



## American Flag History

If you live in the United States, you see the American flag often—maybe every day! But do you know the American flag’s history? From battlefields to turrets to your front porch, let’s learn about the history of the US Flag.

Then be sure to print the mini-book from our upcoming US Constitution & Government Course, which offers even more information on the US flag.

### *“Rebellious” Stripes*

The history of the American flag as we know and love it today begins before the United States was a unified nation and many flags were flying throughout the original 13 colonies.

In 1765, the Sons of Liberty designed a flag with nine vertical stripes, but it was soon outlawed by Britain, who claimed the stripes were “rebellious.” The group then changed the design, and for the first time, 13 red and white stripes (representing the 13 colonies) were used on the flag.

Ten years later the Grand Union Flag, also known as the “Continental Colors,” was designed by either Benjamin Franklin or George Washington and used by the troops.

### *The First Stars and Stripes*

Legend indicates that in 1776, George Washington and two others visited the Philadelphia home of Betsy Ross and requested she make a new flag. The “Betsy Ross flag” was the first American flag made with the iconic stars and stripes.

Many years later, Francis Scott Key wrote America’s national anthem, “The Star Spangled Banner,” while watching the American flag wave during a battle in the War of 1812.

If you go to Washington, DC, you can see the actual flag which was waving over Fort McHenry while the British troops attacked. You can learn more about this amazing story here. [www.si.edu/spotlight/flag-day/banner-facts](http://www.si.edu/spotlight/flag-day/banner-facts)

As more states entered the union, the number of stars and stripes quickly increased. It soon became too many to keep up with on the fast-changing flag!

In 1818, Congress resolved to keep the alternating stripes at 13 to represent the original first colonies. Then each state would have a star added as it joined the union.

### *The Modern Flag*

The American flag is nicknamed “Old Glory” and has flown across the nation (and world) for more than 200 years.

To commemorate the American flag, Flag Day is celebrated on June 14 each year, after being established by an official proclamation made by President Woodrow Wilson on May 30, 1916.

Many Americans use Flag Day to celebrate the United States flag and keep its meaningful history alive. You can celebrate this day, too, by putting up flags in your house, drawing a picture of a flag, or flying one outside.



The story of the United States flag has been passed down through the generations, preserving the incredible, hopeful story of the American people.

For a list of more information and fun facts about the US flag and its history, visit the National Flag Foundation site. [nationalflagfoundation.org/10-fascinating-facts-about-the-american-flag/](http://nationalflagfoundation.org/10-fascinating-facts-about-the-american-flag/)