

# POW/MIA or Missing Man Table

There are various table settings, but all reflect a solemn remembrance of those who have never returned. The U.S. Department of Defense has a toolkit for National POW/MIA Recognition Day that includes the Missing Man Table. This example is a table for six with a chair and hat for each branch of the service: Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard — and civilians. <https://www.dpaa.mil/Portals/85/2019%20Toolkit.PDF>

The National League of POW/MIA Families site also refers to this table setting. <https://www.pow-miafamilies.org/missing-man-table-and-honors-ceremony.html>  
The setting is referred to most often as the “White Table Ceremony” or “America’s White Table.”

*“The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any way, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional as to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their nation.” —Gen. George Washington*

## **AMERICA’S WHITE TABLE**

<https://www.veteranscaucus.org/america-s-white-table>

The table honors the men and women who served in America’s Armed Forces.

The table is round — to show our everlasting devotion and concern for our fallen and missing comrades.

The cloth is white — symbolizing the purity of their motives when answering the call to duty.

The single red rose, displayed in a vase, reminds us of the life, and the blood that was shed, and their loved ones and friends who keep the faith and await answers.

The vase is tied with a red ribbon, a symbol of our commitment, and continued determination to account for our missing.

A slice of lemon on the plate is to remind us of the bitter fate of those captured and missing in a foreign land.

The salt is to remind us of the tears endured by those missing and their families who still seek answers.

The black napkin is a reminder of the isolation, deprivation, and cruel fate of our missing.

The Bible represents the strength gained through faith to sustain those lost from our country, founded as one nation under God.

The glass is inverted — to symbolize their inability to share this evening with us.

The chair is empty and tilted — they are not here — and will remain so until they return or are accounted for.

*“You are not forgotten so long as there is one left in whom your memory remains.”*