

Memorial Day Family Fun



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Introduction

Memorial Day is upon us, and along with it often comes mixed emotions. On one hand it is a bit sad as we honor those who have lost their lives serving our country. This may be an especially meaningful day for those of you who have lost a family member. On the other hand, it is also often looked upon as the weekend that begins the summer months. Although summer does not officially start until the third week in June; many schools are beginning summer vacation around this time and the weather is generally also beginning to resemble summer.

It is our hope that this e-book will help you share some quality time with your family as you take in the weekend. Set aside some time to share with your kids what this day is about. Then enjoy a family BBQ and perhaps create a craft project together.

Have a great and memorable weekend.

Christine Steendahl

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The History of Memorial Day

Memorial Day was first celebrated on May 5, 1866 at Waterloo, New York. This was due to the fact that the town commemorated Memorial Day yearly with the entire community engaged in events, including decorating the graves of soldiers with flags and flowers.

Originally named Decoration Day in honor of the soldiers who died in the Civil War, it was John A Logan, General of the Army of the Republic who, on May 5, 1868, declared that May 30th would be a day in which flowers decorate the graves of those who died in defense of their country. In fact, at the first celebration of Decoration Day, then General James Garfield made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. honoring the 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers who fought and died. It is said that over 5000 people helped to decorate these graves with flags and flowers.

Since then, Memorial Day has become a day of reflection and observance. All businesses are closed for the day, as well as government buildings. In addition, all members of the armed services, from World War I to today, have been so honored. Memorial Day spawned Veteran's Day, which is observed on November 11th. Subsequently, Congress declared Memorial Day as a national holiday and is celebrated during a solemn ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. One of the most important events is the placing of the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, which is usually done by the President or the Vice-President.

The tomb contains the remains of unknown American soldiers from all of the wars American fought. Moreover, every soldier was given the Medal of Honor at the time they were interred, and you can see these medals at the Memorial Amphitheater. In addition, the tomb is guarded

every day of every year by special members of the Old Guard. It is a fitting tribute to these men, and every year thousands of people visit this site to pay homage to these great men.

Memorial Day has become especially significant, as we have our troops fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. Honoring them and those who died before them is not only fitting, but reminds us that freedom comes at a price, and any soldier would tell you that fighting for their country is worth the sacrifice. Remember the men and women who are in far away lands protecting the freedom of others, as well as our own. Light a candle in their honor; send them a message of thanks or a care package of homemade cookies; let them know you are thinking and praying for them. It's the least we can do to ensure our Memorial Day history is not merely read from a book, but practiced every day.

Memorial Day Activities for the Whole Family

Memorial Day is a sober reminder of the men and women who fought and died in the name of freedom. But, it is also a day to celebrate by engaging in a variety of activities. Here are 7 Memorial Day activities the whole family will enjoy.

1. Have a barbecue and invite family and friends. Red, white, and blue is the theme of the day; so get out all of your party favorites and decorate your backyard with balloons, streamers; signs; and flags. You can even buy patriotic hats for your guests to wear! Perhaps you can also bake a red, white and blue cake. Don't forget the candles!!
2. How about a family picnic in the park? You can make this a special time for your and your family by not only enjoying the outdoors and having fun, but explaining to your kids the importance of Memorial Day. Bring Frisbees, a baseball or football, and just have a wonderful time as a family! Later on, you can attend your local Memorial Day parade.
3. If you want to get away, no place would be more suited so spend time than in Washington, D.C. There you can take your children to visit the Capitol; the White House; Lincoln Memorial; and, of course, the Viet Nam Memorial. There you can explain to your kids the importance of Memorial Day, and allow them to ask questions; explore; and experience the history of our nation's capital.
4. If you prefer to stay at home, you can still enjoy the day by having an old fashioned family barbeque, and make Memorial Day crafts for your scrapbook. Why not have the kids write letters to the troops in Iraq, or put together a care package of canned goods, cookies and other items our men and women would love to have. Have the kids send along a card with a message of thanks! Or you can go online and

send emails to the troops via this great online website:
<http://www.usafns.com/email.shtml>

5. Check your community to see if they are having any special events or Memorial Day concerts. This would be a wonderful way to spend the day. They might even have a fireworks display afterward. Plan on spending the entire day out with your family and you can even dress up in red, white, and blue outfits to commemorate the day.

6. If age appropriate, visit your local Veteran's chapter and bring some homemade cookies or cakes. There, the veterans can teach your kids the history of Memorial Day and what it means to them.

7. Every Memorial Day, I watch Yankee Doodle Dandy. It is a wonderful movie for kids, and without being too maudlin, it can introduce them to the true meaning of Memorial Day.

Memorial Day Craft Ideas

Patriotic Streamers

- Cardboard Tube (from a roll of paper towels)
- Glue
- Ribbon in Red, White and Blue
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Stickers (optional)

Wrap the different colors of ribbon around the cardboard tube creating a stripe pattern. Glue it in place as you go.

Using the hole punch, cut nine holes into one end of the cardboard tub.

Cut three pieces each of the red, white and blue ribbon, about 45 inches long.

Tie a large not in one end of each piece of ribbon. Tread the other end of the ribbon through one of the holes in the cardboard tube and pull it all the way through, so the knot is on the inside of the tube.

You can decorate your streamer with some star or flag stickers.

Simple Flag Craft

- Paper in Red White and Blue
- Scissors
- Glue
- Cardboard Tube From Paper Towel Roll

Start your child off with a white sheet of paper. Have him or her add red stripes and a blue square to make the flag. Cut out white stars and your preschooler glue them on the blue square.

Glue the left side of the flag onto the cardboard tube to make a flag he or she can hold.

Noise Makers

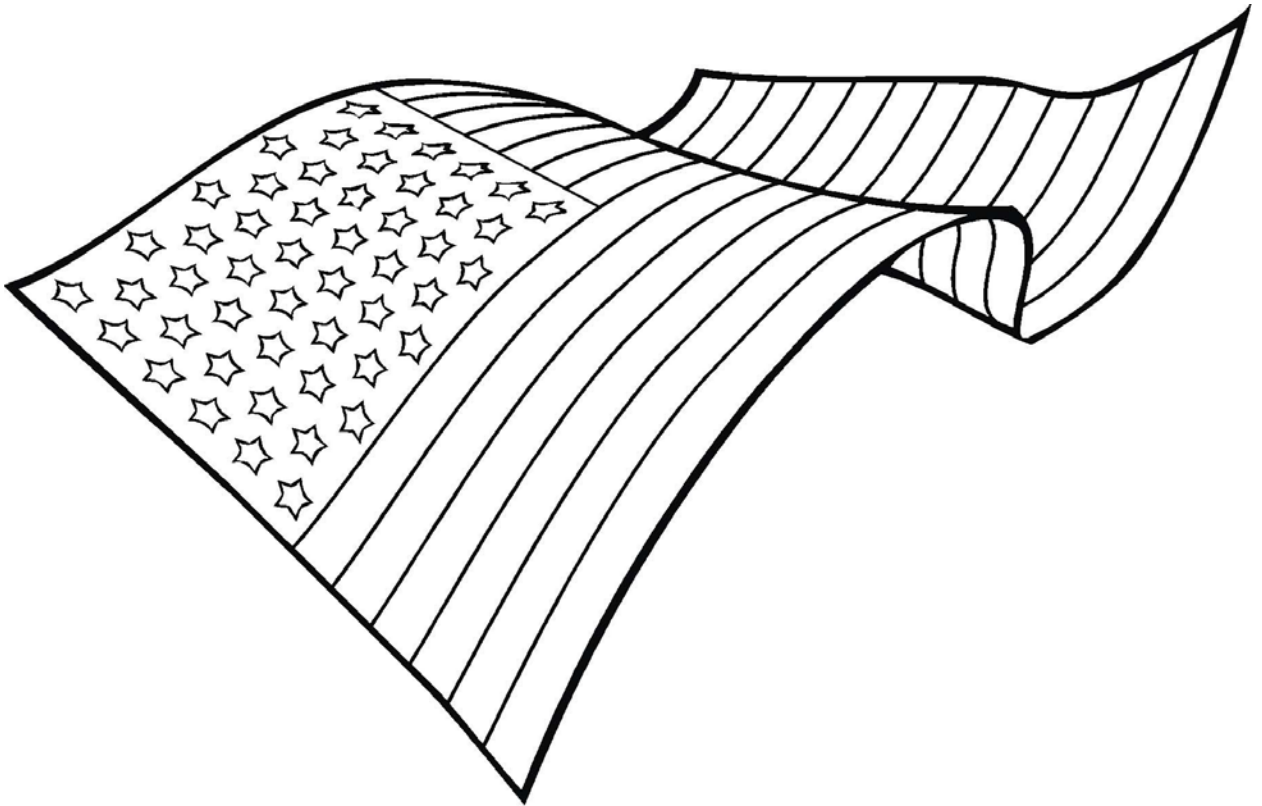
- Cardboard Tube (from a roll of paper towels)
- Paint in red white and blue
- Glue
- 2 small clear plastic cups
- Dry beans
- Stickers (optional)

Paint the cardboard tube in red white and blue and allow the paint to dry completely.

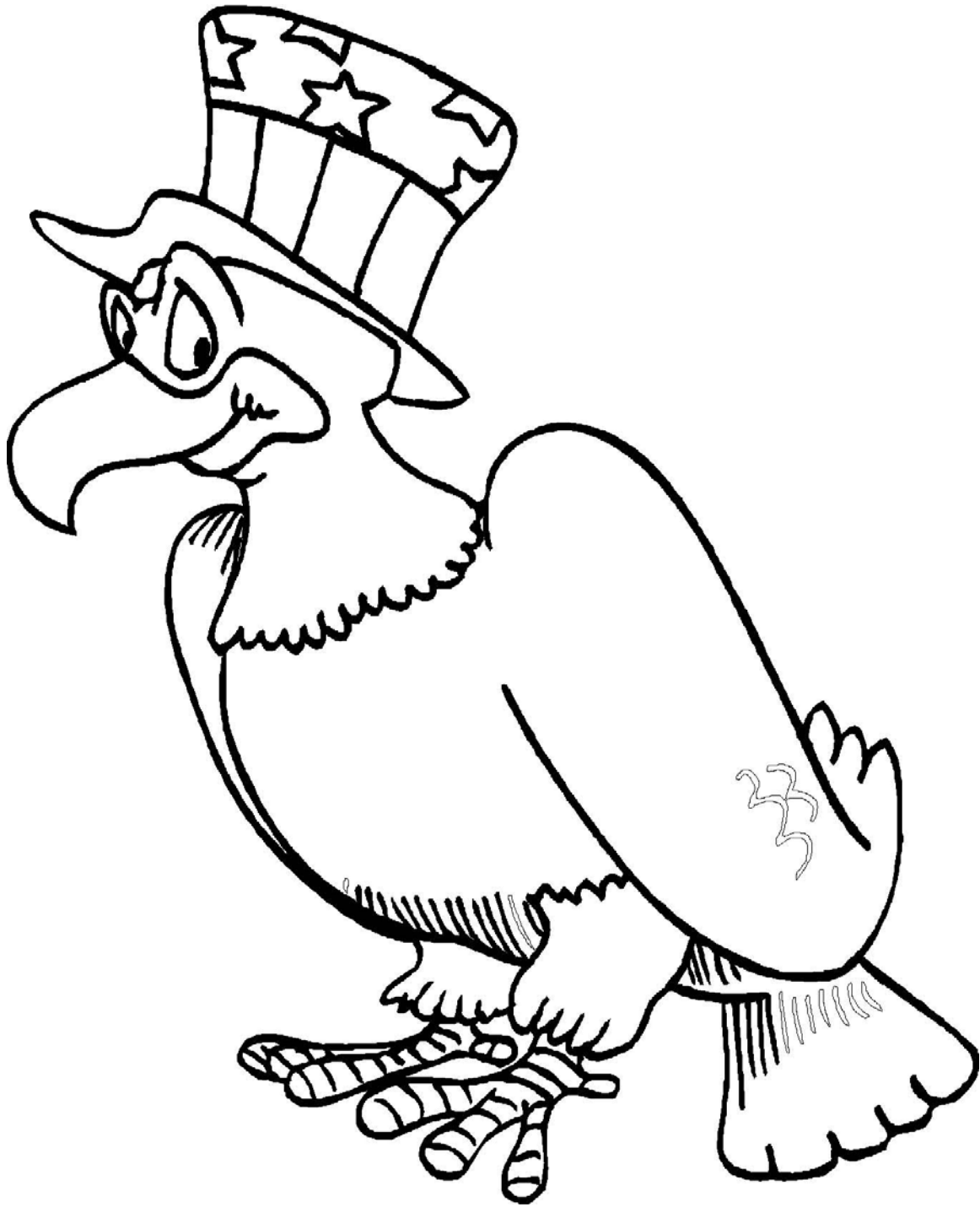
Glue one of the plastic cups on one end of the cardboard tube. Fill it with dry beans, then glue the other side on.

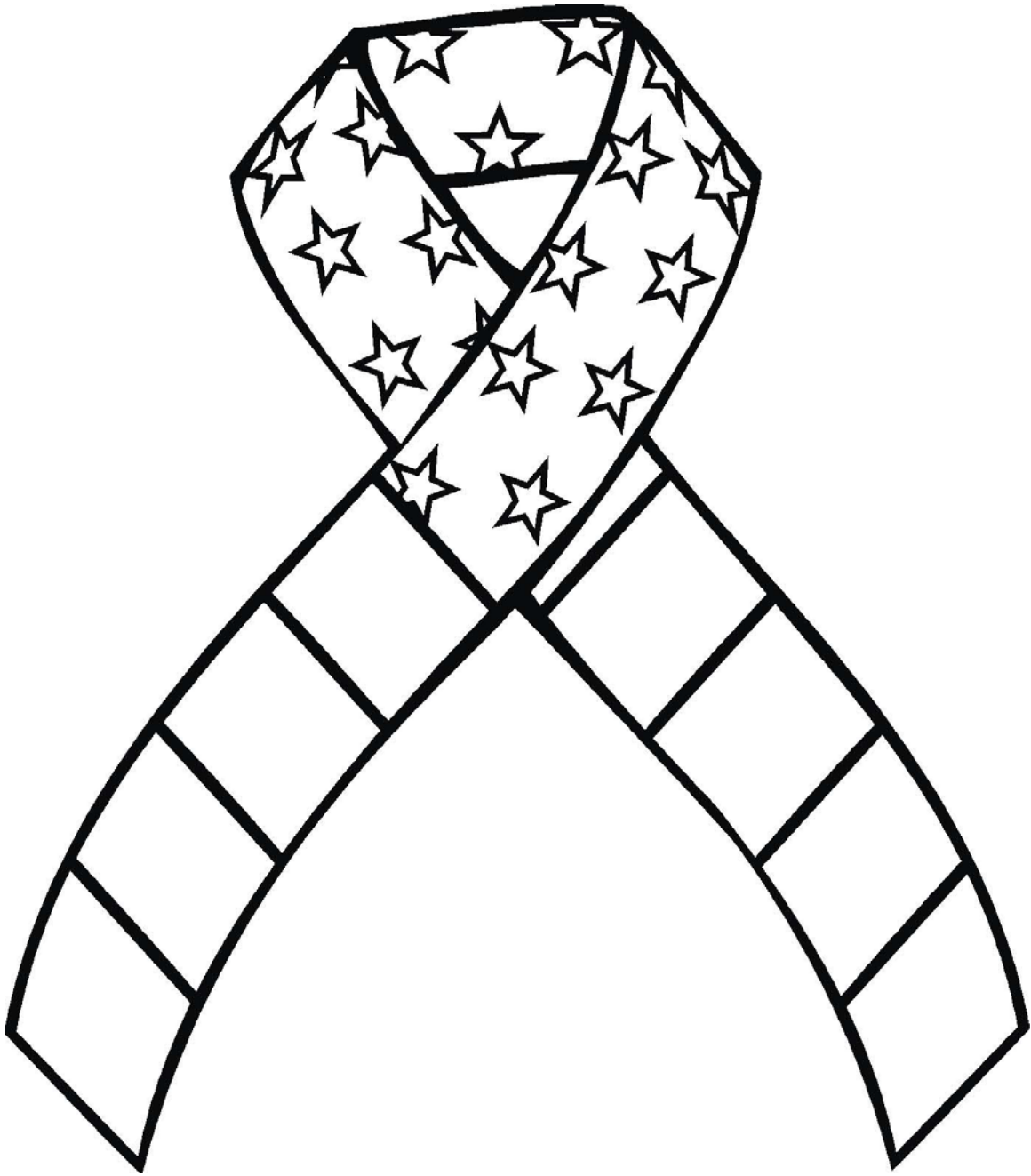
You can decorate your noise maker with some star or flag stickers.

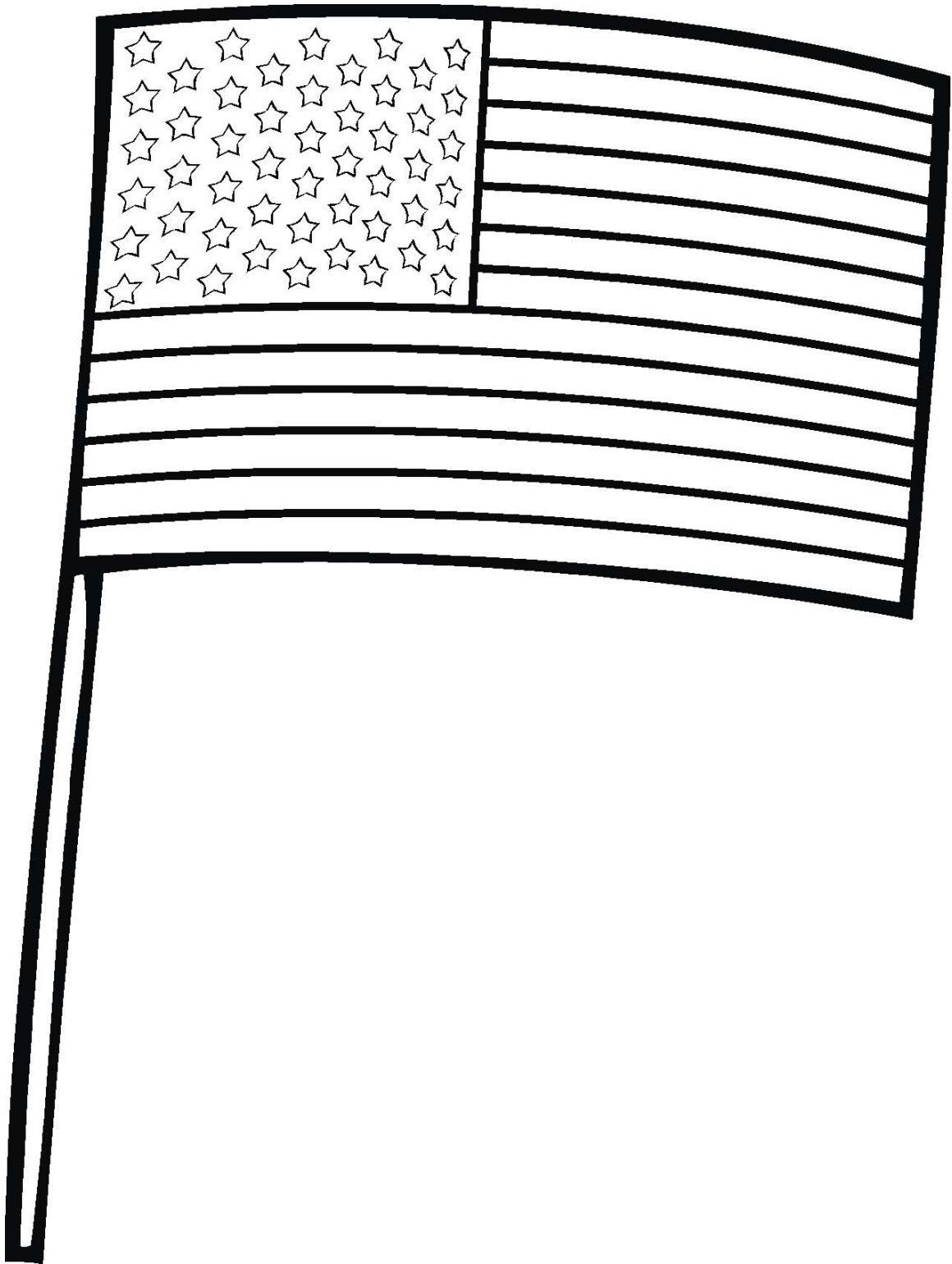
Memorial Day Coloring Pages











Memorial Day Recipes

Ranch Snack Mix

Makes 9 servings

- 4 cups oyster crackers plain
- 2 cups popcorn
- 2 cups pretzel sticks
- 1 cup nuts or peanuts
- 5 tablespoons butter or margarine, melted
- 1 1-ounce package ranch salad dressing mix (not buttermilk recipe)

Preheat oven to 350°.

In a 13 x 9 x 2-inch baking pan, mix oyster crackers, popcorn, pretzels, and nuts. Pour melted butter over the top and toss until well coated. Slowly sprinkle salad dressing mix evenly over mixture, stirring until well blended.

Bake 10 minutes, stirring once. Cool completely.

Store in an airtight container.

Better Burgers (for the health conscious)

- 1 pound lean ground turkey breast
- 1/4 small onion, minced
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1/4 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground white pepper
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

1. In a medium bowl, combine the turkey, onion, parsley, basil, oregano, salt, and pepper until well blended. With a fork, blend in the egg and flour. Shape the mixture into 4 burgers, about 1/2 inch thick.

2. Spray a medium skillet with nonstick cooking spray; heat. Cook the burgers, turning occasionally until fully cooked, about 5-7 minutes on each side. Sprinkle each burger with 1/2 Tbsp cheese before serving.

Calories	169
Calories from Fat	45
Total Fat	5g
Saturated Fat	1g
Cholesterol	114mg
Sodium	277mg
Carbohydrate	2g
Sugars	1g
Protein	28g

Juicy Grilled Burgers

4 to 6 Servings

- 1 1/2 pounds ground chuck or ground round
- 3 tablespoons fine dry bread crumbs
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tablespoons grated onion
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder, optional
- 2 tablespoons tomato juice
- seasoned salt and pepper
- sliced tomatoes, optional
- sliced pickles, optional
- sliced onion, optional
- lettuce, optional
- condiments, as desired

Prepare a grill for high heat.

Combine the beef with bread crumbs, Worcestershire sauce, grated onion, garlic powder, and tomato juice. Shape the meat into 4 to 5 large patties. Sprinkle both sides of burgers lightly with seasoned salt and pepper.

Put burgers on a lightly oiled grill over the prepared coals and grill for about 5 to 7 minutes on each side, or until done as desired. Serve on split toasted buns with your choice of sliced vegetables and condiments.

Beer-Marinated Flank Steak

4 to 6 Servings

- large onion, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 4 garlic cloves, finely minced
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- 1 (12-ounce) bottle beer
- 1 (1 1/2-pound) flank steak

Combine all ingredients except steak in a large self-closing plastic bag, mixing well. Add steak to marinade, seal and refrigerate for 12 hours or overnight.

Remove steak from marinade. Broil 5-inches from heat for 4 to 5 minutes on each side, or until desired degree of doneness.

To serve, thinly slice steak diagonally across the grain.

Red White and Blue Potato Salad

4 Servings

- 1-2 slices of bacon or pancetta (optional)
- 3 tablespoons mayonnaise, or more if needed
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard, or more to taste
- 1 tablespoon tarragon vinegar or distilled white vinegar, or more to taste
- 1 tablespoon capers with their juices
- 2 scallions, both white and green parts, trimmed, finely chopped (set aside 2 tablespoons scallion greens for garnish)
- 1 1/2 pounds red, white, and Peruvian blue fingerling potatoes
- 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
- Plenty of coarse salt (kosher or sea) and freshly ground black pepper

You'll also need:

1 cup wood chips or chunks (preferably hickory or oak), soaked for 1 hour in water to cover, then drained

An aluminum foil drop pan large enough to hold the potatoes

1. Cut the bacon, if using, into 1/4" slivers, put it in a small nonstick frying pan, and cook over medium heat until lightly browned and the fat is rendered, 3 to 4 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the cooked bacon to paper towels to drain.

2. Make the salad dressing: Place the mayonnaise, mustard, vinegar, capers, scallions, and bacon, if using, in a large non-reactive serving bowl and whisk to mix. Set the salad dressing aside.

3. Scrub the potatoes with a brush, but leave the skins on. Place the potatoes in an aluminum foil drip pan. Drizzle with

the olive oil and season very generously with salt and pepper. Toss the potatoes to mix.

4. Set up the grill for indirect grilling and preheat to medium-high. If using a gas grill, place all the wood chips or chunks in the smoker box or in a smoker pouch and preheat on high until you see smoke, then reduce the heat to medium-high.

5. When ready to cook, if using a charcoal grill, toss all the wood chips or chunks on the coals. Place the pan with the potatoes in the center of the hot grate, away from the heat. Cover the grill and cook the potatoes until tender, about 40 minutes. To test for doneness, insert a metal skewer into a potato; it should pierce it easily. Remove the pan with the potatoes from the grill and let cool.

6. Cut any large potatoes in quarters; cut medium size potatoes in half. Leave small potatoes whole. Add the potatoes to the salad dressing and toss to mix. Taste for seasoning, adding salt, mustard, or vinegar as necessary; the salad should be highly seasoned. If the salad is too dry, add a little more mayonnaise. Sprinkle with the reserved salad greens and serve at once.

Italian Pasta & Tomato Salad

Makes 6 servings

Choose vine-ripened tomatoes to pair with penne pasta.

Ingredients:

- 8 ounces (2 1/3 cups) uncooked dried penne pasta
- 1/4 pound (1 cup) Cheddar or Monterey Jack Cheese, cubed 1/2-inch
- 2 medium (2 cups) tomatoes, cubed 1-inch
- 2 medium (2 cups) zucchini, sliced 1/4-inch
- 1/2 cup Italian vinaigrette dressing
- 1 tablespoon fresh oregano leaves
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil leaves
- Lettuce leaves

Cook pasta according to package directions. Rinse with coldwater; drain.

Combine pasta and all salad ingredients in large bowl.

Stir together all dressing ingredients except lettuce leaves in small bowl. Add dressing to salad; toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate at least 30 minutes. Serve salad on lettuce leaves.

Flag Cake

- 1 package white cake mix
- 1 8-ounce container frozen whipped topping (thawed)
- 1 pint blueberries rinsed and drained
- 2 pints strawberries rinsed and sliced

1. Prepare cake according to package directions and bake in a 9x13 inch pan. Cool completely.

Frost cake with whipped topping. Place blueberries in a square in the top left corner, and arrange sliced strawberries as stripes to make an American flag. Chill until serving.

Fruit Pizza

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup powdered sugar
- 1 cup flour
- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/3 cup whole raspberries, fresh or frozen (thawed)
- 1/3 cup whole blueberries, fresh or frozen (thawed)
- 1 small banana, sliced
- 1 small kiwifruit, sliced
- 1/2 cup sliced strawberries, fresh or frozen (thawed)
- 1/4 cup sliced peaches
- 1/4 cup pineapple tidbits
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 cup frozen pineapple-orange juice
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice concentrate

1. Mix butter, powder sugar and flour. Press in the bottom of a 9x9 cake pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 10-15 minutes, or until the crust has a golden brown color. Let the crust cool.

2. Mix cream cheese, 1/2 c. sugar and vanilla together with an electric mixer. Spread evenly over crust. Cut and prepare fruit. Be sure to put cut bananas into your juice mixture to prevent browning. Place fruit evenly across crust. Mix the cornstarch and sugar together. Add juice and lemon juice to the cornstarch/sugar mixture.

3. Put into a microwave safe bowl. Microwave for 3 minutes. Stir, microwave for an additional 3 minutes. Continue mixing and microwaving for 3 minutes until the mixture boils. Spread mixture over fruit. Chill until juice become firm. Cut and serve.

We Recommend

Menu Planning Central:

Yes, you can cook a wholesome meal for your family any night of the week. Stop eating fast food and get the pizza delivery guy off the speed dial. All you need is a little menu planning help.

Choose from 3 different types of menus with plenty of recipes each month to please everyone in the family. Our menus and categorized shopping lists make it easy. But that's not all...

As a member of [Menu Planning Central](#), you will also have access to a group of experts that are available to share great tips on anything from cooking with the kids to table manners. And Christine, "The Menu Mom", is there to answer questions as well.

Each month you will also get additional resources including ideas to plan breakfast and lunch, throwing a great dinner party and you get to explore a different cooking style or cuisine.

Start by grabbing your free Menu Planning Basics guide at www.MenuPlanningCentral.com and watch for an incredible offer to get access to Menu Planning Central.