



Mayla

Invitation Guidebook



Table of Contents

1. Basic Invitation Etiquette	Page 3
2. Invitation Text: Line by Line	Page 4
3. Quick Invitation Template	Page 6
4. Alternate invitation options	Page 7
5. Response Card Examples	Page 10
6. Addressing Examples	Page 12

Basic Rules of Etiquette

- **When to Mail:** In general invitations should be mailed **at least** 6 weeks prior to the wedding. For destination weddings, or ones that will require several guests to travel it may be helpful to mail a save the date at least 4 months prior to the wedding.
- All phrasing is in the third person.
- **No Punctuation** at the ends of a line (commas, periods, colons, etc.). It is okay to use commas within lines to separate the day from the date, the city from the state and a man's surname from "Jr./junior/II/III", etc.
- **No abbreviations:** Common words shown below should be spelled out
 - "Road", "Street", "Avenue", "Reverend", "Doctor",
 - All military titles should be spelled out.
 - Days, dates, and times are always spelled out.
 - *Exceptions are:* "Mr." and "Mrs.", "junior" should be the "j" is not capitalized.
- **Only capitalize proper nouns**
 - names of people and places, cities, states, name of the day of the week, month name, etc.
 - Exceptions are the year line("Two thousand") or where the noun is the beginning of a new sentence or thought ("T" in "The favour of a reply is requested" or "Reception to follow")
- **Favor or Favour? Honor or Honour?** Be consistent. Traditionally the formal spelling with the "u" is considered in proper wedding etiquette, but whichever form you choose, use it in both words.
- **Children:** It is considered inappropriate to write, "no children please" on the invitation or any part of the wedding ensemble.
- **Attire:** "Black tie" does not need to appear on the invitation. If the event takes place after six o'clock, your guests should assume that it is a formal event. If you are concerned, however, you may write "Black tie" as a right footnote on your reception card.
- **Gifts:** It is considered inappropriate to list registry locations, "no boxed gifts", or no gifts please on an invitation. Gifts should not be expected from your guests, and therefore should be left out of the invitation.
- **Response Cards:** The reply by date for the response card should be at least 2 weeks prior to the wedding or whenever your caterer needs a final count. A word of caution, you may find yourself chasing down responses, so dating the response 3 weeks before the event may give you the extra time you need to chase down any "stragglers"

Traditional Wedding Wording: Line by Line

- Begin with the **full, formal name(s) and title(s) of the event sponsors**. These are not necessarily the people who are paying for the wedding. While the bride's parents traditionally sponsor a wedding, anyone can be a sponsor, including other relatives, the groom's parents, or the couple themselves.
- Following the name(s) is the phrase "**request the honour of your presence**" for a service held in a house of worship. The variation "**request the pleasure of your company**" is used for a wedding held in any other location.
- The next line reads "**at the marriage of their daughter**" or whatever the relation is between the sponsor(s) and the bride.
- The **bride's full name follows but often excludes her surname**. If her last name is different from the sponsor name or both sets of parents are doing the inviting, include it; otherwise, omit it. If you use optional personal or professional titles (Ms., Miss., Dr., etc.), then include her last name.
- Generally "**to**" is used on the line separating the bride's name from the groom's. The exception would be the use of "and" when both parents are doing the inviting or for a Nuptial Mass.
- The **groom's full name – first, middle and last-is next**. If the bride uses a personal or professional title, so should the groom.
- On the next line, **spell out the day and date with the spelled-out number inverted before the name of the month and a comma separating the day from the date**: "on Saturday, the first of May." Using "on" before the name of the day is optional but if you do, do not capitalize the "o."
- **Listing the year is optional**. If you choose to do so, it appears on the line following the day/date line. Only the first letter of the first word of the line is capitalized: "The year two thousand" or "Two thousand and nine."

Traditional Wedding Wording: Line by Line (cont'd)

- On the line after the date comes the **time. List this spelled out: "at six o'clock"** with the word "at" preceding the time. You do not need to put "in the morning" or "in the evening" since it should be obvious but you may if you would like to and must if it is not obvious (for example, a sunrise wedding "at six o'clock" would be more likely to get people there on time if you said "at six o'clock in the morning"). In any case, *never put "a.m." or "p.m." on a formal invitation.*
- The **name of the place goes on the next line:** "Thomas Aquinas Cathedral", "The Monclair Arboretum" or simply the address if the wedding is in someone's home.
- **Listing an address for the place is optional** (unless the wedding is in someone's home). If you do include it, place it on the line immediately below the name of the place.
- Generally the **last line lists the city and state**, separated by a comma: "East Greenwich, Rhode Island." Do not include the zip code.
- **If you are not using reception cards**, you may include the information here as the last line of the invitation: **"Reception immediately following"**, "Reception to follow" or "and afterwards at the reception." These sentences indicate that the reception is in the same place as the wedding. If it is not, reconsider ordering reception cards so that the important wording of your invitation will not be reduced in point size to accommodate the several extra lines of the reception information.
- **If you are not using response cards and envelopes**, in the lower left hand corner include "The favour of a reply is requested", or "R.s.v.p.", and a response address; however, if you have a reception card, put the R.s.v.p. corner line there in order to leave the invitation uncluttered. Note that properly only the "R" in "R.s.v.p." is capitalized since this is an abbreviation for a French sentence, "Répondez s'il vous plaît." Likewise, since the sentence means "Respond please", never say "Please R.s.v.p." since that would be redundant.

Quick Invitation Template: BASIC

*Mr. and Mrs. John Michael Smith
request the honour of your presence
at the marriage of their daughter*

Emily Rose

to

Matthew David Jones

on Saturday, the first of May

Two thousand and eight

at six o'clock

St. Thomas Aquinas Cathedral

Brighton, Massachusetts

Reception immediately following



Couple Issuing the Invitation

*Laura Elizabeth Kramer
and
David Matthew Galloway*

*request the honour of your presence
at their marriage*

*on Saturday, the ninth of June
Two thousand and four
at two o'clock*

*St. John's Church
Northfield, New Hampshire*

Reception immediately following

Together with their families

*Laura Elizabeth Kramer
and
David Matthew Galloway*

*request the honour of your presence
at their marriage*

*on Saturday, the ninth of June
Two thousand and four
at two o'clock*

*St. John's Church
Northfield, New Hampshire*

Reception immediately following



Groom's Parents Hosting

*Mr. and Mrs. Robert James Meer
request the honour of your presence
at the marriage of*

*Ms. Jennifer Allison Jones
to their son
William George Meer*

*on Saturday, the ninth of June
Two thousand and four
at two o'clock*

*St. John's Church
Northfield, New Hampshire*

Reception immediately following



Both Set's of Parent's Hosting

*Mr. and Mrs. William Adam Jones
and
Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Howard Knapp*

*request the honour of your presence
at the marriage of their children*

*Allison Joan Smith
and
Wesley Michael Knapp*

*on Saturday, the ninth of June
Two thousand and four
at two o'clock*

*St. John's Church
Northfield, New Hampshire*

Reception immediately following

Examples of Response Cards

Example 1

Thomas & Jessica

We look forward to celebrating with you

The favor of your reply is requested by

April 12, 2007

Name _____

_____ *Accepts with pleasure*

_____ *Declines with regret*

Example 2

The favor of a reply is requested on or before September 1, 2007

M _____

_____ *Accepts with pleasure* _____ *Declines with regret*

Chicken _____

Beef _____

Fish _____

Examples of Response Cards

Example 3

*We would be honored by your presence at
our wedding celebration*

Please kindly respond before May 15, 2007

Name(s) _____

Number of guests attending _____

Regretfully decline _____

Example 4

*Kindly reply before
September 1st, 2007*

M _____

_____ WILL ATTEND

_____ UNABLE TO ATTEND

Addressing Guidelines

Basic Addressing Guidelines

- **Names should be completely spelled out such as:**

Mr. and Mrs. Jonathon Edward Smith (instead of Mr. and Mrs. Greg Jones)

If you know the full middle name, use it, if not, do not use initials, simply omit it. First names (without Mr., Mrs., etc.) or the phrase "and family" are not proper.

- **Families with Children under 18 who are invited**

If there are children under the age of eighteen include first names as:

Mr. and Mrs. Jonathon Edward Smith
Allison and Jason
123 Walnut Terrace
Indianapolis, IN 12345

- **ADULT “children” should receive separate invitations**
- **Married and Both are Doctors:** they can be referred to as "The Doctors Smith."

**PLEASE SEE THE FOLLOWING PAGES FOR SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF
VARIOUS ADDRESSING SITUATIONS**

Addressing Examples

Married Couples

- Married couples living in the same house:

*Mr. and Mrs. David Jones, junior
1000 Park Street,
Albany, New York
10025*

- Married couples in which the woman has retained her maiden name or professional name. Some experts say the woman's name appears first, others suggest the names be listed alphabetically (by last name). Middle names are optional.

*Ms. Jennifer Michelle Gala
Mr. Jonathon Henry Wainwright
28 Arrow Road
Portland, Oregon
94640*

Unmarried Couples

- Unmarried couples living in the same house should be listed alphabetically

*Ms. Jessica Delaney
Ms. Abigail Hershey
40 Oak Tree Drive
Schenectady, Texas
75341*

*Ms. Louise Hart
Mr. Noah Jones
80 Marshall Lane
Seattle, Washington
94640*

Family Invitation

- A family with young children

*Mr. and Mrs. John Edwards
Martha and Susan
500 Rose Cliff Lane
Tampa, Florida
10025*

- It is considered correct to send a separate invitation to each "child" 18 years or older.

Addressing Examples

Single Individual with Guest

- If you wish to encourage a single friend to invite a guest, find out the guest's name (especially if the couple is engaged, living in the same house, or seeing each other on an exclusive basis). If they live at different addresses, it is considerate to send an invitation to the guest directly.

Otherwise address as follows:

*Ms. Monica Stanford
Mr. Benjamin Humphrey
3 Jasmine Lane
Concord, Massachusetts
98110*

If you cannot obtain the name ahead of time, it is okay to address:

- Ms. Evelyn Phelps and guest
- Mr. John Wesley and guest