



Customs and Courtesies

Acts of Respect and Politeness

GOALS FOR THIS MODULE

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the grade structure of Civil Air Patrol.
2. Summarize customs and courtesies of Civil Air Patrol.
3. Demonstrate when and how to render a proper salute.
4. Give examples of proper courtesies to the flag.
5. Identify customs and courtesies associated with the local unit and/or wing.

Have you ever felt out of place at a function because everyone else seemed to know what to do but you didn't? How about your first day at a new job or in a new school? Every organization has some system of etiquette, a set of customs and mores that define the conduct of individuals belonging to the organization. This system defines how to act and speak in certain situations, and in general how members go about the way of life unique to that organization.

Customs and courtesies are proven traditions explaining what should and should not be done.

This module has two parts: Part I will discuss common customs and courtesies; Part II will describe the salute, the position of attention, and the position of parade rest.

PART I

Grade Structure of CAP

Every CAP member holds a grade which symbolizes his or her progression in the program. One of the unique features of CAP membership is the opportunity to progress in a grade structure similar to that of the U.S. Air Force's military grades.

As a member's time and experience in CAP increases, so will the opportunity to advance in grade and assume higher levels of responsibility in the organization. Progress in the unit and in CAP is based in large measure on one's initiative to complete adult member professional development education requirements and to serve in staff and leadership positions. These initiatives also prepare the member for responsibility at higher echelons.

A new senior member should become familiar with the cadet program's grade structure. Pictures of CAP's adult and cadet grade structures are on the mini poster sent in the new member binder. Specific requirements for uniforms and grade insignia are described and shown in CAPM 39-1 and CAPR 35-5.

Grade Insignia, Proper Titles, and Titles of Address

All CAP members and military personnel are addressed properly by their grade or title.

Airman First Class Jones is correctly addressed as "Airman Jones." Master Sergeant Smith may be called "Master Sergeant Smith" or "Sergeant Smith," and Chief Master Sergeant Clifford would be called "Chief Clifford." Cadet/Captain Brown could be addressed as "Captain Brown" or "Cadet Brown." A lieutenant is addressed as "Lieutenant," a lieutenant colonel is addressed as "Colonel," and a brigadier general or major general should be addressed as "General."

When CAP members follow military customs and courtesies, they are continuing to demonstrate the importance of CAP's heritage.

Officers, junior or senior, are addressed by their rank and last name. Officers

who are senior may be addressed as "Sir" or "Ma'am." Military and CAP grades do not address gender. One glaring mistake is to assume a ranking officer is male.

Customs and Courtesies

Have you wondered why a civilian volunteer organization like CAP would emphasize conduct as oriented to the military as customs and courtesies? Since every organization has a system of traditions it uses to define the conduct of its members, CAP being the Air Force Auxiliary, has adopted a set of customs and courtesies based on those practiced by the U.S. Air Force. In the broadest sense, customs and courtesies are proven traditions of military protocol that explain what should and should not be done.

CAP members are expected to follow the traditions, standards, customs, and courtesies agreed to and accepted by the USAF and CAP. To do so reflects pride in CAP and the level of professionalism CAP demonstrates to its customers, to its Air Force partners, and to the

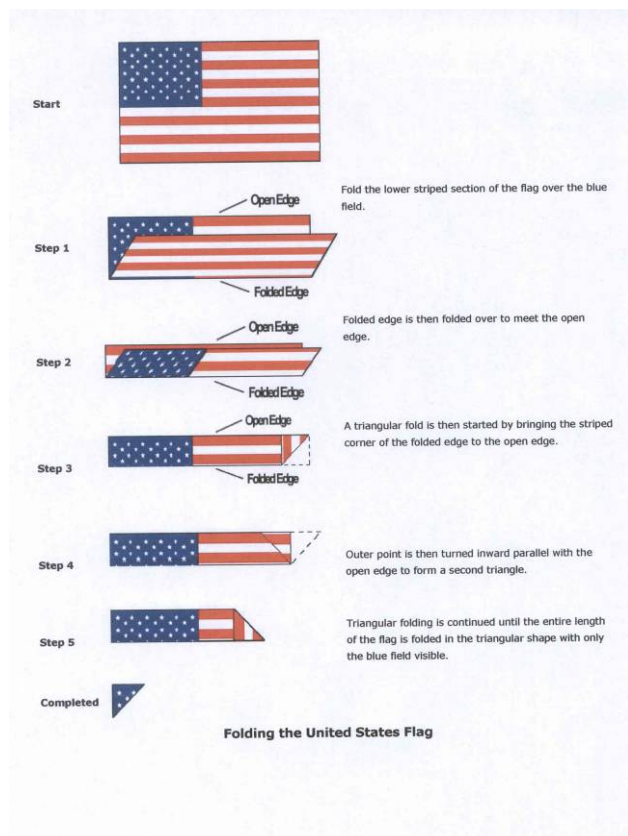
communities where its members serve and live. Customs and courtesies show mutual respect and create a sense of fraternity among military members and CAP members.

A courtesy is kind, polite behavior often linked to a custom. A military courtesy is an action taken to honor a person because of his or her grade or position, or an action to show honor to an object, such as the flag, because of what it represents. For example, the position of honor has always been to the right, and senior officers (those with higher grade) will always walk to the right of others.



This custom originated from medieval swordsmen who always wore their weapons on their left side and drew those weapons with their right hand. The strongest and most experienced warriors were given the place of honor to allow them easy access to their swords.

A custom is a social convention stemming from tradition and enforced as unwritten law. An example of a custom is the triangular folding of the American flag. The folded shape represents the tricorne, the three-cornered hat worn by the patriots of the American Revolution.



CAP customs and courtesies apply to ceremonies, meetings, and gatherings, as well as day-to-day CAP work life. While there is not space to cover all customs and courtesies, this module will discuss the salute and honors to the American flag or “colors.”

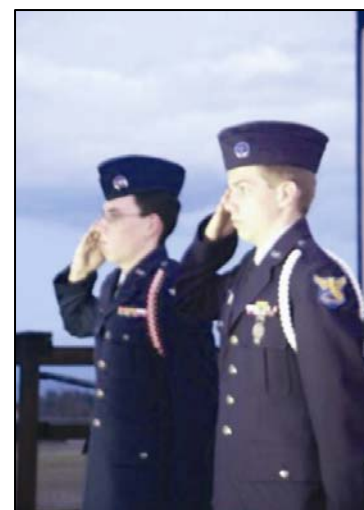
General Rules for Saluting

While the salute is a simple concept to grasp and an easy movement to master with practice, the specific occasions and environments for rendering the salute can become confusing.

As a general rule, salutes are rendered as a courtesy between those officers junior (lower) in grade to those officers senior (higher) in grade. For instance, a lieutenant would salute a captain, a captain would salute a major, or a brigadier general would salute a major general. The junior officer initiates the salute as soon as the senior officer is recognized.

If two members of the same grade meet, it's a good idea for them to salute as well. Salutes typically take place outdoors. It's also polite to greet the officer by saying, “Hello” or “Good afternoon,” for example.

There are times when it is not practical or safe to salute: if both hands are full, or on the flight line. It would be appropriate to give a verbal greeting in these situations. While it is customary for CAP members to salute each other and to salute military members, keep in mind that military members do not have to salute CAP members, regardless of grade.



Ruffles and Flourishes

A song known as "Ruffles and Flourishes" is played to honor certain high ranking military and government officials as well as foreign dignitaries. The song consists of a drum roll (ruffle) and a trumpet fanfare (flourish). Up to four ruffles and flourishes are played, depending on the rank and position of the person being honored.

Upon hearing "Ruffles and Flourishes" *indoors*, in uniform or civilian clothes, face the person being honored and come to and remain at attention until the last note of the music has been played.

Upon hearing "Ruffles and Flourishes" *outdoors*, in the Air Force style uniform, come to attention, face the person being honored, and present arms (salute), remaining at attention until the last note of the music has been played. CAP members in civilian clothes or in the CAP distinctive uniform should face the person being honored and stand at attention until the last note of music has played.

Reporting to Senior Officers

Typically, salutes are not rendered indoors. The exception to this is when reporting to a senior officer. It is proper to salute the senior officer when reporting indoors or outside.

To report indoors, knock on the door and wait for the senior officer to respond to come in. Walk directly to the senior officer until about two paces away. Stop, salute, and report ("Lieutenant Smith reports to Major Jones," for example). When dismissed or at the end of the conversation, come to attention, salute, and walk directly out of the room.

Reporting outdoors follows the same basic sequence.

Respect to the Flag and National Anthem

The U.S. flag is a symbol of the principles and ideals America stands for and should always be treated with respect. The National Anthem and

the Pledge of Allegiance honor the flag and deserve the same respect.

How a CAP member renders honors depends on the specific uniform that is worn (in accordance with the *CAP Uniform Manual* requirements). With the Air Force style uniform (see the *CAP Uniform Manual* for details), saluting for flag and anthem honors is expected. When wearing the CAP distinctive uniform (see the *CAP Uniform Manual* for details), place the right hand over the heart for flag and anthem honors. In the newer CAP corporate uniform of the white shirt and blue epaulets, saluting for flag and anthem honors is expected.

Honoring the Flag Outdoors

Saluting the U.S. Flag

In the Air Force style uniform, when an uncased flag passes by (such as in a parade or at a sporting event), come to attention and salute when the flag comes within six paces and hold the salute until the flag passes six paces beyond. In civilian clothes or the CAP distinctive uniform, come to attention. If wearing a hat, remove it, and hold it in the right hand. Place the right hand over the heart when the flag is within six paces and hold until the flag is six paces past.

On Air Force installations, flags on stationary staffs are saluted only at reveille, retreat, and on special occasions.

Retreat Ceremony

On Air Force installations, the flag is lowered at the end of each day in a ceremony called "Retreat." Usually the bugle call "Retreat" is sounded and is followed by the playing of the National Anthem or "To the Colors." When outside, face the flag if it is visible or face the music if the flag is not visible. Stand at parade rest during the sounding of "Retreat."

At the first note of the National Anthem or “To the Colors,” if in Air Force style uniform, come to attention and salute until the music is finished. If in civilian clothes or in the CAP distinctive uniform, if wearing a hat, remove it, and hold it in the right hand. Place the right hand over the heart until the music is finished.

If you're in a vehicle as “Retreat” sounds, stop the vehicle and sit quietly until the music ends.

The National Anthem & Pledge of Allegiance

The process of paying respect during the National Anthem and during the Pledge of Allegiance is quite similar. When outdoors, in the Air Force style uniform, come to attention, face the flag or music and salute at the first note of music or the first word of the pledge. Hold the salute until the end of the song or the pledge.

If in civilian clothes or the CAP distinctive uniform, come to attention. If wearing a hat, remove it and hold it in the right hand. Place the right hand over the heart until the music stops or the pledge ends.

Indoor Flag Ceremonies

CAP members don't salute the national flag during indoor ceremonies when in the Air Force style uniform. When the National Anthem or “To the Colors” is played, face the flag or music and stand at attention until the last note of music. During the Pledge of Allegiance, remain silent and at attention. In civilian dress or the CAP distinctive uniform, face the flag or music, and remain at attention with the right hand over the heart. During the pledge, hold the same position and recite the pledge.

PART II

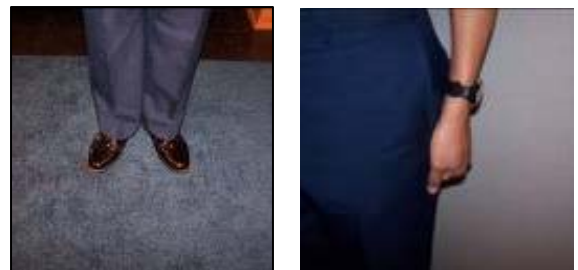
In Part II, the positions or stances “Present Arms (the salute),” “Parade Rest,” or “Attention” will be described in detail. A new member who does not have past military experience will need to continuously rehearse these positions and how and when to respond to officers, to the flag, to the national anthem, and the pledge of allegiance. With practice, these responses will become natural and automatic.

Three Important Drill Positions

The Position of Attention

The position of attention is the basic standing position. This posture allows the commander or leader of an activity to know that the focus is on him or her. The position of attention has the following steps:

- a. Stand straight, knees slightly bent (to avoid fainting).
- b. Feet are together at the heel with toes at 45-degree angles.
- c. Arms are at the sides, in line



with the seams of trousers/slacks.

- d. Hands are cupped into a loose fist, with the thumb outside of the fist facing down.
- e. Head faces forward, chin parallel to the ground. Do not show any expression or speak.

The Position of Parade Rest

The command of “parade rest” is given only from the position of attention. When the preparatory command “parade” is given, mentally prepare, then when the command “rest” is given:

- a. Raise the left leg from the hip just enough for the foot to clear the ground.
- b. Keeping legs straight but not stiff, smartly move left foot to the left and place it down $22\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ off center line of the body. Heels are approximately 12" apart measured inside the heels and on line.
- c. Simultaneously bring hands to the back of the body, uncupping them in the process. Extend and join the fingers pointing them toward the ground, palms out.
- d. Place the back of right hand into palm of the left hand and with right thumb over left so thumbs form an "X," pointing down.
- e. Keep arms fully extended.
- f. Keep head and eyes forward, maintaining silence and immobility until given the command of attention (e.g., “Flight Attention,” “Attention”).



On “Arms,”

- a. Bring right hand smartly up the front and centerline of the body, uncupping the hand as it passes the waist.



- b. Extend and join fingers placing thumb along forefinger; keep palm flat, forming a straight line between the fingertips and elbow.
- c. Tilt palm slightly toward the face; hold upper arm horizontal and slightly forward.
- d. Ensure the tip of middle finger touches one of the following contact points:
 - right front corner of billed cover, or
 - outside corner of right front of eyeglasses if wearing a nonbilled cover or no cover, or
 - outside corner of right eyebrow if wearing a nonbilled cover or no cover.
- e. Remainder of the body remains at position of Attention.
- f. Hold this position until given command of “Order Arms.”

Order Arms

On “Order,” mentally prepare.

On “Arms,”

- a. Smartly lower hand, retracing path used to raise it.
- b. Cup hand as it passes the waist, returning hand to the side of the body.
- c. Body is back at position of Attention.

The Salute

In a formation, the salute is rendered at the command, “Present arms.” The salute is terminated at the command, “Order arms.” The steps for saluting are the following:

Present Arms

On “Present,” mentally prepare.

Conclusion

When CAP members follow military customs and courtesies, they are demonstrating pride and professionalism, and are honoring CAP's heritage.

REFERENCES:

- CAP Manual 39-1, *Civil Air Patrol Uniform Manual*
- CAP Regulation 35-5, *Civil Air Patrol Officer and Noncommissioned Officer Appointments and Promotions*
- CAP Regulation 50-17, *Civil Air Patrol Senior Member Professional Development Program*
- CAP Regulation 52-16, *Cadet Program Management*
- CAP Regulation 900-2, *Use of Civil Air Patrol Seal and Emblem; Use and Display of the US Flag and Civil Air Patrol Flags*
- CAP Pamphlet 151, *Standards, Customs and Courtesies.*