United States Navy

History
On October 13, 1775, the Continental Congress met in Philadelphia and voted on two sailing vessels which would be armed with ten carriage guns, swivel guns, and manned by a two crews of eighty. These vessels would be sent on a cruise for three months to intercept transports that would be carrying munitions and stores to the British army in America. The original legislation which grew out of the Continental Navy and constitutes the birth of the United States Navy.

How does the Navy name its ships?
The United States Congress had placed the Secretary of the Navy in charge of naming the ship in 1819. A power enjoyed by he or she to this day. The names are complied by Naval Historical Center and based off of suggestions from the public, sailors, and retirees, and naval history. A list is formally signed and recommended from the Chief of Naval Operations to the Secretary. Ships that are named for individuals are christened by the eldest living female descendent of that individual. Ships that are commissioned are prefixed with USS, which stands for United States Ship. Used since the late eighteenth century and was not formalized until 1907, by Theodore Roosevelt.

Symbolism of the Navy flag, Symbols, and Insignia
The Navy had a series of flags before finalizing on the official flag. Towards the end of the 19th century, the Infantry Battalion flag was introduced for the use by naval landing forces. The blue flag shows a white diamond in the middle with a blue anchor and rope. This version of the flag became the unofficial Navy flag and was displayed during parades and other ceremonies. In April 24th, 1959, the official Navy flag was authorized by Presidential order by Dwight D. Eisenhower.

The current and official United States Navy flag is a darker blue and on occasion outlined with a yellow fringe. The middle of the flag is the United States Department of the Navy seal, which portrays an eagle flying in front of a ship. Underneath the seal the ribbon reads, “United States Navy.”

The first Navy Jack flag has red and white stripes with the saying, “Don’t Tread On Me,” and a rattlesnake in the middle of the flag. This is the current United States jack authorized by the United States Navy.

"A powerful Navy we have always regarded as our proper and natural means of defense; and it has always been of defense that we have thought, never of aggression or of conquest. But who shall tell us now what sort of Navy to build? We shall take leave to be strong upon the seas, in the future as in the past; and there will be no thought of offense or provocation in that. Our ships are our natural bulwarks." -President Woodrow Wilson