

## How I can be a good American

When you think about “how to be a good American,” what do you think about? This is what it looks like to me. In America we have lots of freedoms, so we need to use them wisely. We need to be a good example for our country; even teens like me can be a good example for little kids looking up to us.

The first thing I think about on how to be a good American is our Pledge of Allegiance. You can stand up, put your right hand over your heart, and take off your hat during the pledge of Allegiance. I believe this because we live in America so we need to honor the flag. We also need to honor the people who fought for our country. We need to be respectful. We need to think about how many lives were lost during the Vietnam war. We also need to think about how privileged we are. We have a lot of freedoms and a lot of privileges that most people don't have. So we need to respect our flag and the people who fought for it.

Another thing I think of when I think about “how to be a great American” is to use freedom of speech in the right way. Before you go to say something, you should think to yourself: is it reasonable, is it appropriate, is it going to hurt people, and are you standing up for what's right? Another thing I believe we need to keep in mind is that most countries do not have freedom of speech. We have a luxury in that freedom, so we need to use it responsibly. Even as teens, we can exercise our right to protest and say what we think is right. Another example of a good way to use freedom of speech is that if you don't think something is right about your school, like maybe the dress code, or bullying not being taken care of properly, you can state your opinion to the principal, assistant principal or maybe even superintendent. This is a good way to use freedom of speech. When we use our freedom of speech we need to think about what we are going to say.

Lastly, when I think about “how to be a good American,” I think about freedom of religion. In America we have freedom of religion, which most countries don't have. In America we can be Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Islamic, and so many more. That doesn't mean making fun of someone for having a different religion than you is okay; you also need to use the freedom in a good way. It should be a way to bring us together and celebrate our differences. We get the right to go to church and pray. We all have the right to pray before a game for good luck, so we need to support other people, even if we're praying to different gods.

In conclusion, there are so many ways to be a good American, and to be a good example for our country, from the little things, like being kind and respectful, all the way to major things, like Serving for our country. In all, I believe it's important to be a good American.