

National Royal Rangers Guidelines For Formations & Ceremonies



Formations and ceremonies have long been a part of the Royal Rangers experience by providing a way of bringing groups together in an orderly fashion, moving them from place to place, and serving as an opening for special events. They are commonly used in awards presentations, opening or closing ceremonies, flag raisings, or other similar activities. Formations & ceremonies help to build teamwork, confidence, patrol spirit, and discipline. These qualities enable groups to conduct interesting and well-executed ceremonies as they represent Royal Rangers in their churches and communities.

The following guidelines have been developed to provide a uniform standard for all Royal Rangers patrols, groups, outpost, districts, or other formations when conducting formations and ceremonies. It is the prerogative of the local outpost leadership to determine the extent to which formations and ceremonies are used in their outpost and the setting in which they are used. But if they are used, we recommend the following guidelines for use within Royal Rangers in all settings.

NOTE: Additional information relating specifically to the use of Color Guards and Honor Guards within Royal Rangers can be found in the Color Guard Manual, available online at RoyalRangers.com.

Formations & Assemblies

A formation is a specific and orderly way of bringing a group together. Formations may include a single patrol, an age group, an outpost, or a group of outposts, depending on the setting. When several outposts are assembling together each outpost will assemble in *patrol formation*, in the location within the larger assembly as directed by the event leadership.

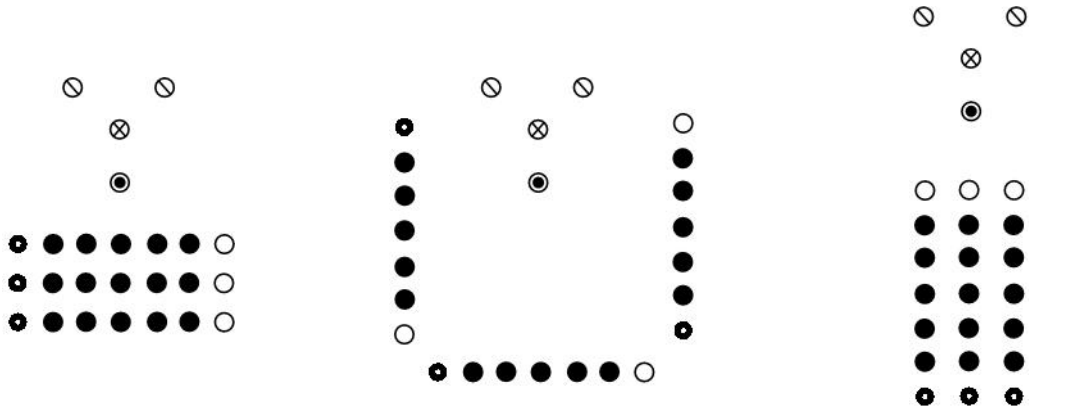
When outposts assemble in *patrol formation*, all boys line up by patrols, with the adult leaders assembling as a separate patrol, usually in the rear or in a special location. Patrols may form in either *rows* or *columns*. A row is a group of individuals standing side by side, facing the same direction. A column is a group standing one behind the other. If the patrol is standing in a row (side by side) the Patrol Leader is on the right of the patrol (boy's right) and the Assistant Patrol Leader is on the left. If the patrol is in a column (lined up behind one another) the Patrol Leader is in front and the Assistant Patrol Leader is in rear. Patrol Leaders assemble their patrols according to the location and formation selected by the Senior Patrol Leader.

When assembling in patrol formation by rows, a block, square, or some other formation may be used. When in block formation, each patrol lines up one behind the other, facing the same direction. The Patrol Leader in each row stands directly behind the Patrol Leader in front of him so that all patrols are in alignment on the right side (boy's right) of the formation. The Group Leader stands in front of the group, facing them, with his Assistant Group Leaders on either side of him or assembled in a line behind him or at the back of the formation. The Senior Patrol Leader stands in the center between the Group

Leader and the patrols. When addressing the patrols, the Senior Patrol Leader turns to face the patrols. When reporting to the Group Leader or receiving instructions from him, he turns to face the Group Leader.

When assembling in patrol formation by columns, the same formations may be used except that the patrols are assembled in columns rather than rows, with the Patrol Leaders in the front of each row.

Other variations of these formations may be used as needed for the situation. The following illustrations show possible formations that may be used.



*Patrols in ROWS,
in block formation*

*Patrols in ROWS,
in square formation*

*Patrols in COLUMNS,
in block formation*

- ⊗ Group Leader
- ⊖ Asst. Group Leader
- ⊙ Senior Patrol Leader
- Patrol Leader
- Asst. Patrol Leader
- Patrol Member

NOTE: These illustrations reflect situations where everyone in the assembly is from one age group. In situations where multiple age groups are involved (or the entire outpost), some form of modified formation may be needed. For smaller outposts, each group could form as a single patrol with the Senior Patrol Leaders standing in line next to the Patrol Leaders (to the Patrol Leader's right), and the Outpost Coordinator standing in the location of the Group Leader.

Drill Commands

Drill commands are used to facilitate the orderly formation and movement of the groups. Each command directs the group to move in a specific way. By understanding each command groups are able to respond quickly and uniformly when each command is given.

Most drill commands are comprised of two parts: the *preparatory command* and the *execution command* (sometimes referred to as the *command of execution*), with a brief pause between the two.

The preparatory command identifies the movement to be carried out and mentally prepares the group for its execution, so that once the execution command is given, the group can move in unison.

For example, when directing the group to turn to their left, the command "Left (pause), face," would be used. The preparatory command is "Left." Although no movement has taken place yet, the group is now aware and prepared to turn left when the execution command is given. When the execution command of "face" is given, the group turns to the left at the same moment.

In some settings, it may be appropriate to precede a command with an identifier to specify who the command is being given to. For example, in a group where several patrols are present, if a Patrol Leader wants to assemble his patrol for special activity, he may say "Running Fox Patrol, Fall in" so that everyone in the room will know that it is only the Fox patrol that is assembling in formation.

Fall In

When the leader wants to assemble the group the command "Fall In" is given. Typically this command is given to the patrols by the Senior Patrol Leader. The Senior Patrol Leader specifies the formation to be made and the location of each Patrol Leader. The patrol members then fall into formation based on the location of their Patrol Leader, at the head of their column or the right end of their row, as described above.

Attention

The command of "attention" is given to bring the group to its most standard and orderly position. When standing at attention, each individual is standing straight with feet together and arms at your sides. Heels should be together with the toes of your feet apart at a 45 degree angle. Your thumbs should be along the side seams of your pants, with fingers cupped. Eyes and face should be directly ahead of you. No talking is allowed when at attention unless directed otherwise by the formation leader.

When the group initially comes together in a formation at the command of "fall in", the position of attention is assumed. From this position, other commands may be given to direct the group to move in specific ways. But the group always returns to attention before executing a new movement.

The command of attention is one of the few commands that does not include a preparatory command. When the command, "attention" is given, all group members immediately come to the position of attention where they are.

At Ease

When the leader wants to keep the group in formation but allow them to stand in a more comfortable manner than at attention, he may give the command "At Ease". When the command is given, members keep their right foot in place and move their left foot a comfortable distance to the left (about shoulder width). Their hands are placed together comfortably behind their back. Members are then free to turn & look around but may not talk.

The right foot is kept in place to enable the group to maintain their spacing. When they are later brought back to attention, they will bring their left foot back in place and will be standing in the same location as where they started.

At Rest

The command "At Rest" is very similar to "At Ease" in that the stance taken by the members is identical. The only difference is that when standing at rest, members are free to talk with one another while maintaining their position in the formation.

Parade Rest

Parade Rest is a position that is a mixture of "at ease" and "attention". The command for the parade rest movement is "Parade (pause), rest." On the execution command "rest," move their left foot a comfortable distance to the left (about shoulder width). Simultaneously, place the hands at the small of the back and centered above the belt. Keep the fingers of both hands extended and joined, interlocking the thumbs so that the palm of the right hand is outward. Keep the head and eyes as in the position of attention. Remain silent and do not move unless otherwise directed.

Dress Right Dress

The command "Dress Right Dress" is given to arrange individuals in a straight line and a consistent interval once they are in formation. To space the patrol members at a normal interval, the command "Dress right (pause), dress" is given. On the command of execution "dress," the Patrol Leader on the right end stays in place while each member turns his head and eyes to the right and aligns himself with the man on his right. Each member (except the Assistant Patrol Leader on the left) extends his left arm to the side at shoulder level, elbow locked, fingers and thumb extended and joined, palm facing down. He ensures his left arm is in line with his body and positions himself by short steps right or left until his right shoulder touches the fingertips of the man on his right. On the command of "Ready (pause), front," each boy returns sharply to the position of attention.

To align the boys at a closer interval, the command "At close interval, dress right (pause), dress" is given. The movement is executed in the same manner prescribed for alignment at normal interval except that patrol members place their left hand on their hip with the fingers extended, joined, and pointing down, rather than fully extending the arm. The elbow is extended to the left to obtain the correct interval.

Facing Movements

The commands to change facing include a two-count movement. The commands are "Left (pause), face", "Right (pause), face", or "About (pause), face." When turning left, on the command of execution "face," slightly raise the right heel and left toe and turn ninety degrees to the left on the left heel, assisted by a slight pressure on the ball of the right foot. Keep the left leg straight without stiffness and allow the right leg to bend naturally. On the second count, place the right foot beside the left foot, resuming the position of attention. Arms remain at the sides, as in the position of attention, throughout this movement. To turn right, follow the opposite procedure.

To turn around so that you are facing in the opposite direction, perform an "about face". On the command of execution, "face", place the toe of your right foot on the ground at a point behind and to

the left of your left foot, about the length of your foot. Then spin around, pivoting on the toe of your right foot and the ball of your left until you are facing in the opposite direction. If done correctly, your feet should naturally come together at a normal angle facing your new direction.

Marching

To move a patrol from one point to another in an orderly fashion, the command is "Forward (pause), march." On the preparatory command "Forward," without noticeable movement, shift the weight of the body onto the right foot. On the command of execution "march," step forward a full stride with the left foot. The head, eyes, and body remain as in the position of attention. The arms swing in natural motion—without exaggeration and without bending the elbows—about nine inches straight to the front and six inches straight to the rear of the trouser seams. The fingers and thumbs are curled as in the position of attention, just barely clearing the trousers. The command to terminate this movement is "Patrol (pause), halt." The preparatory command "Patrol" may be given as either foot strikes the marching surface. However, the command of execution "halt" must be given the next time that same foot strikes the marching surface. The "halt" is executed in two counts. On the command of execution "halt," take one additional step after the command of execution. Then bring the trail foot alongside the lead foot, reassuming the position of attention, thus terminating this movement.

To change the direction of a marching patrol ninety degrees, the command is "Column right (or left) (pause), march." When marching, the preparatory command, "Column right (left)," and the command of execution, "march" are given so they end on the foot in the direction of the turn. The interval between is one additional strike of the same foot. Keep in mind, as stated earlier, that for simplicity, a patrol is considered a column. On the command of execution "march," the patrol guide executes the movement by taking one more step, then pivoting on the leading foot in the indicated direction. All other patrol members march forward on the command of execution and execute the column movement at approximately the same location as their patrol guide and in the same manner.

To change the direction of a patrol when marching, the preparatory command and command of execution for each movement are given so patrol members begin and end on the foot in the direction of the turn. "Column right (pause), march" is given as the right foot strikes the marching surface. "Column left (pause), march" is given as the left foot strikes the marching surface. The pause interval between the preparatory command and the command of execution is normally one step or count.

Terminating a Formation

Formations may be brought to a close with one of the three commands described in the following paragraphs. Before giving any of these commands, the person in charge should call the formation to attention.

Fall Out

Fall out is the command to use to tell the Rangers that they may leave the formation but remain in the immediate areas for further instructions.

Dismissed

Dismissed means the formation is finished and other activities may begin. This may also be used at the end of a closing ceremony to send the Rangers on their way.

Take Charge

When the person in charge of the formation wishes to instruct the subordinate leaders that they may conduct their business, he directs them to take charge. For example, the Senior Patrol Leader may give the directive, "Take charge of your patrols." This means he is finished with his business and he expects the Patrol Leaders to maintain order as the patrols move to next item in the meeting, such as Business/Patrol Corners time. The Rangers remain at attention until the subordinate commands otherwise.

Actions & Ceremonies

Ceremonies can cover a broad range of situations. The important thing is to properly plan and practice prior to the event. Practice time can be provided during the Recreation segment of the meetings. Drill and ceremony can be a competitive game between patrols, with the commander and lieutenant commanders as judges. The procedures discussed here, if followed, will help in preparing for the ceremony. Other ceremonies, when properly planned, can also be accomplished.

Patrol Reporting

When an outpost assembles during morning assembly an event or during the opening ceremony of a weekly meeting, some form of attendance is typically taken to make note of who is in attendance and who is not. This procedure could be conducted orally through patrol reporting, where each Patrol Leader is given the opportunity to report his patrol's attendance to the Senior Patrol Leader. When conducting patrol reporting, the following procedure is used:

1. The Senior Patrol Leader calls on the Patrol Leaders one at a time to report the attendance for their patrols. For example, the Senior Patrol Leader may say "Running Fox Patrol, report."
2. The Patrol Leader for the Running Fox Patrol would stand (if seated), face the Senior Patrol Leader and respond, "Running Fox Patrol, all members are present," or if some members are absent he might say "Running Fox Patrol, 5 members present, two are absent." He would then sit down, if previously seated.
3. The Senior Patrol Leader would then repeat the process with all the patrols, and then report the results back to the Group Leader.

Colors Ceremony

The opportunity to participate in a presentation of the United States flag should be considered an honor, and time should be taken to practice to ensure success during a colors ceremony. The most important thing to remember is that Royal Rangers represent Jesus Christ and, therefore, all should strive to be the best example possible. The leader has the overall responsibility for the presentation of colors ceremony. The following is a sample colors ceremony for raising flags outdoors. The colors ceremony starts with the leader or Senior Patrol Leader stepping forward and giving the directive, "(Patrol Name), proceed with the presentation of colors."

1. If the patrol is not already at attention, the Patrol Leader calls his patrol to attention.
2. The patrol then begins to march in orderly fashion to their position behind the flag poles. If in a square formation, the patrol's first movement is to the rear. To accomplish this, the Patrol

Leader gives the command "One step backward (pause), march," On the command of execution "march," the entire patrol takes one fifteen-inch step back with the left foot, followed up with the right foot to complete the movement.

3. The Patrol Leader then gives the command "Right (pause), face." On the command of execution "face," the entire patrol does a facing movement to the right.
4. The Patrol Leader then gives the command "Forward (pause), march." The patrol marches forward.
5. The Patrol Leader marches his patrol, using appropriate movement commands, to bring them to a position behind the flagpoles, at which time he commands "Patrol (pause), half."
6. Once the patrol is halted, the Patrol Leader gives the command "Left (pause), face."
7. The command "Prepare (pause), colors" is given for the flag bearers to attach the flags to the ropes.
8. Once the flags are attached, the Patrol Leader commands "Outpost (pause), attention" and "Heart (pause), salute." The color guards remain at attention in their positions but do not salute.
9. The command "Post (pause), colors" is given and the flags are raised briskly in the following order: United States, Christian, and Royal Rangers.
10. When the United States flag reaches the top of the pole the Patrol Leader will say, "Ready (pause), two."
11. After the flags are raised and the patrol members have secured the ropes, the Patrol Leader commands, "Heart (pause), salute" and leads the assembly in the pledge to the United States flag. When finished he commands, "Ready (pause), two." Then he commands, "Heart (pause), salute" and leads the pledge to the Christian flag. When finished he commands, "Ready (pause), two." The command "Raise your right (pause), hand" is then given and the Royal Ranger Pledge is recited, followed by "Ready (pause), two."
12. The Patrol Leader then marches his patrol back to its original position.

Pledges & Saluting

Leaders will need to help their boys learn the pledges during the meetings. Ranger Kids will learn these for their advancements. The pledges are provided in each of the boys' handbooks. Parents should be encouraged to help the boys at home. Most boys will learn the pledge to the United States flag in school.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag:

Salute by placing your right hand over your heart. Then recite "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

The Pledge to the Christian Flag:

Salute by placing your right hand over your heart. Then recite "I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag and to the Savior for whose Kingdom it stands; one brotherhood, uniting all true Christians in service and in love."

The Royal Ranger Pledge:

Salute by raising your right hand with upper arm horizontal to the ground and forearm pointing up, with your elbow forming a right angle. Hand should be open and flat, with palm facing forward. Then recite "With God's help, I will do my best to serve God, my church, and my fellowman; to live by the Ranger Code; to make the Golden Rule my daily rule."

Pledge to the Holy Bible:

Salute by holding both hands out in front of you, together and flat, with palms facing upward, as if holding a Bible. Then recite "I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word. I will make it a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path, and will hide its words in my heart that I might not sin against God."

Displaying the Flags

Always treat the United States flag with the highest respect. You may fly the flag continuously, both day and night. However, the flag must be visible at night. It must be lit up either by a streetlight or another light source.

No flag may fly above the United States flag on the same mast; however, other flags may fly below the United States flag on the same line or mast.

As you raise the flag on a pole or mast, the flag should be unfolded and held out by a second person while you pull the line upward. You should raise the flag quickly, but lower it slowly, with dignity. The United States flag must be higher than all other flags.

The Christian flag is flown at the same height as other non-national flags, such as those of states.

The United States flag is to be flown at half-mast while mourning the death of a person and on Memorial Day (until noon). When hoisting the flag, raise it to the top of the mast first and then lower it halfway. When lowering the flag, raise the flag to the top first, then lower and remove it from the mast.

If the flag is on the platform, the United States flag should be on the audience's left, with all other flags to the audience's right. If United States flag is hung on the wall, it should be placed behind the speaker with the stars in the upper left corner of the flag.

When the United States flag is displayed in a group of other flags, it should be at the center or at the highest point. Again, it can be at the audience's left.

When carried in a procession with other flags, the United States flag should be either on the right of the line of marchers holding the flags or in the center in front of the other flags. During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the United States flag, or when the flag is passing in a parade or in a review, those in view of the flag should come to attention and face the flag. In uniform or out you should place your right hand over your heart. If a man or boy has on a hat that is not a part of his uniform, he should remove it with his right hand and place it over his heart. Women may keep their hats on.

Caring for the Flag

The United States flag may be mended or dry-cleaned. When the flag is soiled or torn beyond repair, it may be destroyed by burning or burial during a special ceremony for the occasion. When not being

flown or displayed, the flag should be folded neatly so that the top and bottom attachment grommets are easily reached.

Special Guidelines for Color Guards

The use of color guard or honor guard teams at special events has become a common practice in Royal Rangers. Color guards teams present the colors (flags) during special ceremonies. Honor guards also serve a ceremonial role yet without flags. Due to the special function of these teams, additional guidelines pertain to their use. This information can be found in the Color Guard Manual available online at RoyalRangers.com.