

# **Posting & Retiring the Colors Procedure**

## **4-Man Color Guard + 1 Caller**

### **Uniform:**

Color guards must be in full uniform, preferably with all wearing the same type of pants, and the same shirt (short-sleeve or long-sleeves.) You must wear your hat. Your uniform must be freshly pressed, your neckerchief included. Inspect each other for tucked shirts, gig lines, clean shoes, all buttons fastened, brass-on-brass, etc.

There are two color guards per flag and one caller. The color guard forms up in the back of the room, or if outside, behind the audience. The caller positions himself at the front and center of the room, facing the formed up color guard.

As the color guards line up shoulder-to-shoulder, the American flag is carried by the Scout on the color guard's right. The person on the color guards' left carries the other flag. The other two Scouts are in the trail position and follow behind the flag bearers.

### **How to carry the flag:**

When outside, carry all of the flags completely vertical, preferably in a flag holder worn from the shoulders. Keep the flags vertical until the colors are posted.

When inside and the ceiling do not interfere, carry the flags vertically, preferably in a flag holder worn from the shoulders.

When inside and ceiling height prevents you from holding the flags vertically in the flag holder, carry the flags "in trail." This is done by holding the flag staff on your right side, with the bottom of the pole just above the ground. Your right hand holds the flag material to the flag staff. Your right hand should be as low as is comfortable. Your left hand reaches across your body and holds the staff on the lower corner of the flag where it attaches to the flag staff. Your left forearm should be level with the ground.

### **Requests and Commands:**

The caller uses two different tones while advancing the color guard. One tone is for the color guard, using a strong, loud, and commanding tone. In this instruction when the caller commands, he uses the commanding tone. The other tone is used when addressing the audience, is a strong but non-commanding tone. In this instruction when the caller makes a "request," he uses this non-commanding tone.

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## Posting the Colors:

When the activity director asks for the presentation of the colors, the caller should walk briskly to the front and center of the room and face the audience. At the same time the color guard should gather and form up near the rear of the room.

After about a 2-second pause, the caller commands, “**Color guard prepare to present colors!**”

The caller waits a few seconds, as needed, for the color guard to be in the proper formation before calling any commands. Once the color guard is in the proper formation, the caller commands, “**Color Guard, ATTENTION!**”

The caller then requests the audience, “**Please rise.**”

After a one-second pause, the caller commands, “**Scouts, ATTENTION!**”

Wait one second, then command, “**Color guard, ADVANCE!**”

The color guards all start by stepping forward with their right foot. The flag bearers should be exactly even, but if not possible, allow the American flag to take a slight lead. The trail guards should be exactly even, unless not possible, and then the American flag trail is slightly ahead of the other.

When the color guards reach a point just in front of the caller, they hesitate until the caller commands, “**Color guard, CROSS the colors!**”

The American flag bearer will then take a half step forward, and execute a sharp 90-degree LEFT turn, as the other flag executes a sharp 90-degree right turn, crossing between the American flag and the audience. The trail guards cross after the flag bearers, and stay with the same flag bearer. The color guards then continue marching, making sharp 90-degree turns when appropriate until they reach the floor holder for the flag.

As the color guard crosses the colors and continues towards the floor holder, the caller executes a 180-degree turn in the direction of the American flag.

Once the color guard reaches the floor holder the caller commands, “**Color guard, HALT!**”

The caller commands, “**Color guards, POST the colors.**”

As the audience removes their head gear the caller commands, “**Scout SALUTE!**” The caller executes a perfect salute. Nobody in the color guard salutes yet.

The flags should be placed into their respective holders at nearly the same time. If there is any difference the American flag is posted slightly ahead of the other flags.

Once the flags are posted, the caller commands, “**Color guards, ADDRESS the colors!**” The color guards take two steps away from the flag, turn sharply to face the flags. Each pair should be shoulder to shoulder.

The color guard and caller execute perfect salutes and remain at attention.

When the color guard is in position, the caller politely requests the audience to, “**Please remove headgear, if appropriate, and then join in the Pledge of Allegiance.**”

The caller, using the request tone **begins the Pledge of Allegiance**, and after the first 3 words, drops the volume to a more normal volume. The color guards recite the pledge.

Upon completion of the Pledge the caller commands, “**Ready, TWO!**” The caller and the color guards sharply drop their salutes. (Do NOT slap your side.)

After a one second pause, the caller commands, “**Color guard, REGROUP!**”

The flag bearers lead the trail guard, and retrace their steps until they make the turn down the center aisle. Once the trail guard makes the turn, the color guards stop. This is the regroup position.

When the color guards approach him, the caller executes a sharp 180-degree turn facing the rear of the room again.

Once the color guard reaches the regroup position and pauses, the caller commands, “**Color guard, DISMISSED!**” The color guards begin marching to the rear of the audience, after the first step the caller commands, “**Scouts, as you were.**” He follows that with a request to the audience, “**Thank you. You may be seated.**”

At this point the caller walks briskly towards the rear of the room. The color guards and the caller return to their seats maintaining a serious demeanor.

## Retiring the Colors:

When the activity director asks to retire the colors, the caller should walk briskly to the front and center of the room and face the audience. At the same time the color guard should gather and form up near the rear of the room. The American flag bearer is on the group's left side to avoid having to cross.

After about a 2-second pause, the caller commands, "**Color guard, prepare to retire the colors!**"

The caller waits a few seconds, as needed, for the color guard to be in the proper formation before calling any commands. Once the color guard is in the proper formation, the caller commands, "**Color Guard, ATTENTION!**"

The caller then requests the audience, "**Please rise.**"

After a one-second pause, the caller commands, "**Scouts, ATTENTION!**"

Wait two seconds, then command, "**Color guard, ADVANCE!**"

The color guards start with their right foot, and without any turn commands from the caller, follow your path back to your flag. Use sharp ninety-degree turns as you march to your flag. Once you reach your flag, stop and stay at attention.

When the color guard is in position, the caller politely requests the audience to, "**Please remove headgear, if appropriate.**"

After one second the caller requests the audience to remove headgear, if appropriate, and a half second later commands, "**Scout SALUTE!**"

Wait one second and command, "**Color guard, retrieve the colors!**"

The flag bearers pick up the flag staffs and hold them as they did while presenting the colors, then move away from the flag holders and stop facing off to the side of the room.

The trail guards form up behind their flag bearers, and once all guards are formed, the caller commands, "**Ready, TWO!**"

Wait one second and command, "**Color guard, RETIRE the colors!**" The color guard retraces their steps, and stops just as they make the turn down the center aisle.

Once the color guard reaches the regroup position and pauses, the caller commands, "**Color guard, DISMISSED!**" The color guards begin marching to the rear of the audience, after the first step the caller commands, "**Scouts, DISMISSED!**" He follows that with a request to the audience, "**Thank you for attending.**"

At this point the caller walks briskly towards the rear of the room. The color guard and caller should immediately secure the flags in a manner appropriate to the location.

## Posting the Colors – Caller’s Commands & Request

**“Color guard prepare to present colors!”**

**“Color Guard, ATTENTION!”**

**“Please rise.”**

**“Scouts, ATTENTION!”**

**“Color guard, ADVANCE!”**

**“Color guard, CROSS the colors!”**

**“Color guard, HALT!”**

**“Scout SALUTE!”**

**“Color guards, POST the colors.”**

**“Color guards, ADDRESS the colors!”**

**Please remove headgear, if appropriate, and then join in the Pledge of Allegiance.”**

**Begin the Pledge of Allegiance.**

**“Ready, TWO!”**

**“Color guard, REGROUP!”**

**“Scouts, as you were.”**

**“Thank you. You may be seated.”**

## Retiring the Colors – Caller’s Commands & Request

**“Color guard, prepare to retire the colors!”**

**“Color Guard, ATTENTION!”**

**“Please rise.”**

**“Scouts, ATTENTION!”**

**“Color guard, ADVANCE!”**

**“Please remove headgear, if appropriate.”**

**“Scout SALUTE!”**

**“Color guard, retrieve the colors!”**

**“Ready, TWO!”**

**“Color guard, RETIRE the colors!”**

**“Color guard, DISMISSED!”**

**“Scouts, DISMISSED!”**

**“Thank you for attending.”**