
General Rules

This Ritual may not be changed except by the National Convention.

1. Officers are personally responsible for their Rituals. They shall permit only properly authorized persons to read the Ritual.
2. While the Post is in session, no member will pass between the altar and the commander's station, except as prescribed by the Ritual.
3. All officers should memorize their parts and practice with co-workers in order to render all ritual work correctly and impressively. See the foreword.
4. The officer of the day shall act as master of ceremonies.
5. When addressing the commander, all officers salute in a military manner. The commander will return similar salutes. All officers exchange salutes when addressing each other.
6. One rap of the gavel calls attention or seats the body when standing. Two raps of the gavel call everyone to standing attention.
7. At National and Department conventions, the "Star Spangled Banner" should be played or sung at the Opening Session immediately after the colors are placed.
8. All Posts should hold a public memorial service for their departed comrades at least once a year. This may be held as a special ceremony or in conjunction with a public meeting.
9. "Sleep, Soldier Boy," by Dorothy Alexander, Auxiliary No. 409 (copies of which may be purchased from National Headquarters), or any other appropriate song may be used at all VFW memorial services.
10. All VFW military formations and procedures shall conform with the current Infantry Drill Regulations, United States Army.
11. The military salute shall be given in all ceremonials and meetings when a member wishes to address the commander or presiding officer. The military salute shall also be used in the ceremonial work, as set forth in this Ritual.
12. In compliance with directives approved by the Veterans of Foreign Wars 59th National Convention and the VFW National Council of Administration, "the flag of the United States, of appropriate size and attached to a standard, shall be placed upright upon the VFW altar to the left of a Bible – (to the left of the Bible as viewed by one standing before the altar and facing the Commander's station). The POW/MIA flag may be placed to the right of the American flag. Both the flags and Bible shall be upon a regulation VFW altar cloth. ”
13. All members who are able will stand during the offering of the prayers.
14. Regarding the wearing of hats:
 - a. Members will follow the action of the Chaplain or presiding officer relative to removal of caps during prayers; if uncovering, the hat shall be placed on the extended closed fingers of the right hand in such a way that the Cross of Malta is exposed and held over the heart.
 - b. Official caps will not be worn during luncheons, banquets or other meals.
 - c. Official caps will be the only head covering allowed to be worn at regular meetings of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.