

MARINE CORPS RECRUIT

DEPOT, SAN DIEGO

FRIDAY MORNING COLORS

AUDIENCE GUIDE

- This guide provides a step-by-step walkthrough of the Friday morning colors ceremony.
- It's designed to be accessible to all guests, including those who are hard of hearing, multilingual, or unfamiliar with military tradition.
- Each portion of the ceremony includes a brief explanation, followed by the actual narration as it is spoken during the event.
- No names or ranks are included, so this guide can be used at any colors ceremony, regardless of company.

Glossary

- **Parade Rest** – A position of rest with your feet spread 12 inches apart and your hands behind your back.
- **Attention** – A position where you're standing upright, heels together, and hands at your sides.
- **Present Arms** – Position where one performs a military salute. If holding a sword, the sword is used to salute.
- **Order Arms** – Returning to 'attention' after saluting.

Pre-Ceremony

- Marines will assemble under the large archway of the Commanding Generals building, quietly preparing for the ceremony.
- At about 7:30, the narrator will announce:

NARR:

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. The ceremony will begin in 10 minutes. At this time, we ask that you do not pass through the center archway to use the restrooms. Please use the entrances along the roadway on the left or right side of building. Thank you!

- At about 7:35, the narrator will again say:

NARR:

Ladies and gentlemen, the ceremony will begin in 5 minutes, please remember to silence all electronic devices.

- Around 7:38, the narrator cues the start of the ceremony:

NARR:

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Commanding General, Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and the Western Recruiting Region, welcome to the Marine Corps Recruit Depot's Friday morning colors ceremony. Today's ceremony is being executed by the Marines of Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego. We ask that you take this time to silence all electronic devices.

- From beneath the archway, the band's Drum Major commands "**FORWARD MARCH**" and marches the band just past the threshold of the entrance.
- The band halts, and the musicians in the front row peel outward into a "concert split" formation.
- The band stops playing and marching. The conductor steps out front.
- The narrator says:

NARR:

Officially formed in 1921, Marine Band San Diego has performed inspiring renditions of traditional and contemporary music for millions throughout the world.

Each member of the band has completed recruit training, Marine combat training, and actively maintains combat skills, giving true meaning to the title, “Marine musicians.”

The band is under the direction of their enlisted conductor and is led on the march by the drum major.

- The narrator provides a short narration for the bands first song. Then, the band performs the song.
- When they band finishes the song, the conductor turns, bows, and the band prepares their next piece.
- The Narrator will say:

NARR:

Marines have served honorably in every clime and place for 250 years.

From the shores of Tripoli, to the valleys of Afghanistan, Marines have always been the most ready when the nation was least ready. United states Marines have prided themselves on living their motto, “Semper Fidelis” meaning “always faithful” since their founding on November 10th, 1775.

- Another short narration follows, detailing the next song, then the band plays their second tune.

- Once complete, the Drum Major steps back in front. The band reforms into a “block” formation, and they march forward and turn right. They conduct a “countermarch” and halt at their final position on the audience’s left.
- The Drum Major will command “**SOUND FIRST CALL TO MORNING COLORS**”. The trumpets raise their horns and play the bugle call “*First Call*”

March on of the Troops

- The Narrator then says:

NARR:

Ladies and gentlemen, please rise for the march on of the troops and remain standing for honors to the Commanding General for Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and the Western Recruiting.

Accompanying him is the Sergeant Major for Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and The Western Recruiting Region.

- From beneath the archway, the command “**DEPOT, ATTENTION, FORWARD, MARCH**” is given.
- The band begins to play, and the General and Sergeant Major march out.

- Behind them emerge 3 platoons of Marines, each with their own Platoon Commander up front. They stop at their designated spot.
- When the music stops, the Platoon Commanders have the platoons face the audience.

Note 1:

- If the Commanding General is not present, someone else may lead the ceremony. For this guide, the Marine standing-in for the General will continue to be referred to as the General.
- In this case, the next section of “**RENDERING HONORS**” would not occur.
- If the individual marching up is NOT wearing black trousers, then it is not the General. Skip ahead to **SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS**

Note 2:

- If the Depot Sergeant Major is unable to attend, another Marine will accompany the General or the Generals Stand-in. They too will continue to be referred to as the Depot Sergeant Major in this guide.

Rendering Honors to the Commanding General

- The commanders give “**PRESENT ARMS**”. Each platoon will salute.
- The Narrator will say:

NARR:

Ladies and gentlemen, it is customary for all active-duty members to render a salute during the playing of honors to Commanding Officers. We ask that all military members in the audience join us in rendering honors to the Commanding General for Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and The Western Recruiting Region.

- The band plays “*One Ruffle and Flourish*” and “*Flag officers March*” as all Marines salute the General.
- On the last note, the narrator says:

NARR:

Thank you, please be seated.

- The Platoon Commanders then give “**ORDER ARMS**”

Special Recognitions

- The Platoon Commanders give “**PARADE REST**” in sequence.
- The Marines remain at “Parade Rest” while the narrator states:

NARR:

The Depot, which consists of 388 acres, is the Corps’ oldest west coast installation, and has a recruit training mission dating back to 1923. This year, more than 17,000 young men and women will successfully complete our rigorous three-month training cycle and depart the depot having earned the title, “Marine”.

We extend a warm welcome to the families and friends of the Marines graduating from the graduating company. Distinguished among all of the graduating Marines is the company honor graduate. While at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, the honor graduate was trained by their Senior Drill Instructor who joins us here this morning as well as their Recruiter. Also present today is the highest platoon average Primary Marksmanship Instructor.

(Pause For Applause)

We would also like to extend a warm welcome to today's parade reviewing official.

(Pause For Applause)

Today, as a representation of the legacy of bravery and selfless service to which all Marines have committed themselves, we pause to honor the actions of a marine who clearly demonstrated commitment to their comrades, our country, and our corps by reading the following citation of meritorious action:

- At this point, a Medal of Honor citation, or other notable award citation, is read.
- A different citation is read every week and cannot be included here. However, the citation highlights a Marines bravery and selflessness.
- After the citation is read, the Platoon Commanders turn around and bring their units to attention.

March on of the Colors

- When all Marines are at attention, the narrator will say:

NARR:

Now taking his position at the head of the formation is the Commanding General for Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and the Western Recruiting Region. Accompanying him is the Sergeant Major for Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and The Western Recruiting Region.

- Once they're in place:

Ladies and gentlemen, please rise for the presentation of the colors and remain standing for the playing of our National Anthem. We welcome veterans and members of the armed forces to join us in rendering appropriate honors with a military salute. For guests who have not served in the military it is proper etiquette during the National Anthem to place their right hand over their hearts and for those in the audience wearing headgear to remove it.

- The Sergeant Major will command **“MARCH ON THE COLORS”**
- The band begins playing *“You’re a Grand Old Flag”* as the color guard marches from under the archway to their position centered in the courtyard.

Sounding Morning Colors

- The color guard halts, the music stops, and the band's Drum Major commands "**SOUND ATTENTION**"
- The band plays the bugle call "*Attention*"
- The Platoon Commanders and Color Sergeant command "**PRESENT ARMS**"
- The Drum major Commands: "**STRIKE EIGHT BELLS AND SOUND MORNING COLORS**"
- The narrator strikes the ceremonial bell eight times, and the band immediately plays "*The Star Spangled Banner*"
- On the last note, the band plays the bugle call "*Carry On*"
- The Platoon Commanders and Color Sergeant give "**ORDER ARMS**"
- Once all Marines complete order arms, the narrator says:

NARR:

Thank you, please be seated.

Ladies and gentlemen, The Commanding General for Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and the Western Recruiting Region.

Remarks from the Commanding General

- The platoons are commanded to “Parade Rest” and the Commanding General (Or stand-in) will step out to speak to the crowd.
- The General will recognize special guests, top performers, and comment on the significance of the morning colors ceremony.
- When remarks conclude, the platoons are commanded back to “Attention” and the color guard “Carries” the colors.

Retiring the Colors

- The narrator states:

NARR:

Ladies and gentlemen, please rise for the retiring of the colors and remain standing for the playing of Anchors Aweigh followed by the Marine’s Hymn. For all Marines present and who have served honorably, please join us in singing the first verse, as Marine Band San Diego performs the Marines Hymn.

- The Sergeant Major will command: **“RETIRE THE COLORS”**
- The band plays *“National Emblem March”* as the color guard turns around and returns to the archway.
- When the color guard is out of sight, the band performs *“Anchors Aweigh”* And *“Marines Hymn”*
- When the music stops, the Narrator says:

NARR:

Thank you, please be seated.

- The Commanding General commands **“COMMANDERS, DISMISS YOUR PLATOONS”**.
- They respond, **“AYE AYE SIR”**, salute, and dismiss their platoons.
- The platoons fall out and the band prepares to play.
- The band marches off playing *“Semper Fidelis March”* as the Drum Major salutes the Commanding General.
- Once the Commanding General and Sergeant Major shake hands, the narrator says:

NARR:

Ladies and gentlemen, this concludes today’s ceremony. Thank you for your attendance and welcome to the Marine Corps family!