

The Code for the National Anthem of the United States of America

ADOPTED BY THE NATIONAL ANTHEM COMMITTEE, APRIL 2, 1942

The Star-Spangled Banner will be presented only in situations, programs, and ceremonies where its message can be effectively projected.

Since the message of the music is greatly heightened by the text, it is of paramount importance that emphasis be placed upon the *singing* of the National Anthem.

The leader will address himself to those assembled, as an invitation for their participation. If announcement of the National Anthem is necessary, it will be stated as follows: "We shall now sing our National Anthem," or "So-and-so will lead you in singing our National Anthem."

On all occasions, in singing the National Anthem, the audience will stand facing the flag or the leader in an attitude of respectful attention. Outdoors, the men will remove hats.

Musicians playing the National Anthem in an orchestra or band will stand when convenient to do so.

Our National Anthem is customarily sung at the opening of any program, but special circumstances may warrant the placing of it elsewhere.

If only a single stanza of the National Anthem is sung, the first will be used.

In publishing the National Anthem, the melody and harmony and syllable divisions of the Service Version of 1918 will be used. In publishing for vocal groups, the voice-parts of the Service Version will remain unchanged. (The Service Version in A-flat is reproduced on this page.)

It is inappropriate to make or use sophisticated "concert" versions of the National Anthem.

For usual mass singing of adults and for band or instrumental performances, the key of A-flat will be used. For treble voices the key of B-flat may be used.

If an instrumental introduction is used, the last two measures are most appropriate.

When the National Anthem is sung unaccompanied, care should be taken to establish the correct pitch.

The National Anthem should be sung at a moderate rate of speed. (The metronome indications in the Service Version are crotchet 104 for the verse and crotchet 96 for the chorus.)

The slighting of note values in the playing or singing of the National Anthem will seriously impair the beauty and effectiveness of both the music and the lyric. Conductors should painstakingly rehearse both instrumental and vocal groups in the meticulous observance of correct note values.

The statements herein relate to every mode of civilian performance of our National Anthem and apply to the publication of the music for such modes of performance.



The Service Version of the National Anthem, reproduced below, was prepared in 1918 by a joint committee of twelve (see 1919 Yearbook of the M.E.N.C., p. 145, and MUSIC SUPERVISORS' JOURNAL of November 1918, pp. 2-3), comprising John Alden Carpenter, Frederick S. Converse, Wallace Goodrich, and Walter R. Spalding, representing the War Department Commission on Training Camp Activities; Hollis E. Dann, Peter W. Dykema (chairman), and Osbourne McConathy, representing the Music Educators National Conference; Clarence C. Birchard, Carl Engel, William Arms Fisher, Arthur E. Johnstone, and E. W. Newton, representing the music publishers.

The Service Version as reproduced below is the same as that prepared by the original joint committee, with the exception of the transposition to the key of A-flat, in order to make it more singable by audiences, and a few minor changes in punctuation and wording, in order to make it more authentic.

The code here printed was adopted by the 1942 National Anthem Committee at the Milwaukee Conference with the assistance of its two representatives from the War Department, Major Howard C. Bronson, Music Officer in the Special Services Branch, and Major Harold W. Kent, Education Liaison Officer in the Radio Branch of the Bureau of Public Relations. Messrs. Dykema and McConathy represent the original committee on the 1942 Committee, which includes representatives of all principal music organizations.

The Star-Spangled Banner

SERVICE VERSION

Francis Scott Key

Attributed to
John Stafford Smith

With spirit (♩=101)

1. O say! can you see, by the dawn's ear - ly
2. On the shore, dim - ly seen thro' the mists of the
3. O thus be it ev - er when free - men shall

light, What so proud - ly we hail'd at the twi - light's last
deep, Where the foe's haugh - ty host in dread si - lence re -
stand Be - tween their loved homes and the war's des - o -

gleam - ing? Whose broad stripes and bright stars, thro' the per - il - ous
pos - es, What is that which the breeze, o'er the tow - er - ing
la - tion! Blest with vic - t'ry and peace, may the heav'n - res - cued

fight, O'er the ram - parts we watch'd, were so gal - lant - ly
steep, As it fit - ful - ly blows, half con - ceals, half dis -
land Praise the Pow'r that hath made and pre - served us a

stream - ing! And the rock - ets' red glare, the bombs burst - ing in
clos - es? Now it catch - es the gleam of the morn - ing's first
na - tion. Then con - quer we must, for our cause it is

air, Gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there.
beam, In full glo - ry re - flect - ed now shines on the stream;
just, And this be our mot - to: "In God is our trust."

Chorus (♩=96)

O say, does that Star - Span - gled Ban - ner yet -
'Tis the Star - Span - gled Ban - ner, O long may it -
And the Star - Span - gled Ban - ner in tri - umph shall

broaden
wave O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?
wave O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!
wave O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!
broaden

[Reprints of this page may be obtained from M.E.N.C. headquarters, 64 E. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, for 1c a copy, postpaid.]