



Morning Quarters

*“Quarters is the formation for muster and inspection.”
The Bluejackets’ Manual, 6th Edition
05/2010*

A Fleet venue for getting History, Heritage, and Culture information to our Sailors on a continual basis.

To have a thorough understanding of naval customs and traditions; To proactively integrate naval traditions, customs, and practices into decision making processes, training and daily leadership; and to consistently use naval history to demonstrate who we are as a service.

1942 Pacific Theater Morning colors is observed.

Colors: Morning and Evening (as described in Article 1206 of U.S. Navy Regulations and as found in the Blue Jackets Manual)

As with many naval traditions, the United States Navy adopted that of morning and evening colors from the British. The practice of morning and evening colors has always been made at 0800 and sunset respectively, and was first codified in the 1843 Rules and Regulations for the government of the Navy. Morning and evening colors are now described in Article 1206 of Navy Regulations.

Approximately five minutes before colors, the word is passed, “First call, first call to colors.” At 0800 or sunset, “Attention” is sounded on the bugle or one blast is blown on a police whistle. Everyone within sight or sound face the national ensign and, if not in formation, render the hand salute (if not in uniform, come to attention and if in a car come to a complete stop). Boats in the vicinity lie to, or proceed at the slowest safe speed, and the boat officer or coxswain stands and salutes in a safe, professional way except when dangerous to do so.

The order “execute” is then given and the national ensign is hauled up smartly (raised) for morning colors while at evening colors it is lowered slowly. During morning colors the National Anthem is played, and during evening colors the bugler sounds “Retreat,” with the national ensign starting down the flagstaff on the first note and timed to reach the bottom at the last note. In the case of a ship, the union jack (on the “jackstaff”) is either raised or lowered simultaneously with the national ensign. In the absence of a band or an appropriate recording to be played, “To The Colors” shall be played during morning colors.

When the National Anthem is finished playing in the morning or the national ensign is completely lowered in the evening, the bugle call “Carry On” is sounded, or three blasts are given on a whistle, or the word is passed, “Carry on,” at which time salutes are ended and the ceremony is over.

You will be able to tell youth from experience during our colors ceremonies because the veterans of battles with the enemy or the elements will often come out to take part in the ceremony while the young and inexperienced will hurry inside as they do not yet understand or appreciate what this ceremony symbolizes. During the ceremony you may of course think about whatever you like, but those who have grown to appreciate the nation through their years of experience and sacrifice will tell you that it is an excellent time to reflect on what this nation and Navy are all about, to think about what it is that makes the United States of America, the greatest nation on earth. And if you are unmoved by the sight of the nations flag bursting forth on a morning breeze, in all it’s colorful glory, it is because you have not yet traveled the world and seen how other people live nor experienced the pride of being a part of a crew that works hard and gives what it takes to make the US Navy the best the world has ever seen.

