

Where to See Historical Flags



The American flag has a rich history. The stories behind some historical banners offer humbling perspectives of a growing nation. Fortunately, many of the most famous flags are still on display in facilities throughout the country.

Check out a few of the locations open to the public for citizens to pay their respects and witness the flags that hold a special place in history, in person. Star-Spangled Banner National Museum of American History, Washington, D.C.

The flag considered the source of lyrics which would become our National Anthem is proudly on display in D.C. The Star-Spangled Banner was penned by Francis Scott Key after being held captive during the War of 1812. Key was inspired by a lone United States flag flying over Fort McHenry after a failed invasion by the British.

The banner on display features 15 stars and is considered one of the most meaningful banners in the country's history.

9/11 Flag

9/11 Memorial and Museum, New York City, N.Y. September 11, 2001 will forever hold a heart-wrenching place in our nation's history. Terrorist attacks would claim the lives of thousands of citizens and first responders and destroy some of the most famous buildings in the world.

An iconic image from the destruction showed three firemen raising the American flag over the wreckage of the World Trade Center. Considered lost for many years, it was eventually recovered in 2016, when it was donated to the 9/11 Museum and Memorial, where it rests today.

13-Star Flag

Historical Society, New London, Ct. The Nathaniel Shaw

Flag, which was named after its original owner, is one of the few remaining authentic 13-star flags flown during the American Revolution. While the banner has required restoration to appear presentable, it gives us a peek at the humble origins of our nation.

USS Arizona

Arizona State Capital Museum
The flag displayed over the USS Arizona when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, forcing us into World War II is showcased at the Arizona Capitol Museum in Phoenix. Artifacts retrieved from the sunken ship also are featured.

Where the Flag is Always Displayed

While proper etiquette discourages flying the flag 24 hours a day, presidential proclamations and laws do authorize it in certain places. Consider taking a vacation to see the locations deemed historic enough to constantly showcase Old Glory.

Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine — Baltimore

Presidential Proclamation No. 2795, July 2, 1948
Visit the historic location where Francis Scott Key penned the standing verse of "The Star-Spangled Banner" after witnessing the American flag raised in victory during the Battle of Baltimore in the War of 1812. The staff still stands in the exact spot it did in 1814.

United States Marine Corps Memorial — Arlington, Virginia

Presidential Proclamation No. 3418, June 12, 1961
The flag constantly flies at this emotional tribute to the men of the United States Marine Corps who have given their lives for their country since 1775. The memorial is a historic statue which captures the moment an American flag was raised after an intense battle for Mount Suribachi in Iwo Jima during World War II.

On the Green of the Town of Lexington — Lexington, Massachusetts

Public Law 89-335, Nov. 8, 1965
This site was host to the opening shots of the Battles of Lexington and Concord, on April 19, 1775 -- the beginning of the Revolutionary War. The former battle grounds are now a public park where several memorials are featured.

The White House — Washington D.C.

Presidential Proclamation No. 4000, Sept. 4, 1970.
In some countries, a flag will only fly over a president or monarch's residence to signify they are inside. In America, the banner flies 24 hours a day.

The Moon — Outer Space

In 2012, NASA excitedly reported that all but one of the six American flags on the moon are still standing. Their stars and stripes have reportedly faded, but it marks the achievements of our country's astronauts who have ventured into space.



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