or thing.

- (a) The flag should never be displayed with the field down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.

- (b) The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water, or merchandise.

- (c) The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.

- (d) The flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding, or drapery. It should never be festooned, drawn back, nor up, in folds, but always allowed to fall free.

- (e) The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used, or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.

- (f) The flag should never be used as a covering for a ceiling.

- (g) The flag should never have placed upon it, nor on any part of it, nor attached to it any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing of any nature. An exception to this is unit markings on the flag when used by historical re-enactors.

- (h) The flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.

- (i) The flag should never be used for advertising purposes in any manner

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whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like, printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes or anything that is designed for temporary use and discard. Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the flag is flown.

(j) No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen, and members of patriotic organizations. The flag represents a living country and is itself considered a living thing. Therefore, the lapel flag pin being a replica, should be worn on the left lapel near the heart.

(k) The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

#### FOLDING THE FLAG

To fold the flag, two persons face each other and hold the flag waist high and horizontally between them. They fold the lower half of the flag lengthwise over the upper half; then fold it again in the same manner. The person holding the fly end folds the lower right corner to the upper edge to form a triangle, folds the outer point inward to form a second triangle, and continues to fold the flag in triangles until the entire length of the flag is folded, ending with the hoist end to the outside.

#### OCCASIONS FOR DISPLAY

(a) Display on buildings and stationary flagstuffs in open.

Night display: It is the universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstuffs in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed twenty-four hours a day. It is preferred that the flag be properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.

(b) Manner of hoisting

The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.

(c) Inclement weather

The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is inclement, except when an all weather flag is displayed.

(d) Particular days of display

The flag should be displayed on all days, especially on:

January 19 - Robert E. Lee Birthday - Confederate Heroes Day (TX)

January 21 - Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson Birthday

February 22 - Confederate Independence Day (Founding of the C.S.A. / Jefferson Davis inaugurated)

March 4 - Confederate Flag Day

March 27 - Confederate Day of Prayer, designated by President Jefferson Davis in 1863 as a day of "fasting, humiliation, and prayer" in the Confederate States

April 26 - Confederate Memorial Day (AL, FL, GA, MS)

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May 10 - Confederate Memorial Day  
(NC, SC); "Stonewall" Jackson died

May 30 - Confederate Memorial Day  
(VA)

June 3 - Confederate Memorial Day  
(KY, LA, TN); Jefferson Davis Birthday

October 12 - Robert E. Lee died

December 6 - Jefferson Davis died

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### Notes and References

1. The Code of Confederate Flag Etiquette was compiled by Stephen Clay McGehee in April 2008 and was adopted by the Military Order of The Stars and Bars in July 2011.
  2. This document is intended to be international in scope; the display of the Confederate flag in conjunction with the flag of a sovereign state is not addressed.
  3. This document is based on the following:
    - a. UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 36, CHAPTER 10
    - b. UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 18, CHAPTER 33
    - c. UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 4, CHAPTER 1
    - d. Florida Statutes 256.10 and 256.051
    - e. UDC Flag Code ([http://www.hqudc.org/info/flag\\_code.pdf](http://www.hqudc.org/info/flag_code.pdf))
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### Revisions

05/30/2008 – Display Section (g)

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