



## *Color Guard Procedure*

### **Basic Procedures**

When practical, the color guard consists of two NCOs (the flagbearers) and two experienced airmen (the guards). When selecting a color guard, make every effort to ensure uniformity in height among members.

The carrying of the US and Air Force flags is an honor bestowed only on responsible NCOs. When possible, flagbearers and guards who have had experience in this function should be selected. If experienced personnel are not available, those selected should be thoroughly trained in the manual of the Colors and made fully aware of the honor of their duty.

The flagbearers are unarmed. The guards are armed with rifles or revolvers, but ammunition will not be issued to color guards performing a strictly ceremonial function.

The senior flagbearer carries the US flag, commands the color guard, and gives the necessary commands for movements and rendering honors. The junior flagbearer carries the Air Force flag. The Air Force flag is placed on the marching left of the US flag in whatever direction the flags face. When only the US flag is carried, the color guard is composed of one flagbearer and two guards. The Air Force flag is never carried without the US flag.

With the flagbearers in the center, the color guard is formed and marched in one rank at close interval. The color guard does not execute to the rear march or about face. When the unit to which the color guard is attached executes a facing movement, the color guard, on command of the senior flagbearer, executes a right or left about. To halt the color guard, give the command **Color Guard, HALT**. When the unit to which the color guard is attached marches to the flank in column, the color guard executes half right (left) about. When the unit moves in a new direction for short distances, the color guard executes the about movement and halts in its proper place. The base or pivot point is the guard on the flank toward which the movement is directed. Each member turns (without pivot) around this point and maintains dress until the new direction is established.

On command of the senior flagbearer, the guards of the color guard present arms on receiving and parting with the US flag. After parting with the US flag, the guard is brought to order arms by command of the senior remaining member, who is the right flank of the guard.

Having received the US flag, the senior flagbearer conducts the color guard to its proper position in the center of the color squadron. After securing the US flag, the color guard is dismissed by the senior flagbearer.

At drills and ceremonies in which the US and Air Force flags are carried (except escort of the US flag), the US and the Air Force flags are received by the color squadron before the formation of the command.

The color squadron, formed with a 12-pace interval between flights and with its commander facing the front, receives the Colors as follows:

the color guard, conducted by the senior flagbearer, approaches from the front and halts at a distance of 12 paces from the squadron commander. The squadron commander then faces the squadron and brings it to present arms, faces

the US flag, and salutes. After a brief moment, the squadron commander again faces the squadron and brings it to order arms. The guards of the color guard execute present and order arms with the color squadron. The senior flagbearer then marches the color guard directly to its post. The color guard takes its position in the center when the squadron is in line or column and on the left when the squadron is in mass. When the color squadron joins the formation, the color guard takes its post on the final line.

When in formation, the color guard executes at ease and rest with the color squadron, keeping the staffs on the US and Air Force flags vertical.

When dismissing the color guard at the end of a drill or ceremony in which the US and Air Force flags have been carried, the color guard proceeds from its position and halts in front of and faces the squadron commander of the color squadron. The squadron presents arms. The color guard then escorts the US and Air Force flags to the commanders office or other depository of flags. The color guard is dismissed from organizations smaller than a squadron (funeral escort) in a similar manner.

