

# **Twenty Bugle Calls**

## **As sounded in the U.S. Armed Forces**

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These are bugle calls sounded in the United States Armed Forces. The calls are printed along with a brief explanation of their origin and use. Bugle calls can be sounded on trumpets or cornets when a bugle is not available.

Bugle calls have been used in the military since armies have been formed. A useful tool for sending communications over a long distance, they were also important in everyday military life. Today most calls are used in ceremonial settings and at times designated by base commanders. Although troops are no longer maneuvered by the sound of bugles they remain an essential part of our military heritage.

Bugle calls are classified into three categories-Warning Calls, Formation Calls, and Service Calls. Sounding bugle calls is an important duty. Every effort should be made to sound perfect calls in keeping with the occasion of a military ceremony. Calls should be sounded with conviction and played musically with good intonation. They should be sounded in place. The following calls are listed in the general order they are sounded during the day. Calls requiring a hand salute are noted.

# Twenty Bugle Calls

## As sounded in the U.S. Armed Forces

**FIRST CALL** (Warning Call)-Sounded as signal for those who are to participate in a formation or ceremony to get ready. It also is used as a signal for all buglers to assemble. This call dates from the French cavalry- "Pour la Reunion des Trompettes"-1804 by David Buhl. The first U.S. usage is found in 1834 as a trumpeters call.

Quick ♩ = 86

**REVEILLE** (Service Call)-Sounded as a signal to awaken and form for morning roll call. This call dates from the Crusades.

♩ = 142

*fine*

*D.S. al fine*

**ASSEMBLY** (Formation Call) -Signal for those involved in formation or ceremony to form or assemble on the parade ground or designated area.

Moderato ♩ = 160

*Sound twice*

**MESS CALL** (Warning or Service Call)-Signal to announce meals breakfast, lunch and dinner. This call is similiar to the French call “Le Rappel.”

♩ = 132

**ATTENTION** (Warning Call)-Signal to cease talking, come to attention and prepare for instructions. Earliest reference is found in the 1874 U.S. Army Infantry manual (Upton Manual).

♩ = 120

**OFFICER’ S CALL** (Service Call) -Sounded as a signal for Officers to assemble at a designated point.

♩ = 100

**DRILL** (Warning Call)- Sounded as signal to prepare for drill.

♩ = 120

**FATIGUE** (Service or Warning Call)-Sounded as signal to prepare for work details.

♩ = 100

**RECALL (Service Call)**-Sounded at time designated by Officer In Charge. It is a signal to those involved that drill is over. It also is sounded to end an activity such as work details.

**Moderato** ♩=110

**CHURCH CALL (Service Call)**-Signal that Divine service is about to be held. The call may also be used to announce the formation of a funeral escort. This call is the same as the French call taken from the “Sonneries de Chasseur” -1845.

Earliest reference is found in the 1874 U.S. Army Infantry manual (Upton Manual).

**Andante-religioso** ♩=72

**ADJUTANT’S CALL (Formation Call)**-Sounded to indicate that the Adjutant is about to form the battalion or regiment. This call is sounded at a signal from the Adjutant in order for companies or details to assemble on the parade ground. It is followed immediately by a march which the band plays until the last company (or flight in our case) is halted on the line. It is based on the fife and drum call played during the Civil War and was used for the same purpose. Earliest reference is found in the 1874 U.S. Army Infantry manual (Upton Manual).

**Quick** ♩=120



**RETREAT** (Service Call)-Sounded to mark the end of an official day. Earliest reference-1841 US Cavalry manual. Based on French bugle call La Retraite written by David Buhl in 1829. The call can be sounded by buglers in unison or in three parts. **Retreat** is followed by The Star-Spangled Banner and the flag is lowered as the anthem plays. If there is no band or recording of the The Star-Spangled Banner, the flag is lowered during **To The Color**. Military members will stand at parade rest and face the flag or music.

Moderato ♩=108

**TO THE COLOR** (Service or Formation Call)-Sounded as a salute to the National colors. Earliest reference is found in the 1874 U.S. Army Infantry manual (Upton Manual). The call can be sounded in unison by assembled buglers or by one. When a band is not present, **To The Color** is sounded in place of The Star-Spangled Banner. Military members will render a hand salute and face the flag or music.

Quick ♩=132

*fine*

*D.S. al fine*

**TATTOO** (Service Call)- Sounded in the evening. No formation is required but it is a signal that Lights Out will follow. This type of call dates from 17th century and was used to summon troops back to their garrison for the night roll call.

♩ = 116

The musical score for 'TATTOO' is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of 116 beats per minute. It consists of five staves of music. The melody is characterized by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. There are several measures with rests, and the piece concludes with a final cadence. A large watermark 'WWW.APSUICER.COM' is overlaid diagonally across the score.

**CALL TO QUARTERS** (Service Call)-This call is sounded for everyone not on duty to be in their quarters preparing for the extinguishing of lights.

Slowly

The musical score for 'CALL TO QUARTERS' is written in 4/4 time and is marked 'Slowly'. It consists of two staves of music. The melody is slower and more spacious than the 'Tattoo'. It features several measures with rests and concludes with a final cadence. The first staff ends with a comma. The second staff begins with three triplet markings over groups of three notes. A large watermark 'WWW.APSUICER.COM' is overlaid diagonally across the score.

# TAPS

The call Taps was written in July 1862 and originally attributed to General Daniel Butterfield although it has been found to have been adapted from the last 5 measures of an earlier (1835) version of Tattoo. First sounded by Brigade bugler Oliver Willcox Norton, the call soon replaced “Extinguish Lights.” The earliest official reference to the mandatory use of Taps at military funeral ceremonies is found in the US Army Infantry Drill Regulations for 1891 (P. 283) although it had doubtless been used unofficially long before that time, under its former designation “Extinguish Lights.”

## PERFORMANCE AUTHORIZATIONS

The performance of Taps is authorized and limited for the following occasions only.  
(Performance is not authorized for any other purposes.)

1. Taps is sounded at the end of a military day. It is sounded 1 hour after Tattoo.
2. Taps is sounded at military funerals.
3. Taps is sounded at memorial services.
4. Taps is sounded at wreath ceremonies.

## PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Taps is only authorized to be performed as illustrated below. No other version is authorized.
2. Taps is only authorized to be sounded live by a solo military bugler.  
Only when a military bugler is not available may a professional civilian bugler may be utilized.
3. Taps is to be sounded only on a trumpet, cornet or regulation bugle. It is to be played open without a mute and unaccompanied by any other instruments.

## PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES AT FUNERALS

1. Bugler is to prepare before the funeral, making sure to have the proper ceremonial uniform and outer wear in case of inclement weather. Uniform, appearance, and instrument should meet or exceed the military standards as outlined in regulations.
2. Bugler is to report promptly to the funeral site at the appropriate time and report to the Officer or Non-Commissioned Officer In Charge.
3. Bugler is to position him/herself near the gravesite angled from the firing party. The bugler should take care to position him/herself in a location where the sound will carry to the funeral party and where he/she can be seen. The bell of the instrument should be pointed towards the casket.
4. The bugler will render a hand salute as the casket is carried to the grave site. The bugler will then go to ceremonial at ease during the funeral service.
5. When the service is complete the OIC or NCOIC will Present Arms. The firing party will go to attention and fire three volleys. Bugler will sound Taps after the third volley and after the NCOIC of the firing party executes Present Arms. After sounding Taps, the bugler will render a hand salute and order arms on the command of the NCOIC of the firing party.
6. When a firing party is not available, the bugler will sound Taps on completion of the service and at a arranged signal by either the OIC, NCOIC or officiating person. After sounding Taps, the bugler will render a Hand Salute and Order Arms on his/her own. A recording of a firing party is not authorized.

## PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES AT OTHER CEREMONIES

1. Bugler is to prepare before the funeral, making sure to have the proper ceremonial uniform and outer wear in case of inclement weather. Uniform, appearance, and instrument should meet or exceed the military standards as outlined in regulations.
2. Bugler is to report to the ceremony site at the appropriate time and report to the Officer In Charge or Non-Commissioned Officer In Charge.
3. Bugler will sound Taps at designated signal. After sounding Taps, the bugler will render a hand salute and Order Arms on his/her own.

## PERFORMANCE GUIDELINE

1. The sounding of Taps at ceremonies is the most sacred duty a bugler can perform. Every effort should be made to sound a perfect Taps in keeping with the solemn and impressive occasion of a military ceremony.
2. The call should be sounded with conviction and not rushed. Every effort should be made to perform musically and with good intonation.
3. Careful attention should be made to the rhythm of the 7th, 8th, 10th, 11th, 13th and 14th notes of Taps to insure they are played as straight eight notes.

Andante ♩=60

The musical notation for the Taps call is presented on two staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'Andante' with a quarter note equal to 60 beats per minute. The melody consists of a series of notes: a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a half note B4 with an accent, a quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, a quarter note F4, a quarter note E4, a quarter note D4, and a quarter note C4. The second staff continues the melody with a quarter note B3, a quarter note A3, a quarter note G3, a quarter note F3, a quarter note E3, a quarter note D3, a quarter note C3, and a quarter note B2. The piece concludes with a double bar line. Dynamic markings include hairpins for crescendo and decrescendo, and accents over several notes.

# Words to Bugle Calls

## Reveille

I can't get 'em up, I can't get 'em up,  
I can't get 'em up in the morning.  
I can't get 'em up, I can't get 'em up,  
I can't get 'em up at all  
The corporal's worse than privates;  
The sergeant's worse than corp'als;  
Lieutenant's worse than sergeants;  
An the captain's worst of all!

## Assembly

When the bugle sounds this call,  
Every Airman has to fall,  
In the front rank or rear,  
And when called answer "Here"

## Mess Call

Soupy, soupy, soupy,  
Without a single bean;  
Porky, porky, porky,  
Without a streak of lean;  
Coffee, coffee, coffee,  
Without any cream.

## Fatigue Call

With a pick and with a shovel, and with a hoe;  
With a sentry at your back you won't say no;  
With a pick and with a shovel, and with a hoe,  
Down in the ditch you go!

## Taps

Day is done, Gone the sun.  
From the lake, From the hill, From the sky,  
All is well, Safely rest.  
God is nigh.