Reveille is the signal for the start of the official duty day. Because the time for the start of the duty day varies between bases, the commander designates the specified time for reveille. If the commander desires, a reveille ceremony may accompany the raising of the flag. This ceremony takes place in the vicinity of the base flagstaff and is held after sunrise.

In the unit area, reveille is normally held, using the formation of squadron in line. This formation is used when a reveille ceremony is not held at the base flagstaff.

**Events Accompanying Flag Raising at the Reveille Ceremony**

* Shortly before the specified time for reveille, troops are marched to a predesignated position near the base flagstaff, halted, faced toward the flagstaff, and dressed. The flag security detail arrives at the flagstaff at this time and remains at attention.
* The unit commander commands **Parade REST**.
* At the specified time for reveille, the unit commander commands **SOUND REVEILLE**. The flag detail assumes the position of attention, moves to the flagstaff, and attaches the flag to the halyards.
* After reveille has been played, the unit commander commands **Squadron ATTENTION** and **Present ARMS** and then faces the flagstaff and executes present arms. On this signal, the national anthem or To the Colors is sounded.
* On the first note of the national anthem or To the Colors, the flag security detail begins to raise the flag briskly. The senior member of the detail holds the flag to keep it from touching the ground.
* The unit commander holds the salute until the last note of the music is played. Then he or she executes order arms, faces about, and commands **Order, ARMS**. The troops are then marched back to the dismissal area.

**Raising the Flag**

When practical, a detail consisting of an NCO and two junior enlisted hoists the flag. This detail should be armed with sidearms (if the special equipment of the guard includes sidearms).

The detail is formed in line with the NCO carrying the flag in the center. The detail is then marched to the flagstaff and halted, and the flag is attached to the halyards. The flag is always raised and lowered from the leeward side of the flagstaff. The two junior enlisted attend the halyards, taking a position facing the staff to hoist the flag without entangling the halyards. The NCO continues to hold the flag until it is hoisted clear of the grasp, taking particular care that no portion of the flag touches the ground. When the flag is clear of the grasp, the NCO comes to attention and executes present arms.

On the last note of the music or after the flag has been hoisted to the staff head, all members of the detail execute order arms on command of the senior member. The halyards are then secured to the cleat of the staff or, if appropriate, the flag is lowered to halfstaff and the halyard secured. The detail is formed again and marched to the dismissal area.

Retreat

The retreat ceremony serves a twofold purpose. It signals the end of the official duty day and serves as a ceremony for paying respect to the flag. Because the time for the end of the duty day varies, the commander designates the specific time for the retreat ceremony.

The retreat ceremony may take place at the unit area, on the base parade ground, or in the vicinity of the flagstaff. If conducted at the base parade ground, retreat is a part of the parade ceremony. If conducted within the unit area, it is usually a ceremony not involving a parade. If the retreat ceremony is conducted at the flagstaff, the units participating may be formed in line or they may be massed, depending upon the size and number of units and the space available.

When persons not assigned to a formation are outdoors and in uniform, on the first note of retreat, they should face the flag (if visible) or music and assume the position of parade rest.

**Events Accompanying Retreat Ceremony at the Flagstaff**

Shortly before the specified time for retreat, the band and troops participating in the ceremony are positioned facing the flagstaff and dressed. If marching to and from the flagstaff, the band precedes the troops participating in the ceremony.

If the band and troops march to the flagstaff, a flag security detail also marches to the flagstaff, halts, and is given the command **Parade, REST** by the senior member.

As soon as the troops are dressed, the commander commands **Parade, REST**. The commander then faces the flagstaff, assumes the position of the troops, and waits for the specified time for retreat.

The commander orders the band leader to sound retreat at the specified time by commanding **SOUND RETREAT**.

The band plays retreat. If a band is not present, recorded music may be played over the base public address system. During the playing of retreat, junior members of the flag security detail assume the position of attention and move to the flagstaff to arrange the halyards for proper lowering of the flag. Once the halyards are arranged, the junior members of the flag security detail execute parade rest in unison.

After the band finishes playing retreat, the commander faces about and commands Squadron (Group, etc.), ATTENTION.

The commander then commands **Present, ARMS**. As soon as the troops execute present arms, the commander faces to the front and also assumes present arms. The members of the flag security detail execute present arms on command by the commander.

The band plays the national anthem or the bugler plays To the Colors. The junior members of the flag security detail lower the flag slowly and with dignity. If the flag is being flown at half-staff, it is raised briskly to the top, then lowered slowly.

The commander executes order arms when the last note of the music is played and the flag has been securely grasped. The commander faces about, gives the troops Order, ARMS, and then faces to the front.

The flag security detail folds the flag. The senior enlisted of the detail remains at attention while the flag is being folded unless he or she is needed to control the flag.

When the flag is folded, the flag security detail, with the senior enlisted on the right and the flagbearer in the center, marches to a position three paces from the commander. (In an informal ceremony, the detail marches three paces from the officer of the day.) The senior enlisted salutes and reports "Sir (Ma’am), the flag is secured." The commander returns the salute, and the flag security detail marches away. The troops are then marched to their areas and dismissed.

**Lowering the Flag**

When practical, the persons lowering the flag should be an NCO and three junior members for the all-purpose flag and an NCO and five junior members for the base flag. The detail is formed and marched to the flagstaff, and the halyards are detached and attended from the leeward side. On the first note of the national anthem or, if no band is present, To the Colors, the members of the detail not lowering the flag execute present arms. The lowering of the flag is coordinated with the playing of the music so the two are completed at the same time. The senior member commands the detail **Order, ARMS** when the flag is low enough to be received. If at halfstaff, the flag is hoisted briskly to the staff head while retreat is sounded, and then it is lowered on the first note of the national anthem or To the Colors.

The flag is detached from the halyards and folded. The halyards are secured to the staff.

**Folding the U.S. Flag**

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| --- | --- |
| A - Hold the flag waist-high. | http://0.tqn.com/d/usmilitary/1/0/F/j/flaga.jpg |
| B - Fold the lower striped section of the flag over the blue field. | http://0.tqn.com/d/usmilitary/1/0/E/j/flagb.jpg |
| C - The folded edge (the edge nearest the reader in illustration B) is then folded over to meet the open edge. | http://0.tqn.com/d/usmilitary/1/0/D/j/flagc.jpg |
| D - A triangular fold is then started by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to the open edge. | http://0.tqn.com/d/usmilitary/1/0/C/j/flagd.jpg |
| E. The outer point is then turned inward (parallel with the open edge) to form a second triangle. | http://0.tqn.com/d/usmilitary/1/0/B/j/flage.jpg |
| F - The triangular folding is continued until the entire length of the flag is folded in this manner. | http://0.tqn.com/d/usmilitary/1/0/A/j/flagf.jpg |
| G - When the flag is completely folded, only the blue field should be visible. | http://0.tqn.com/d/usmilitary/1/0/9/j/flagg.jpg |