

## Class Ring History

As far as records show, the United States Military Academy was the first school to use rings as a unified symbol. The first class to receive rings was 1835. Until 1869, ring designs were chosen informally. In that year, an organized meeting was held to decide a common class ring design. Thus began the Ring and Crest committee, the members of which are chosen by each class during Cadet Basic Training. The committee formally announces the crest they have decided upon during Plebe-Parent Weekend. See the USMA Library for a collection of rings from almost every USMA class to date.

Since the class of 1917, rings have borne a class crest on one side, representing friendships within the class, and the crest of the Academy on the other, as a constant reminder of the ideals of West Point. By current convention, each crest must contain the motto, the cadet and army sabers, an eagle, "USMA", and the class year, amongst other things, although their arrangement is up to the class. Traditionally, the class crest is worn closest to the heart while at USMA, and reversed afterward.

Although the bodies of the rings are uniform, the stones have always been chosen by the purchaser. Cadets choose a stone that will personalize the ring.

Firsties have always purchased their own rings but for many years, money in each cadet's account has been accumulated during three years for the expenditure.

More on class rings