

Tailgating

Game-day festivities begin long before game time. As fans approach the stadium, they're treated to the aromas of burger, brats and other fare from the tailgate area. There are roughly 130 tailgating spots available (by reservation). Cadets are enthusiastic participants in the tailgating with Squadron tents setup for all 40 squadrons – but no alcohol.

Falcon Alley Fun Zone

Falcon Alley will be open two hours prior to kickoff for every home football game. Falcon Alley is located East of Falcon Stadium in the parking lot, offers family-fun entertainment for all home games.

Dollar bills

As the cadets congregate in the tunnel prior to the march-on, fans will toss dollar bills down on them. There are **live performances by the Drum & Bugle Corp** – get there early to watch this unforgettable performance.

Cadet march-on

All 40 squadrons of the Cadet Wing march onto the field prior to kickoff. After the grand procession, they salute the flag during the anthem. That military precision is followed by a chaotic, **mad dash into the cadet section of the stands.**

Wings of Blue

The U.S. Air Force Academy parachute team, the Wings of Blue, **deliver the flag and game ball.** Although they jump from thousands of feet, they frequently make a precision landing on the midfield logo.

Fly-overs

Fly-overs of Falcon Stadium are a treasured pregame tradition. Everything from F-16s to vintage aircraft to stealth bombers have flown over Falcon Stadium. The anticipation of their arrival and the roar of their jet engines always fires up the home crowd as well as the players on the field.

The Bird

A costumed mascot known as “The Bird” also serves in the Academy’s ranks. Known for his unusual arrivals at season home openers, “The Bird” has arrived via limousine, parachute and horseback.

First downs

Each Air Force first down is celebrated by the band and some cadets with an odd gyration that looks like the referee’s illegal procedure call followed by a pair of “first down” hand gestures. This is all accompanied by a cadence from the band’s percussion section, of course.

Push-ups

Freshmen have to do push-ups after each score - one for each point on the scoreboard. If the Falcons score a field goal, that's three push-ups. If they follow with a touchdown and extra point, they do 10. During one 72-0 rout of Nicholls State in 2009, cadets did 409 pushups.

Crowd surfing

Visiting dignitaries beware – the cadets may be stalking you! While the Bird and other cadets are routinely surfed up the Cadet Section, others – including generals and Washington brass – are hoisted up for the trip to the top of Falcon Stadium.

The Falcon

Air Force says that the falcon is the NCAA's only performing mascot. The bird can achieve speeds in excess of 200 MPH as it dives and wheels above the heads of spectators. There are actually several falcons, and trainers will spend an average of 300 hours over a 6-week period to train the birds.

Alma Mater

Whether they've won or lost, Air Force players join hands and face the crowd after the game as the school's Alma Mater is played. In a gesture of sportsmanship rarely seen these days, opposing teams will often stay on the field or even join in as a sign of respect.