

Formal Invitation Guest List Preparation Tool



2755 S. 45th Street | Milwaukee, WI 53219

414 . 301 . 1751

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Addressing the Envelopes

Wedding invitations were once delivered by hand. If you were a bride back in those days, your footman delivered your invitations to your guests' homes. Their servants received the invitations and removed them from their mailing envelope, an envelope much too pedestrian for your guests to handle themselves. The servants, then, presented the invitation to your guests in its pristine inside envelope. Because the invitations were already at their destination, the inside envelopes had only the names of your guests written on them. The address was no longer needed. They just had to be directed to the appropriate members of the household.

Wedding invitations are still occasionally sent in two envelopes, but it has become more typical to only use one nowadays. Either way, the outside envelope is the mailing envelope. No abbreviations are used. Full state names, Rural Route and Post Office Box and any other Street/Avenue abbreviations are always written out.

If using two envelopes, your guests' names are repeated on the inside envelope. This time, however, only their titles and surnames are used. If children under the age of eighteen are invited, their first names would appear on the line beneath their parents' names. If using only one envelope, it is important to list the name of all persons invited as well as specifying if any "guests" are also invited.

Prepping for Printed Envelopes

To ensure your invitation envelopes are printed correctly, your guest list needs to be organized in a particular way. Please organize your guest list in the following way.

First Line of Envelope (List exactly as you want printed. Formal examples are listed below)	Optional Second Line of Guest Name (Children are listed on the second line. Also when inviting two single individuals, use the second line)	Address Line (Spell out all words in the address, include any apartment number/suite number also)	Address Line 2 (if needed) (Used primarily for addresses with an apartment or suite #)	City, State ZIP (Format as printed - comma after city and state name spelled out fully)
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Klimek		1234 South Main Street, Suite 201		Chicago, Illinois 34556
Miss Jennifer Jones	Mr. Robert Frost	N234W5009 Sheboygan River Drive	Apartment #3	Milwaukee, Wisconsin 12345
Mr. Frank Sinatra and Guest		Stoneridge Village	5677 Chase Boulevard	Palm Springs, California 45678
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Tatar and Family		456 1 st Street	Post Office Box 556	Peru, Illinois 56064
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Schneider	Cassie, Max and Luke	907 West Treasure Island Road		New York, New York 98890

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Wedding Invitation Envelope Wording

Unsure of how to address wedding invitations? Below are various examples of the wording for formal wedding invitation envelopes.

Guest Type		Envelope
Single Guests	Unmarried Woman over 18 or a Divorced Woman who retains her maiden name	Miss (or Ms.) Smithers and Guest
	Divorced Woman who uses her married name	Mrs. Sally Carter and Guest
	Unmarried or Divorced Man	Mr. Howard Croft and Guest
Couples	Married Couples	Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Caldwell
	Married Couple - when the woman kept maiden name	Mrs. Carol Thompson Mr. John Sigenthaler
	Unmarried couples who do not share the same residence. You should send the invitation to the closest friend and list on the top line	Miss (or Ms.) Amy Carter Mr. Bob Stevenson
	Unmarried couples who live together address alphabetically by last name	Miss (or Ms.) Amy Carter Mr. John Stevenson
	Same gender couples - alphabetically by last name	Miss (or Ms.) Melissa Franklyn Miss (or Ms.) Stella Ziegler
	Children over 18 years old should be considered adults and receive their own invitation, even if still at the home of their parents who will also be invited to your wedding	Miss Amy Carter and Guest or Mr. Brian Atwater and Guest
Other	Doctor (Medical)	Doctor Michael Stokes (If Single) Doctor and Mrs. Michael Stokes (If married)
	Doctor (Ph.D.)	Dr. Harry Keller
	Married Woman Doctor	Doctor Patricia Neddles Mr. Charles Lyons
	Married Couple, Both Doctors	Doctors Sam and Mary Hepler
	Clergy	The Reverend Jeremiah Whetheral
	Officer - Male who is active duty or retired from the service	General and Mrs. Barry Lynch
	Officer - Female who is active duty or retired from the service	Captain Sandra Kellerman, U.S. Army Mr. Anthony Giminiani
	Judge	The Honorable Thomas Thurman (If Single) The Honorable and Mrs. Thomas Thurman (If married)

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How much will mailing my wedding invitations cost?

Please never assume you know how much mailing an invitation will cost. Take a completed invitation (including all your enclosures) to your local post office. They will weigh it and tell you the price for a first-class mailing. Do not take the risk of having all your beautifully addressed invitations send back to you because you were a few cents short on postage!

How can I preserve the look of my invitation when it goes through the mail?

Using the “non-machineable” option through USPS is important when an invitation is rigid or has any bumps from ribbons of embellishments. This requires an additional 20 cent stamp, but is well worth it so the invitation is not sent through a belted machine that bends the mail 180 degrees.

Hand canceling means your invitations will be processed by hand and should bypass the automated processing machines, avoiding damage. Wedding invitations are often thick, oddly shaped or oddly sized as a result of their enclosures or accessories, and run the risk of getting caught or damaged in these machines. You can also minimize the amount of automated printing and stamping the post office adds to your mailings (bar codes, for example), by requesting your invitations be hand canceled at a local Post Office. Many post offices will let you hand cancel your own invitations for free – check with your local post office for details.