

Birchcraft Studios

HELPFUL HINTS

for addressing *and* assembling
YOUR WEDDING OR SOCIAL INVITATIONS

We have prepared this handy guide to help make the addressing and assembly of your wedding invitations easy.

01. Addressing etiquette and tips
02. Envelope Addressing Services
03. How to assemble your invitation ensemble
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01 ADDRESSING ETIQUETTE AND TIPS

Make an organized guest list with full names, addresses and zip codes. (Remember when using our Envelope Addressing Service to use the template that can be downloaded at www.birchcraft.com/addressing. Getting organized is easier than ever today with great software packages, our envelope addressing template, internet sites, binder systems or even note cards to keep track of all of your guests. You can then use this list to send Save-the-Date notices, your invitations, announcements and thank you notes. (Helpful Hint: Assign a number to your guests at the beginning. Print this secret number, lightly in pencil or an invisible ink pen, on the back of your response cards. If your guests forget to write their name on the line, you will know who is responding.)

Your invitation envelopes are traditionally addressed by hand, by an envelope addressing service or by a calligrapher. These are the preferred choices for addressing, but brides do tell us that they are using software on their home computers to address their envelopes. Return addresses printed on envelopes are usually printed in “raised ink” to match your invitation. Home printers that generate heat may melt the “raised ink” and potentially damage your printer. Please be careful or request that we print your return address in flat ink!

Traditionally, two envelopes are used for wedding invitations and announcements. The inner envelope, which may be plain or lined in a color to coordinate your ensemble, is without glue and remains unsealed. A band around these envelopes states that these are not to be addressed. It is used to enclose the invitation or announcement and any accompanying cards. It also makes sure that your invitation itself is delivered in an envelope without post office markings. The outer envelope has a glued flap and is used for the complete mailing address.

The guest’s full name is always used on the outer envelope with the street address:

Mr. and Mrs. Laurence Sutton
908 South Main Street
Hingham, Massachusetts 02043

Nicknames or abbreviations should be avoided when possible except for Mr., Mrs., Dr., Jr., etc. and for military rank. You may use an initial if you do not know the full name or if the person never uses their given name. Cities, states, and numbered streets are written out in full. Remember to include zip codes. Your local post office can help you find any zip codes you are missing if you do not have internet access. The U.S. Post Office website www.usps.com is easy to use.

The inner envelope always carries the last names only with no address:

Mr. and Mrs. Sutton

The phrase “and family” should be avoided. If you wish to include younger children, they should be mentioned by first name, according to age, on the line following that of their parents:

Mr. and Mrs. Sutton
Mark, Cynthia, Thomas

These names should appear on the inner envelope only. The outer envelope would simply be addressed to the parents. You should avoid writing “No Children” on the invitation or envelope. This should be handled verbally, if you feel someone needs this clarified.

Dates of single guests should be sent a separate invitation or you may wish to enclose a personal note in the invitation of a single guest saying, "Please bring a guest" or "Please bring Miss Marie Quinn".

Two unmarried people who reside at the same address may be sent a single invitation. Their names would appear on separate lines in alphabetic order:

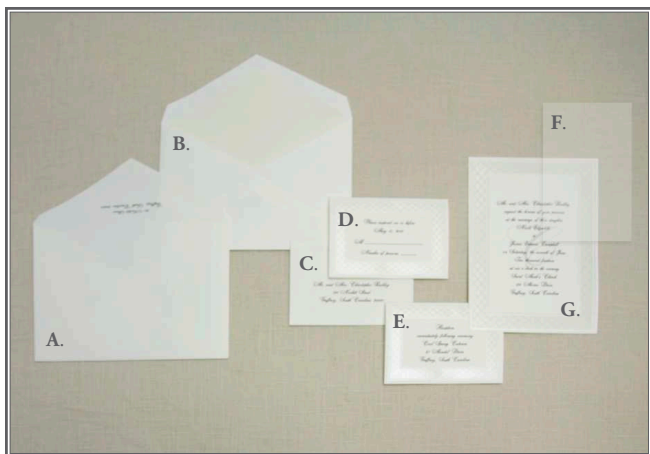
Ms. Roberta Trent
Mr. Robert Williamson

This same format may be used when inviting a married couple, if the wife has kept her maiden name or uses a professional title.

In addressing clergy, military officers and medical doctors, always use their titles in full:

The Right Reverend William Prentice
Colonel and Mrs. Quinlan Roberts
Doctor and Mrs. Martin Swift
The Doctors Swift

Your return address should be printed, written, or embossed on the flap of your outer envelope. This ensures that any invitation can be returned to you with an address that is incorrect or for any other reason.



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|----------------------|---------------|
| A. Outer envelope | E. Reception |
| B. Inner envelope | F. Tissue |
| C. Response envelope | G. Invitation |
| D. Response | |

02 ENVELOPE ADDRESSING SERVICES

We also offer envelope addressing services for any of your envelope needs. We will print your envelopes giving them a beautiful hand addressed look. You simply provide your guest list using our template that can be downloaded at www.birchcraft.com/addressing. Visit the same website for more pricing information on this service.

03 HOW TO ASSEMBLE YOUR INVITATION ENSEMBLE

Your invitations and announcements will arrive flat. Single fold invitations should be folded with the printing on the outside. Those with a tri-fold should be folded with the design on the front. Accessory enclosures are placed inside the second fold. Cards that are flat or with one fold should have the accessories placed on the top of the invitation.

With the invitation face up, place the tissue over the imprint area. Accessory (enclosure) cards are then placed face up on top of the tissue with the reception card closest to the invitation. Remember to place a postage stamp on the response envelope and to number the back of the response card with your secret number. The invitation and its accessory (enclosure) cards should then be placed inside the inner envelope. The printed side faces you, leading into the envelope with the folded edge first.

Finally, the inner envelope, with all of the contents mentioned above, is inserted into the outer envelope. The guests' names should face the back of the outer envelope so that it is seen immediately when removed from the outer envelope.

04 POST OFFICE TIPS TO ENSURE PROPER DELIVERY

You should ALWAYS put together a complete invitation ensemble with all of the accessory (enclosure) items, envelopes and any direction cards. Take this to your local post office to have it weighed and checked for size. Square and oversized invitations require extra postage due to their shape if 1 ounce or less. Anything over 1 ounce requires extra postage. The post office can then show you different decorative stamps available in the amount you will need to use.

Your invitations should be mailed 6 weeks before the wedding. (8 weeks is now common for out-of-town guests.) Use Save-the-Date cards so that long distance guests can make arrangements. These should be sent out 6 to 12 months before or as soon as your plans are finalized. "At home" or announcements should not be mailed until after the wedding.