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American flag dimensions

As Americans, it might be healthy to acknowledge that we, the people, may be unnaturally tied to the flag of our country. Not that it's a bad thing necessary. Yes, we're digging our flag. Acknowledge. We like to see red, white and blue fluttering against the amber waves of grain and the magnificence of those purple mountains. We respect everything Old Glory stands for — life, freedom, the pursuit of happiness, the government of the people and for the people, our men and women in uniform, a good hamburger — and we see no reason not to know that we are generally proud of the United States of America. Nipples and all that. Commercial So we unfurl that the Grand Old Flag on our front porch on any given day we feel like that. We turn to field versions of stars and stripes at sporting events when we stand up to sing our national anthem (a song that, as we know, all deals with the flag). Our children, still, stand and pledge allegiance to the flag in public school classrooms across the country, despite the efforts of many to cool it down with things under God. The flag is also in our churches — hell with this separation of church and state matters. We're waving flags. We literally got ourselves into them. Even, in an oddly patriotic, self-american way, we occasionally burn them in protest (for which the Supreme Court ruled in 1989 and later in 1990 protected speech under the Constitution). Americans can sometimes look at our country through unapologetic pink glasses, and the most patriotic of us do so through flags festooned contact lenses. Seen from abroad - it certainly comes from the UK - it's striking when you go to the United States, how prevalent the flag is, Adam Smith, a history professor at University College London who writes about the US, tells HowStuffWorks. It's pretty hard to find places in America where you can't find a flag somewhere. And that doesn't apply to most places. The Americans are waving the flag like there might be no place on Earth. The Flag Manufacturers Association of America estimates that about 150 million American flags of all sizes are sold each year (although, approved, quite a few are made in China). This means that as of, say, January 2015, Why? What is it that makes us so crazy about our flag? What is it about those 13 stripes and those 50 stars that made us raise the flag to untouchable iconic status? In a country these days so sharply divided by all sorts of fault lines — the political, social, racial, geographical, National League v. American League — why are millions of us protecting and worshipping the flag? Our flag has become a symbol above politics. It's a symbol of what unites us, says John Hartvigsen, president of the North American Vexillological Association (NAVA). Vexiology is a study something Hartvigsen has been doing with NAVA for the last 48 years. It's very important for us to find what unites us. The desire, the fervent need to find unity in a country that has no monarch to rally around has been present since the American Revolution, Hartvigsen says, and has been strengthened throughout American history. Certainly since the Civil War, Americans have looked to the flag to remind us that we are one nation despite our differences, despite our hardships. So, in our darkest times and in our greatest triumphs, the flag was our symbol. Above Fort McHenry when Francis Scott Key wrote his song that became our national anthem. Teddy Roosevelt at San Juan Hill. Iwo Jima. On the streets of American cities during the Vietnam War. On the moon in 1969. Above the podium after a miracle on the ice at the 1980 Olympic Games. Rising above the ruins of the World Trade Center after September 11, 2001. Sometimes we exaggerate a little, of course, with all the nationalism waving the flag. Certainly compared to places like the UK, we do. Unless you're queen, or... It'd be a little embarrassing. It's just something people don't do. In France (another country without a monarch), Smith suggests, the French are in their flag and flying it proudly. Other countries, of course, hold their flag in great regard. But... Let me just say that American honoring the national flag is not unique, but it is towards the extreme end of the spectrum, says Michael Billig, professor of social sciences at Loughborough University in the UK, by email. Billig examined the daily use of flags in his 1995 book Banal Nationalism. I don't know of another nation where schoolboys are expected to salute the flag in a formal ritual every day, he says. National flags tend to date back 250 years — they are not ancient. Even the oldest national flags were not fetishized when they were introduced as they are today. If you're saying americans have a flag fetish, we have to plead guilty. On the outside patriotic days — Independence Day, Veterans Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day (June 14th) — that banner with stars is so proudly being hung everywhere. On other days... Yes, then too much. Everywhere, every time. That might seem strange, and perhaps even unsullied, to people beyond our borders, an obvious example of the Yanks rubbing all that freedom and power and national pride before the rest of the world. I find it personally kind of charming. I certainly don't have a problem with that, smith says. [But] if you were prepared to be too sensitive to American patriotic chauvinism, then you would see [this] as well ... roll your eyes at it: 'What expect from these guys?' America, though, has some image issues when it comes to highlighting our flag. We also have real problems that we remind ourselves of every day. But every Independence Day, we gather in public places with flags - on race shorts at peachtree road race in Atlanta, on blankets and T-shirts along the Charles River as Boston pops play, on Capitol Fourth in our nation's capital, during fireworks in Larnedo, Kansas, around a pie-eating contest on Seattle's North Shore of Lake Union - and we know there's a lot to be proud of in this country. A lot to take and cheer about. When the 5th U.S. President of the U.S. President Every day after that, too, whenever we want, paste into the windows of apartments and hung from trees, high above factory floors and flutters of car antennae. Yes, we've been overtaking things. We're Americans. But when it comes to the flag, it can be a good thing. It's the flag that brings us together, Hartvigsen says. In May, the weather can be quite unpredictable, so keep an eye on the forecast. The American flag should not be subject to weather damage, so be prepared to bring in a flag if rain, snow or even a storm threatens — unless you have an all-weather flag. Related: 20 U.S. cities with perfect weather Traditionally, the flag should fly only from sunrise to sunset. If, however, you're planning a Memorial Day celebration that will spread through the evening, make sure your flag is properly lit. Just a few garden lights should help. Related: The best ways to light a yard If you have a state or school flag to be hung with the American flag, pay attention to their positions. When flying two flags on the same staff, the American flag should always be on top. When displaying two flags against a wall with staff crossed out, the staff of the American flag should always be front and right of the staff of the other flag (meaning that the American flag itself will be on the left). Related: State pride: 50 ways to show your love where you live When two or more flags of different nations are displayed, they should always fly at a separate staff at the same height. Also, flags should be about the same size and should never be displayed in a way that favors one over the other. This attention to the relative positions of flags symbolizes peace among nations. To honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country, we display the American flag at half-staff until noon on Memorial Day. But after the clock is up 12, make sure you raise that flag to the top. Related: 18 small towns that have changed America If you decide to hang a flag vertically from a wall, outsmarts of a building or across a street, you can display the stripes horizontally or vertically, but pay attention to the position union (blue field with white stars). When the flag is hung on the wall, the union should be on the left side of the observer (flag in itself); across the street, the union should face the north or east, depending on the direction of the street. Related: Don't make these 8 mistakes in your backyard One of the most important rules to remember is always hang the flag to the right: When the flag is flying from the staff, the union should always be on top. The flag flying with the union facing down is a symbol of trouble — so be careful how you hang it! As a mark of respect, you should never let the American flag touch the ground or any other surface, including the roof of your house, any goods or your car. This rule protects the flag from eave or dirt. If you want to display it from the car, it should be firmly attached to the right fender. While it may be tempting to dress it up for a holiday, the American flag should never have additional designs, letters or insignia. It is best to let red, white and blue stand on their own. Show Old Glory the right way. Smart project ideas and step-by-step tutorials are delivered right to your inbox every Saturday morning — sign up today for the Weekend DIY Club newsletter! Newsletter!

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