

**BY ORDER OF THE
INSTALLATION COMMANDER**



**CHARLESTON AIR FORCE BASE
MANUAL 36-2203**

30 SEPTEMBER 2004

Personnel

RETREAT CEREMONY

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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Pages: 4
Distribution: F

This manual describes the movements and procedures for the Retreat Ceremony at the base flagpole at Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina. It is a guide for persons teaching, learning or participating in the Retreat Ceremony. This manual applies to all Charleston Air Force Base members.

1. The Flight:

- 1.1. The Flight Commander will form up the flight as described in AFPAM36-2241V1, *Performance Fitness Examination Study Guide*, 1 July 2003.
- 1.2. Upon completion of the flight being formed up the flight commander can place them to parade rest and wait for Retreat to begin.
- 1.3. Following the last note of retreat, the flight commander will call the flight to attention and then call present arms.
- 1.4. Following the National Anthem, the flight commander will call order arms and will keep the flight at attention until the flag is folded and has been taken to the front steps of the wing building.
- 1.5. The flight commander can then dismiss the flight.

2. Flag Detail:

- 2.1. The Flag detail will consist of six (6) members. A NCO, three (3) Airmen on the flag detail, and two (2) road guards.
- 2.2. All members of the flag detail will line up with the wing building to their left and the squadron flight to their right. The NCO will be furthest to the right facing directly in front of the pole along the edge of the grass. The remaining Airmen will be lined up based on rank or flag folding experience.

2.3. Five minutes prior to the beginning of retreat the NCO will call the detail to attention and give the command **FORWARD, MARCH**. At that point the detail will begin to march as well as fall into their positions. Road guards will remain in position at parade rest.

2.4. The NCO will march around the right of the pole. After passing the flagpole they will take 10 (ten) steps perform a left flank, take another three (3) steps and halt. The NCO will halt and perform a left face. At this point, the NCO should be parallel to the middle detail member.

2.5. The Airman that was to the NCO's left will march and perform a right flank, take one (1) step forward and halt so that they are one (1) pace to the right of the flagpole facing the flight.

2.6. The third person will perform a right flank, take one (1) step and halt so that they are directly in front of the flagpole one (1) pace away.

2.7. The fourth Airman will perform a right flank, and take three (3) steps forward and halt so that they are one (1) pace to the left of the flagpole facing the flight.



2.8. Once everyone is in position, the NCO will give the command **DETAIL, SECURE**. The two facing the flight will perform either a right or left face so that they are facing the flagpole and the middle person will begin to untie the rope from around the cleat. Prior to the detail beginning a team member should loosen the rope from the cleat so that it is still secure, but will not cause a time delay if previously secured too tight. Once released, the middle Airman will hand the rope off, first to the left then to the right. The two individuals with the rope will hold it left hand over right, hands chin high.

2.9. Once the team is ready the NCO will call **READY, POST** all three (3) members will take two (2) steps backwards.

2.10. The team will now wait for retreat to begin. The NCO can put the team to parade rest. The two members holding the rope will perform all movements of parade rest except for their right hands. They will leave it chin high holding the rope tight so that it makes a triangle from hand to hand to top of pole.

2.11. Retreat will sound; the two road guards will post to stop traffic and stand at parade rest with their right arm extended and their right hand flared. The flag detail team will remain at parade rest. An added note, if the flag is at half-staff it must first be raised to full-staff before it can be lowered. During retreat it will be hoisted briskly to the staff head thus the NCO must call the detail to attention on the first note of retreat.

2.12. Following the last note of retreat, the NCO will come to attention and call the flag detail to **DETAIL, ATTENTION**. The flag detail members holding the rope will come to the position of attention holding the rope tight with both hands left over right, chin level.

2.13. The NCO will then call **PRESENT, ARMS** the NCO and the middle flag detail member not holding the rope will present arms. The National Anthem will play.

2.14. As the anthem is playing, the members will begin to bring the flag down hand over hand. The goal is to have the flag unlatched and secure simultaneously as the anthem ends. As the flag is being lowered and comes within reach of the middle member, they will order arms and begin to gather in the flag. The individual will unhook the halyards as they descend.

2.15. The NCO will help control the speed in which the flag is being lowered. A slight head nod up and down will mean to speed up the decent. A slight head shake right to left will mean to slow down the decent. This movement will be watched for by the detail member facing the NCO.

2.16. Once the flag is secured, the members holding the rope will then take one (1) step towards the pole and secure the rope to the lanyard. This is done by one member giving an eye wink to initiate the movement. Once secured, they will return to the position of attention.

2.17. The NCO will call the command **READY, POST**. Only the members without the flag will perform either a right or left face so that they are facing the flight. This will not include the NCO. They will then automatically step off with the left foot, take five (5) steps then step stop. They will automatically perform either a right or left face so they are facing each other.

2.18. After the members are in place the individual holding the flag will march over to the person on their right and hand the union portion of the flag to that member. Make sure that the union is to the receiving persons left. The middle member will then walk over and hand the opposite end to the other detail member. The member receiving the flag will take necessary back steps to make sure the flag is taut. The person who handed off the flag will then position themselves center on the flag facing the flight.

NOTE: This center member may help in the securing the flag if the wind is blowing by simply pinching the flag, but should not move down as the flag is being folded.

2.19. The members will perform a flag fold as described in AFPAM36-2241V1. They can also contact the Base Honor Guard and ask for guidance on a two-person flag fold.

2.20. As the flag is being folded, the person on the union side will remain stationary while the person folding will step in towards the union side. The middle person will also remain stationary but can aid in folding the flag if the wind is blowing by pinching the flag. When the flag folder is directly in front of the middle person, the next step the flag folder takes the middle person will simultaneously take one (1) step forward as well. This will allow a smaller step when they post as described in **2.22.2**.

2.21. Once the flag is completely folded and tucked, the person who folded the flag will secure it to their chest left hand over right, middle finger tip touching middle finger tip. The tip of the flag will point toward the persons chin.

2.22. Once all members are done moving the NCO will march over and position themselves four (4) paces, centered in front of the flag detail. The NCO will have the flight to the left and the flag detail to the right. The command of **READY, POST** will be given and the following will occur simultaneously.

2.22.1. The two members who folded the flag will perform either a right or left face so that they are facing the flight.

2.22.2. The individual that was centered will step forward so that they are to the left of the flag bearer.

2.22.3. The NCO will perform a left face so that they are facing the flight.

2.23. At this point the three Airmen will be abreast facing the flight with the middle airman holding the flag. The NCO will be four (4) paces ahead of the Airmen also facing the flight.

2.24. The NCO will give the command of **FORWARD, MARCH**. The detail will begin marching towards the flight. Approximately five paces from the Flight Commander the NCO will halt the detail. The NCO will present arms and state "Sir/ Ma'am, the flag is secured." The commander will return the salute.

2.25. After the commander has lowered their salute the NCO will do so also, perform an about face and give the command **LEFT WHEEL, MARCH**. The NCO will go to a mark time march and the three Airmen will also begin a mark time and wheel turn to the left. Once they have made a 180 degree turn and are facing the Wing building, the NCO will call **FORWARD, MARCH** on consecutive left feet. The detail will march forward towards the wing building.

2.26. As the detail approaches wing leadership, the NCO will present arms. The commander of the wing leadership flight will salute and then order arms as the detail pass. After passing, the NCO will order arms and the detail will continue to the wing building. The NCO will then call **DETAIL, HALT**. At that point the NCO can dismiss the detail.

2.27. The road guards will remain posted until wing leadership has crossed the street to the flagpole. Following that, the NCO of the flag detail will dismiss the road guards.

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Commander