

instead of having that information on the main invitation. There could be several reasons for doing this. One is that everything about your wedding is truly formal and you do not wish to clutter up the invitation proper with that information. Another is if you are inviting certain people only to the ceremony and not to the reception, or vice-versa: you insert the reception cards only in the envelopes of those who are invited to both. Lastly, the reception card is a handy reminder for your guests. They can simply tuck the reception card in their pocket or purse and have all the information they need at hand without carrying the bulky envelope. This is particularly useful if the reception is not immediately following the ceremony: it is a good reminder for your guests if they have repaired to a bar or someone's home during the lull between events and could lose track of time.

You may also wish to enclose a map and/or detailed directions to the church and/or reception location. This is particularly helpful if either location is in an out-of-the-way place and even if not, it is a good idea for your out of town guests. Many reception halls have preprinted maps they will let you have, or you can have your printer make some up for you.

PRINTING

Your invitations should be printed in black typescript on a double sheet of fine white or off-white paper. You may customize your invitations by using unusual sizes, special paper like parch-

ment or linen, or different colors (usually pastels or earth tones). A beautiful and classy way to personalize your invitations is to have a professional calligrapher design an invitation just for you.

If you are planning a wedding that is less than traditional, you can choose from many other invitation styles. Your printer will have many sample books on hand. The paper may be colored and/or textured and may feature decorative touches like wedding bells or angels in the corners. This is also a less expensive approach than the formal invitation as the paper used is generally of a lighter weight. The wording can also be less formal and lighter in tone, or more personalized:

*Mr. and Mrs. John Smith
invite you to share their joy in
the marriage of their daughter
Jane and John Brown, Jr.*

INFORMAL

If your wedding is truly informal (married at home, marry outdoors, very small, etc.), you could actually send handwritten invitations or invite your guests by telephone. It would still be a good idea, however, to use something from a printer, especially if your handwriting is not the clearest. We have seen some perfectly nice informal invites which were typeset by a printer and included directions and a map and simply run off on a photocopier.

ADDRESSING

The inner envelope in your invitation is addressed by name only to the individual(s) being invited

to the wedding. It is handwritten. You should use only the title and name, for example: Dr. and Mrs. Smith, or Mr. and Mrs. Jones, or Mr. John Doe and Guest. For children, you may simply add their names after the parent(s): Mr. and Mrs. Smith and Stephanie, or Ms. Jane Doe and Jason. Single adults (over eighteen) living in the same house (including children still at home while attending school or boarders or other members of an extended family) should each receive a separate invitation, indicating, of course, whether they are invited to bring a guest.

The outer envelope would include the full name, complete address and any other names of those invited listed underneath the principal name.

WHEN TO SEND

Allow yourself plenty of time for printing, addressing, mailing and receiving the responses. You should have worded your invitations and placed your order with the printer at least ninety (90) days before the wedding date. Get a head start on addressing the envelopes by asking your printer to let you have them right away, before the rest of the printing has been finished. Make sure you use blue or black ink only, and keep your handwriting extra neat for this very special mailing.

Mail the invitations as soon as you get them back from the printer to ensure that everyone you really want to attend will be free to witness one of the greatest moments of your life and to help you celebrate the occasion afterwards!

