Customs, Courtesies & Ceremonies

Lesson Objective: Demonstrate the unique customs and courtesies used by members of CAP and the USAF, plan relevant ceremonies which require the use of those skills and demonstrate the correct selection and wear of the appropriate uniform.

Desired Learning Outcomes (DLO):

1. Describe how military customs and courtesies are appropriately shown and used.
2. Explain how to plan and conduct military ceremonies.
3. Describe the correct wear of selected Civil Air Patrol uniforms.

Scheduled Lesson Time: 50 minutes

Introduction

An old expression of attitudes towards professional customs and courtesies is “the senior officer never thinks about them, the junior never forgets them.” However, unit commanders set the standards for their command by setting the example. By consistently practicing customs and courtesies as well as correctly wearing appropriate uniforms, commanders demonstrate their expectations of professional behavior to their members. Commanders must also be mindful that they are being observed very closely by cadets, who practice customs and courtesies as an important part of their program. Through the use of military customs and courtesies we are reminded of our Air Force heritage. They foster professional, respectful and comfortable interaction within the home unit, among other CAP units, the Air Force and other branches of our armed forces.

1. Appropriately rendering military customs and courtesies

Terms of address and greeting

The salute originated in the age of chivalry. Etiquette dictated that should two friendly knights meet, each would raise his helmet visor, show his face, and greet the other. A knight also would salute with his right hand. Because swords were carried in the right hand, offering a salute was a sign of trust. Even after firearms made armor obsolete, the salute continued to serve as the proper greeting between soldiers.

The custom to greet and salute fellow officers continues as a sign of professionalism and respect. The junior officer initiates the salute to the senior officer and brings it down when the salute is returned or the officer passes. The verbal greeting should be short and sincere “…good morning colonel.”
Professionalism also dictates that we address cadets and senior members by their correct terms according to their grade. (See Figure 1, above)

**The salute**

Saluting is usually confined to outdoors when not performing assigned duties (such as taking part in a work detail), in a formation (the supervisor or formation commander salutes for the group) or on the flight line. We also salute indoors when reporting to a superior officer. A verbal greeting is always appropriate. We also salute (but not verbally greet) a staff car when grade is displayed, signifying that the vehicle is occupied by an officer of the grade indicated.

Not only is it important to salute at the appropriate times, but we may also be judged by the quality of the salute. Forget the “Hollywood” salutes. Figure 2 (below) shows the proper technique for saluting.
Reporting to a superior officer is a custom that simply reflects the recognition that when doing official business with someone of higher rank, their rank is recognized and they are given control of the conversation (after all, as the person of higher rank, they do control the conversation).

Reporting to a superior officer in CAP is really no different than it is anywhere else (if called to see the boss at work you knock on the door, wait for permission to enter, give a greeting and wait to be asked to be seated. After conducting the business at hand, he/she will dismiss you and you’ll leave). The difference in CAP is that it’s just a little more formal.

General Principle: When directed to formally report to an officer, follow these steps...

1. In an office setting, knock on the commander’s door and wait for permission to enter.
2. Walk toward the commander and halt 2 paces in front of them.
3. Salute and report, “Sir / Ma’am, (Grade) (Name) reporting as ordered.”
4. Wait for the officer to return the salute.
5. Remain at attention, unless instructed otherwise.
6. When the meeting is over, the officer will say, “Dismissed.”
7. Come to attention (if not already), and take one step backward.
8. Salute and wait for the officer to return the salute.
9. Perform an about face and exit the area.

It’s likely that you may be directed to report at a formation. If your name is called to receive an award, or if you are accepting an award for a member not present:

1. March to the front via the most direct route
2. Walk toward the presenter and halt 2 paces in front of him (her)
3. Salute and report, “Sir (Ma’am), (your Grade & Name) reporting as ordered”
4. Wait for the return salute
5. Remain at attention and follow instructions
6. After the presentation, you will be dismissed
7. Come to attention (if not already), and take one step backward
8. Face the presenter, salute and wait for the return salute
9. Perform an about face and march back to your place via the most direct route

2. Planning and conducting military ceremonies

It’s very common that CAP commanders have little or no military background or training aside from that provided by CAP. However, they are expected to demonstrate military customs and courtesies. While not expected to do much marching, senior members, particularly commanders, should know how and when to use the basic positions.

**Basic standing positions common to formations and ceremonies**

**ATTENTION**

The position of “Attention” is the base from which all other drill movements and courtesies are derived. Very simply, it is the act of standing attentively, respectfully and quietly while being absolutely focused on the activity or person around which you are standing. Not surprisingly the posture and form in which one stands is standardized. When called to a formation or during a ceremony the attention position is the default until instructed otherwise. It is also customary for all members to come to attention when the commander enters the room.

If an officer who is higher ranking than anyone present enters the room, the first person to notice commands, “Room, ATTENTION.” If only senior members or officers are present, the first to notice the commander uses the more cordial, “Ladies and gentlemen, the commander.”. The position of “attention” involves the following:

- Stand straight with knees slightly bent.
- Feet should have heels together with toe-side pointing out at a 45-degree angle.
Arms should hang naturally at one’s sides with the thumb and forefinger touching the side-seam of the trouser (or at one’s side if wearing the skirt).

Hands should be in a gentle fist with thumbs exposed and facing down to the floor.

**PARADE REST**

The position of “Parade Rest” is the most formal of the rest positions. In this position members have a slightly more relaxed posture, but remain silent. It is used both in formations and when speaking to a superior officer as directed. The position of “Parade Rest” involves the following:

- On “REST,” raise the left foot slightly from the hip and move smartly to the left.
- Heels 12-inches apart and on line; legs straight, but not stiff.
- As the left foot moves, brings arms fully extended to back of body.
- Extend and join fingers, pointing them to ground with palms facing outward; right hand in palm of left, forming an “X”.
- Head and eyes straight ahead.
- Remain silent and still.

**AT EASE**

The position of “At Ease” is a less formal rest position. While at ease, members may relax their posture, make uniform adjustments, etc. While at ease, members may NOT:

- Move their right foot (this keeps your place in formation aligned)
- Speak (many times instructions are given to members at this time)

If commanded to be “At Rest”, members may do anything that they do at the position of at ease and they may talk. Members must still hold their place with their right foot.

**THE PLACE OF HONOR**

It is a custom in many societies to reserve the place of honor (most desired place) for the member of the group who carries the highest or most seniority. Rank, in this context, can be many things: age, position in the organization, grade (in the case of the military or CAP), social status or other measure. Senior rank means highest rank and all other members of the group are junior to this person.

**How is this done in CAP?** The senior ranking member of the group occupies the most desirable place, walks in front and to the right of everyone else when walking in a group; enters the room first, exits the car last, or is seated at the most desirable place at a head table at a banquet.

The junior officer walks on the senior’s left because the right is the customary place of honor. This stems from antiquity when warriors carried swords, usually on their right side. Being positioned on the right of the juniors, the senior would be able to draw a sword and defend the formation. The exception is during uniform inspections, the senior walks on the left. This positions the senior closest to the troops, with the best vantage point for conducting the inspection.
FACING POSITIONS

Commanders will sometimes be in a situation that requires facing movements. Performing a “Left Face” involves two steps.

**Count 1;** Pivot on the heel of the left foot and the ball of the right foot

**Count 2;** Move the right foot forward so the heels are together and the feet are at a 45° angle.

“Right Face” is the opposite. Pivot on the heel of the right foot and the ball of the left foot and bring the feet together.

An “About Face” is a more difficult facing movement. To perform an about face:

**Count 1;** Place the right toe approximately 4 to 6 inches behind and slightly to the outside of the left heel.

**Count 2;** Pivot to the right on the left heel and right toe. If properly executed you should face 180° with your heels together and feet at an angle of 45°. (This may take some practice.)

Honoring the Flag

DURING A CEREMONY AS THE FLAG IS BROUGHT FORWARD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Military-Style Uniform</th>
<th>Civilian Attire or Corporate Uniform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indoors</strong></td>
<td>Stand at attention as the flag passes</td>
<td>Stand at attention as the flag passes place right hand over heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outdoors</strong></td>
<td>Stand at attention and salute as the flag passes</td>
<td>Stand at attention as the flag passes remove hat with right hand over heart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DURING THE “NATIONAL ANTHEM” OR “TO THE COLORS”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Military-Style Uniform</th>
<th>Civilian Attire or Corporate Uniform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indoors</strong></td>
<td>Face the flag or music and stand at attention</td>
<td>Face the flag or music, stand at attention, place right hand over heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outdoors</strong></td>
<td>Face the flag or music and salute</td>
<td>Face the flag or music, stand at attention, place right hand over heart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DURING THE “PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE”
Military-Style Uniform | Civilian Attire or Corporate Uniform
---|---
**Indoors & Outdoors** | Face the flag stand at attention and remain silent | Face the flag, stand at attention, place right hand over heart and recite the pledge

**NOTE:** We do not recite the Pledge of Allegiance while in military formation.

Our CAP ceremonies are based on protocol, which is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "a code prescribing strict adherence to correct etiquette and procedure (as in diplomatic exchange and in the military services)." Protocol is the accumulation of customs and standards that deal with meetings, conferences, ceremonies and etiquette. In Civil Air Patrol this code of accepted practices and procedures has paralleled that of the United States Air Force. It not only requires knowledge and awareness of regulations and numerous other references, but good common sense and a lot of flexibility.

Commanders are responsible for ensuring their people receive proper recognition. It's common that squadrons perform monthly promotion ceremonies to recognize the accomplishments of their members with multiple promotions at the ceremony. CAP ceremonies should be a family event to celebrate the success of the family member in the organization.

Don’t forget the photo opportunities, press release, invitations to VIPs (city, county, and state elected officials), refreshments, and any items to be presented.

Some awards and cadet ranks can only be given by specified officers, elected officials, or representatives of the sponsoring organization. Commanders must be aware of the requirements and invite those guests well in advance of the occasion.

**Promotions and awards**

**PROMOTIONS**

Promotions are significant events in the lives of military people. In CAP, promotions are one of the few tangible rewards for the efforts of our volunteers. During the promotion ceremony:

- The individual being promoted is called to report to the commander
- The squadron is called to attention as the promotion order is read
- The new rank is put on the uniform. This is an opportunity to directly involve the family in a very significant part of CAP
- The oath of office is recited
- The member is dismissed

Air Force protocol states that multiple promotion ceremonies should be sequenced in descending rank order.
AWARDS

Awards are also very important. They recognize our volunteers’ accomplishments and extra efforts demonstrating a CAP core value of *Excellence*. Very much like that the promotion ceremony, the awards ceremony sequence is:

- The individual receiving the award is called to report to the commander
- The squadron is called to attention as the citation to accompany the award is read
- The award is presented
- The member is dismissed

*Change of Command Ceremony*

The primary purpose of a *change of command* ceremony is to allow subordinates to witness the formality of command change from one officer to another. The ceremony should be official, formal, brief and conducted with great dignity. For very detailed directions refer to Air Force Pamphlet 34-1202, paragraph 14.5.

The flag/guidon is exchanged during the change of command as a symbolic gesture providing a tangible view of the command authority being transferred from one commander to the next. The sequence for the exchange begins with three participants standing abreast, from left to right as viewed from the audience, presiding officer, outgoing commander, and incoming commander. A fourth participant, the flag/guidon bearer, takes a position behind and between the presiding officer and outgoing commander. The flag/guidon bearer gives a subdued command, (Officers, Center); the presiding officer executes a left face while the two commanders execute a right face. The outgoing commander salutes the presiding officer, while stating, “Sir/Ma’am, I relinquish command.” The presiding officer returns salute. The outgoing commander takes the flag/guidon from the flag/guidon bearer, holding the flag and angling the top of flag towards the head of the flag/guidon bearer, and presents it to the presiding officer with presiding officer hands on top. The outgoing commander takes one step to the right, two steps back and one step to the left; simultaneously, the incoming commander takes two steps forward, taking the outgoing commander’s place. The presiding officer presents the flag/guidon to the incoming commander who firmly receives the flag/guidon and passes it to the flag/guidon bearer. The incoming commander salutes the presiding officer, while stating, “Sir/Ma’am, I assume command.” The presiding officer returns the salute. The flag/guidon bearer gives a subdued command, (Officers, Post). All three officers face forward.

3. Correctly wearing all of CAP’s uniforms

As stated in the introduction of this lesson, unit commanders should set the example by consistently and correctly wearing appropriate uniforms. A neat, clean and correctly worn uniform speaks volumes about a commander’s professionalism and organization. It also sends a strong message to visitors and potential recruits of the expectations of the unit. They must always remember that they are being observed very closely by the other officers and especially by their cadets. The diligent commander will often refer to CAPM 39-1, *Civil Air Patrol Uniform Manual* to ensure that their uniform is worn correctly. They may even ask other members of their command to perform a quick inspection.

Introductory Discussion Topics: Why do people wear uniforms?
CAP Unit Commanders Course
Customs, Courtesies & Ceremonies

Possible answers:

- Identify members of an organization/nationality/religion/team.
- Special jobs require specialized clothing for safety and comfort.
- Allow members to identify each other.
- Promote the organization to the public.

Why does the military wear uniforms?
Possible answers:

- Identify friendly (and enemy) personnel.
- Identify leadership.
- Military résumé.

One of the privileges of belonging to CAP is wearing the uniform. Unit Commanders must remember when that privilege is exercised; the commander and members of their command represent the United States Air Force and are bound to wear the uniform properly and respectfully.

**Practical symbolism**

When to wear and when not to wear a CAP uniform

- Wearing the CAP uniform is required when:
  - working with cadets
  - flying in corporate aircraft
- Wearing the CAP uniform is encouraged:
  - CAP activities, meetings and events
  - at military social functions
- Wearing the CAP uniform is authorized when:
  - traveling to/from CAP activities, and for short stops while on the way such as to a restaurant for a break, when fueling the vehicle, etc.
  - on military installations when on base for a CAP purpose
- The CAP uniform may not be worn:
  - at a public demonstration or event not authorized by the Air Force
  - when engaged in private employment
  - when sponsoring or advertising a commercial interest
  - at any meeting or demonstration of a group that advocates illegal acts or violence against the government or other groups
  - in foreign countries except when participating in official exchange programs or other sanctioned international events
In addition, an Air Force style CAP uniform may be worn only if the member (officers and cadets) meets grooming and weight standards. Figure 3 (below) chart outlines the weight standards used to determine eligibility to wear the Air Force-style uniforms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEIGHT</th>
<th>MEN</th>
<th></th>
<th>WOMEN</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>USAF Standard (Maximum Allowable Weight)</td>
<td>CAP standard (Maximum Allowable Weight)</td>
<td>USAF Standard (Maximum Allowable Weight)</td>
<td>CAP Standard (Maximum allowable Weight)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4'10&quot;</td>
<td>149 lbs</td>
<td>164 lbs</td>
<td>132 lbs</td>
<td>145 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4'11&quot;</td>
<td>151 lbs</td>
<td>166 lbs</td>
<td>134 lbs</td>
<td>147 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5' 0&quot;</td>
<td>153 lbs</td>
<td>168 lbs</td>
<td>136 lbs</td>
<td>150 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5'1&quot;</td>
<td>155 lbs</td>
<td>171 lbs</td>
<td>138 lbs</td>
<td>152 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5'2&quot;</td>
<td>158 lbs</td>
<td>174 lbs</td>
<td>141 lbs</td>
<td>155 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5'3&quot;</td>
<td>160 lbs</td>
<td>176 lbs</td>
<td>142 lbs</td>
<td>156 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5'4&quot;</td>
<td>164 lbs</td>
<td>180 lbs</td>
<td>146 lbs</td>
<td>161 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5'5&quot;</td>
<td>169 lbs</td>
<td>186 lbs</td>
<td>150 lbs</td>
<td>165 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5'6&quot;</td>
<td>174 lbs</td>
<td>191 lbs</td>
<td>155 lbs</td>
<td>170 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5'7&quot;</td>
<td>179 lbs</td>
<td>197 lbs</td>
<td>159 lbs</td>
<td>175 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>202 lbs</td>
<td>164 lbs</td>
<td>180 lbs</td>
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<tr>
<td>5'9&quot;</td>
<td>189 lbs</td>
<td>208 lbs</td>
<td>168 lbs</td>
<td>185 lbs</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5'10&quot;</td>
<td>194 lbs</td>
<td>213 lbs</td>
<td>173 lbs</td>
<td>190 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5'11&quot;</td>
<td>199 lbs</td>
<td>219 lbs</td>
<td>177 lbs</td>
<td>195 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6' 0&quot;</td>
<td>205 lbs</td>
<td>225 lbs</td>
<td>182 lbs</td>
<td>200 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6'1&quot;</td>
<td>211 lbs</td>
<td>232 lbs</td>
<td>188 lbs</td>
<td>207 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6'2&quot;</td>
<td>218 lbs</td>
<td>240 lbs</td>
<td>194 lbs</td>
<td>213 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>224 lbs</td>
<td>246 lbs</td>
<td>199 lbs</td>
<td>219 lbs</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6'4&quot;</td>
<td>230 lbs</td>
<td>253 lbs</td>
<td>205 lbs</td>
<td>226 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6'5&quot;</td>
<td>236 lbs</td>
<td>260 lbs</td>
<td>210 lbs</td>
<td>231 lbs</td>
<td></td>
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<td>6'6&quot;</td>
<td>242 lbs</td>
<td>266 lbs</td>
<td>215 lbs</td>
<td>237 lbs</td>
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<td>248 lbs</td>
<td>273 lbs</td>
<td>221 lbs</td>
<td>243 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6'8&quot;</td>
<td>254 lbs</td>
<td>279 lbs</td>
<td>226 lbs</td>
<td>249 lbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3, Air Force and CAP weight standards

Commander’s discretion may be used to determine if individual’s personal grooming is within standards of this manual. Commanders do not have authority to waive grooming and appearance standards except as identified CAPM 39-1. Grooming is very personal. However,
like the weight standards, meeting military grooming standard are not required for some CAP uniforms. All CAP personnel must comply with the same personal grooming standards dependent on the uniform they are wearing (Air Force-style or Corporate-style). Commanders have the responsibility to determine compliance with the letter and intent of this manual and to correct the obvious violations regardless of whether the situation identified is clearly written in this manual.

**Uniform combinations overview**

There are a variety of CAP uniform combinations available to members which may be worn according to the occasion. Some of them require ribbons to be worn and some require that the member meets grooming and weight standards. Figure 4 (below) shows uniform requirements. **CAPM 39-1, Civil Air Patrol Uniform Manual**, is THE guide to find answers to any questions concerning details on the correct wearing of CAP uniforms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meet Grooming and Weight Standards</th>
<th>ABU/BDU</th>
<th>White Aviator</th>
<th>Polo</th>
<th>Blue Field</th>
<th>Blue AF Shirt</th>
<th>Service Dress</th>
<th>Flight Suit</th>
<th>Mess Dress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Grade | Required | Required | None          | Required | Required | Required | Required | Required |

| Name | Required | Required | Opt | Required | Required | Required | Required | None      |

| Ribbons | None | Optional CAP Ribbons Only | None | None | Opt CAP & Military | CAP Required Military Optional | None | Miniature CAP Medals Required |

| Specialty Track Badges | None | Optional w/ Limit of 4 | None | None | Optional w/ Limit of 4 | Yes w/ Limit of 4 | None | Yes w/ Limit of 4 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergarments</th>
<th>Black / Desert Tan Tee</th>
<th>V neck tee Required w/o tie</th>
<th>White V neck tee Required</th>
<th>White V neck tee Required w/o tie</th>
<th>White V neck tee or crew neck Required</th>
<th>Black crew neck tee only Required</th>
<th>Not visible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Tie (male) | Tabs (female) | None | Required w/ long sleeve | None | Required w/ long sleeve | Required | CAP Scarf Opt | Required Midnight Blue Bow |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trousers or Skirts (female)</th>
<th>ABU/BDU</th>
<th>Gray w/ black belt</th>
<th>AF Blue</th>
<th>AF Blue</th>
<th>AF Blue</th>
<th>One Piece</th>
<th>Matching trousers or skirt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Footwear | Black Combat Boots | Black Shoes and socks | Black Shoes or Combat Boots | Black Combat Boots | Black Shoes and socks | Black Shoes and socks | Black Shoes/boots and socks | Black Shoes and socks |

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Figure 4, Uniform Requirement Guide Abstract
Refer to CAPM 39-1 for more details (tattoos, hair color, jewelry, etc.)
Lesson Summary and Closure
It is through our practice of the military customs and courtesies, ceremonies, and uniforms that identify the Civil Air Patrol as part of the United States Air Force. A thorough knowledge of these distinctions will assist our members to successfully integrate as an important part of the USAF Total Force. By making military customs and courtesies a part of CAP’s culture, we add our 75 year history to the heritage of our armed forces, demonstrate our professionalism, and profess our commitment to our missions.