



# ARMED FORCES DAY

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## Objectives:

- What is Armed Forces Day?
- What day is Armed Forces Day celebrated?
- What day did Armed Forces Day replace and why?
- Who officially made Armed Forces Day a national holiday?

## Activity:

- As a group, review and discuss the .pdf provided and the questions above. Discuss how this day is different from Veteran's Day and Memorial Day. Have the group discuss why it is important to celebrate our military service members. Name the branches that the holiday honors.

## Additional Activities

How to Celebrate Armed Forces Day.

Attend one of the many events in cities across America including parades, military service displays, educational exhibits, luncheons, motorcycle rides, run/walk races, and much more. Also, since Armed Forces Day is not a federal holiday, many military installations are available for public viewing for those wishing to take part in the celebration or to learn more about our country's military.

## More ways to celebrate

- Wear red, white, and blue
- Fly the American flag
- Thank a man or woman who serves or has served
- Talking with or writing to a military member



# ARMED FORCES DAY HISTORY

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While there are many holidays that many Americans hold in honor of the military, one is Armed Forces Day. This holiday is celebrated on the third Saturday in May. This holiday is placed in military appreciation month and falls in line with Military Spouse Appreciation, Memorial Day, and Victory in Europe Day (V-E Day) as another May military-themed holiday. This day is meant to recognize the current men and women that serve in today's military regardless of branch.

## **The History of Armed Forces Day**

With several days set aside for the several different branches such as Army, Navy, and Air Force Day, Defense Secretary Louis Johnson on Aug. 31, 1949, announced the creation of an Armed Forces Day to replace each branch's own holiday and make it one day. This was brought on by the fact that all our armed forces were made to a single unification under one agency, The Department of Defense.

On Feb 27, 1950, President Truman said:

"Armed Forces Day, Saturday, May 20, 1950, marks the first combined demonstration by America's defense team of its progress, under the National Security Act, toward the goal of readiness for any eventuality. It is the first parade of preparedness by the unified forces of our land, sea, and air defense."

Armed Forces Day was not considered a national holiday until President John F. Kennedy declared it one in 1961.

Today's Armed Forces Day has become larger in honoring more than just the top three. The list of branches is Army, Navy, Airforce, Marine, Coast Guard, and the newest member - Space Force.

## **How to Celebrate Armed Forces Day**

With the proclamation by President Truman, the first Armed Forces Day was held with parades, airshows, and receptions in Washington D.C. 10,000 troops from all branches along with their respected cadets and veterans marched past the president and his party. On this day we would like to challenge each and every one of you to do something new to celebrate this day. Pick up a pen and write to a Soldier, Sailor, Marine, or Airman and thank them or Bring food or a care package to your local USO.