

## ***Military Funeral Honors - [www.midsouthfuneralpiper.com](http://www.midsouthfuneralpiper.com)***

The order of ceremony is the sounding of "Taps", folding and presentation of the flag to the family. If the deceased was retired from the military or was killed-in-action, a firing party will be present. They will fire three volleys before sounding "Taps". Afterwards, the flag is folded and presented. A detail leader is responsible for ensuring each step in the ceremony is executed precisely.

1. The bugler and color guard are situated at the graveside so that they are in view of the family, approximately 30-40 yards from the grave. The firing party also should be in view of the family, but 45-75 yards from the grave.
2. The firing party includes 3-8 riflemen, reflecting the military custom of firing "three volleys of musketry" over the graves of fallen comrades.
3. The Military Honors detail positions itself near where the hearse will stop. The pallbearers move into position behind the hearse. When the entire procession has arrived, the funeral director opens the rear of the hearse, readies the pallbearers, and determines when the family is ready to proceed.
4. The pallbearers are directed to withdraw the casket from the hearse and carry it to the grave. The piper leads the them to the grave playing an appropriate selection. The bugler and firing party already are in their positions.
5. All detail participants (excluding pallbearers) come to "Attention" and "Present Arms" as the casket is carried to graveside. All detail participants will "Order Arms" after the casket has been placed on the lowering device. Most often, pallbearers are instructed to stand aside in formation for the duration of the service.
6. During the committal, all honors detail participants go to "Parade Rest".
7. When the committal is completed, the detail leader assumes the clergy's position at the head of the grave and all honors detail participants come to "Attention". The funeral director may request mourners to stand for the rendering of military honors.
8. If a firing party is present, all honors participants will execute "Present Arms". Three volleys will be fired, followed immediately by the sounding of "Taps". If mourners are standing, they will be invited to be seated by the funeral director.
9. Flag folding is next. A United States flag drapes the casket of deceased veterans to honor the memory of their service. The flag is placed on a closed casket so the union blue field is at the head and over the left shoulder of the deceased.

If cremains are to be interred, the flag will be in possession of a detail member. It will be unfolded and re-folded in the standard military fashion.

Folding is performed by two detail members, or by as many as six if sufficient personnel are present. If there is a firing party, often three of the spent brass cartridges are inserted into the folded flag or given to the family. The folded flag then is passed to the detail leader for inspection and presentation.

10. The detail leader presents the folded flag to the next of kin determined by the family.

11. Following flag presentation, the detail leader offers condolences to the remainder of the immediate family and others seated in the front row.
12. Upon presentation of the flag, if the piper is present, a selection is performed. Afterwards, the funeral director concludes the service.
13. The detail leader, bugler, and firing party return to their vehicle and prepare to depart.





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