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GETTING STARTED: Organization, Etiquette, Wording, Calligraphy Info, and FAQ's

Thank you for choosing Katie Fischer Design! Here are a few tips that will help you create your wedding invitation wording and prepare for addressing and mailing. Our goal is to make the invitation process as seamless and stress-free for you as possible. Contact us anytime if you have questions or need anything at all!

TIMING

Normal timing to send your save the dates is eight to six months in advance. If you're having a destination wedding or planning a wedding during a time many others are planning to have weddings, you may consider sending it out twelve to eight months in advance. Invitations should be sent three months to six weeks in advance. During Covid, there have been increased postal delays. You may want to consider sending out your invites 14 weeks in advance to give them a bit more time to arrive by the 3 month mark. Your "reply by date" can be five to two weeks in advance (we suggest five to four weeks in advance to give you, your guests, and your vendors plenty of time to plan).

SUBMITTING YOUR FINAL WORDING FOR YOUR SAVE THE DATES AND INVITATION SUITE

In order to get started, we'll need your final invitation text typed out exactly as you'd like it to appear. Please submit your text all at once via email or through our links below. *Please make sure everything is spelled correctly and all details are correct:*

1. Your final Save the Date text: <http://www.katiefischerdesign.com/save-the-date-order-form>
2. Your final Invitation suite text: <http://www.katiefischerdesign.com/invitation-order-form>
3. We'll also need your final recipient addresses spelled out exactly as you'd like them printed (digital calligraphy) or written by the calligrapher. More info on this on pages 5-8.

WORDING SUGGESTIONS

Save the date

For save the date wording, less is more. You should include the following information:

- Wording that tells recipients to "Save the date"
- Your names: first names only (casual), first and last names, full names (formal)
- The date of your wedding, including the year. You do not need to mention the time on your save the dates.
- Place: you only need to list the city and state. You can save the actual venue info for your formal wedding invitations.
- Your wedding website URL (and password if your site will be password protected).
- It's a good idea to say: Formal invitation to follow.

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- You can include accommodation info or travel info, if needed. This can be a separate card insert or you can utilize both sides of your save the date and print this info on the back.

A few examples are as follows:

FORMAL WORDING NO. 1

Please save the date
for the wedding of
Elizabeth Alexandra Fausch
to
Andrew Joseph Walker III
September 26, 2016
New York, New York
Formal invitation to follow

For more information, please visit our website www.elizabethtakesawalk.com

FORMAL WORDING NO. 2

Please save the date of
Saturday, the ninth of September
two thousand twenty
for the wedding of
Rachel Adina Epstein
and
Joshua Phillip Altman
Brooklyn, New York
Formal invitation to follow

For more information, please visit our website www.RachelandJoshua2020.com

CASUAL WORDING NO. 1

Please save the date
for the marriage celebration of
Daniel Mitchell
and
Richard Callahan
on September 26, 2020
in San Francisco, California
Invitation to follow
www.danielandrichard.com

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CASUAL WORDING NO. 2

Save the date
September 26, 2020
Kate and Mark
are getting married!
Hudson, New York
Invitation to follow
www.kateandmarklovehudson.com

Invitations

Traditional/Bride's parents hosting (at a place of worship):

Mr. and Mrs. David Miller
request the honour of your presence
at the marriage of their daughter
Anna Joy
to
Joshua Seth Bennett
Saturday, the eleventh of June
at five o'clock in the evening
St. Patrick's Cathedral
New York, New York

Bride's parents hosting (at a place of worship/Jewish):

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Cohen
request the honour of your presence
at the wedding ceremony of their daughter
Anna Joy
and
Joshua Seth
son of
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Bennett
Saturday, the eleventh of June
at five o'clock in the evening
West End Synagogue
New York, New York

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Bride's parents divorced (mother listed first):

Ms. Leslie Clark-Phillips and Mr. Andrew Phillips
Dr. Martin Monroe
request the honor of your presence
at the marriage of their daughter
Anna Joy
to
Joshua Seth Bennett

Same sex with both parents hosting (names listed in alphabetical order of the last names):

Mr. and Mrs. David Bell
and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Yaffe
request the pleasure of your company
at the marriage of their children
Joshua Seth
and
Matthew Louis
Saturday, the eleventh of June
at five o'clock in the evening
The Green Building
Brooklyn, New York

Bride and groom's parents co-hosting (brides parents always listed first):

Mr. and Mrs. David Miller
together with
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Rosario
invite you to share in the ceremony
uniting their children
Anna Joy
to
Joshua Seth Bennett

The couple and parents hosting or when there's too many names to mention:

Together with their families
Sarah Joy
and
Joshua Seth Bennett
request the honor of your presence
at their marriage

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The couple hosting:

Andrew Martin Page
and
Joshua Seth Bennett
request the pleasure of your company
at their marriage

Bride, groom, and children hosting:

Bella and Benjamin
invite you to the ceremony
that will make them brother and sister
and that will make their parents
Sarah Joy Miller
and
Joshua Seth Bennett
husband and wife

INDICATING ATTIRE

People love to know what they should wear and by mentioning attire in your invitation suite you'll avoid spending time answering multiple inquires. Include information about attire in the bottom left- or right-hand corner of your invitation card (if ceremony and reception at the same place). If not, you should include it on your reception card. Here are some examples:

- Black tie: Tuxedo or dinner suit for men, formal gown for ladies.
- Formal or black tie optional: Suit and tie for men, fancy dress for ladies.
- Cocktail attire: Dark suit or slacks and a sport coat for men, cocktail dress for ladies.
- Semiformal: Suit and tie for men, cocktail dress for ladies.
- Resort casual or beach chic: Collared shirt and slacks for men, summer dress & sandals for ladies.
- Garden party attire: Summer suit for men, summer dress for ladies.

MORE WORDING TIPS

- Traditional wedding custom assumes that the parents of the bride pay for the wedding and are therefore the hosts. As the hosts, they are inviting the guests so their names appear in the first line of the wedding invitation. The names of married couples are connected by *and* and listed on the same line. The most traditional way is *Mr. and Mrs. John Daniels*. If the wife did not take her husband's last name

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or if she wishes to have her first name listed, you may write it by using *Ms.* in this case rather than *Mrs.* (as *Mrs.* next to the husband's name would indicate divorce) - it should be *Ms. Elizabeth Daniels and Mr. John Daniels* or, if different last name, *Ms. Elizabeth Whitford and Mr. John Daniels*. If the groom's parents are also hosting - you would list them under the bride's parents preceded by *and* or *together with*.

- If the groom's parents are not hosting, but you'd like to honor them - you can add them below the groom's name preceded by *son of*.
- If the invitation line is complicated, you can elect to do "Together with their families" in lieu of listing names.
- For a formal wedding where the ceremony will be held in a place of worship - generally you would use "honour of your presence" or "honor of your presence."
- If you are selecting to use the English spelling of "honour," then say "favour of your reply" on your response card. And if using "honor" then you would use "favor of your reply" on your reply card.
- If you are getting married at your reception venue or at an outdoor location, I recommend you put "pleasure of your company" instead of honor/honour of your presence.
- Traditional Jewish wording always connects the couple with "and" rather than "to" to symbolize the joining of the two families.
- Formal invitations should be written in third-person. Example: "Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Goldstein," not "We."
- Numbers in the date are spelled out and follow the day of the week (ex: Saturday, the seventh of August).
- Years can be used but are not necessary. If you choose to include the year, be sure to spell it out (ex: Two thousand and fifteen).
- No punctuation is used except after courtesy titles such as Mr. and Dr.
- Proper names and courtesy titles are also capitalized.
- The time should be spelled out and written to describe the placement of hands on a clock. For example, Half past one (not 1:30 p.m.).
- If don't want the guests to bring children, here are three options:
 - If you have a website post the information there, not on the invitations.
 - Include "adult reception" on your reception cards.
 - Include "Number of adults _____" on your reply cards.
- R.S.V.P. are the initials for the French words *Repondez, s'il vous plait* which translates to *Please respond* - so if using R.S.V.P. on your reply card, it should not be preceded by the word *please*. You may instead use *Please reply* or *Kindly reply* or *The favor/favour of your reply is requested* in place of R.S.V.P. Whichever you choose, it should match the wording style/formality of your invitation card.
- Reply cards should have an *M* and a line for your guests to write in their name. You may include the traditional responses: *___ accepts ___ regrets* OR *___ accepts with pleasure ___ declines with regret*. You may also simply use a sentence asking for a "reply by" date or "The favor of a prompt reply is requested" at the top or bottom of the card and leave the rest blank. This is a more elegant solution and leaves room for your guest to write in their reply (as well as including a personal note).
- Registry information may be included on your wedding website - it should never be mentioned in your invitation suite.

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QUANTITY TO ORDER

As a general rule, the quantity of save the dates or wedding invitations will be a little more than half of your total guest list.

We suggest ordering 10-20% extra save the dates or invitation sets (for lots of international recipients - 20% is suggested) to allow for any last minute additions and to replace any invitations that are returned. Going back to press for a few additional pieces is expensive, but if you run out and need to order more, we will charge you at cost for the set up fees, supplies, reprinting, and calligraphy.

ADDRESSING YOUR ENVELOPES

You've put a lot of heart and time into getting your invitations right – be sure to get the addressing right too. If you need help collecting mailing addresses for your guests, we suggest setting up an account with Postable. You'll be able to email your Postable link to your contacts and then they'll enter in their addresses. From Postable, you can export an Excel spreadsheet of guest addresses. As you're organizing your addresses, please use the following etiquette guidelines:

- Everyone over 18 should receive a separate invitation.
- Everyone under 18: individual names or "and family" should be listed below parent's names.
- If you are allowing your single friends to bring a date, please specify "and Guest" next to their name on your spreadsheet.
- Widows are Mrs.
- Divorcees are Mrs. or Ms.
- For non-binary guests, you can use Mx. (or ask them how they would like to be addressed).
- Boy under 8 ~ Master
- Girl under 18 ~ Miss
- Single woman ~ Ms.
- The only acceptable abbreviations are: Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms., Jr., Dr., Mx., and military titles
- Clergy ~ The Reverend, The Revered Father, Rabbi
- Elected official ~ Judge, The Honorable
- If two people are married with different names, each name is listed one above the other on the envelope. Ms. is used for the woman's name.
- If one person has a title and one does not, the person with the title is listed first.
- Couples unmarried and living together, one above the other, the woman being listed first.

PREPARING FOR DIGITAL CALLIGRAPHY

Digital calligraphy is when your recipient addresses are digitally printed directly on your envelopes in matching fonts and colors (we can't do digital calligraphy on black envelopes or super dark colored envelopes). Putting

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your guest list together properly for digital calligraphy is important. The printer will print your addresses exactly as they are entered in your Excel spreadsheet. Below are some tips to guide you so the envelope printing process goes by smoothly.

- Please request our sample digital calligraphy spreadsheet to use as a guide.
- Address lists should be typed in the Times New Roman or Arial font in an Excel spreadsheet (or as a Google Doc, exported to Excel) using proper upper and lower case letters so there's no confusion. Example: MCCARTHY should be McCarthy.
- Each column signifies a new line in the address printed on the envelope.
- Married couples should be listed together with an "and" in column one, i.e. Mr. and Mrs. Scott Cohen. For married couples with different names, each name is listed one above the other on the envelope. Ms. is used for the woman's name. Any married couples with an unusually long name(s) - list on two lines as to not have it awkwardly cut off between a first and last name or run off the edge of the envelope.
- If you want apartment numbers listed on the same line as the street address, please type it as "125 East 24th Street, Apartment 1" or "125 East 24th Street ~ 1" If you'd like suite and apartments on the next line, please be sure to list them in their own column after the street address. For very long street addresses and apartment numbers, you may want to put them on two lines to avoid awkward splitting up of the address onto two lines.
- City and state need to be together in the same column properly separated by a comma: "New York, New York" or "New York, NY"
- You may include the ZIP code next to city and state in the same column or you can put it in its own column and we will print it below on its own line.
- Please create a separate page for International addresses and please be sure it's formatted properly per the postal guidelines for those specific countries.
- For particularly long names of couples or long street addresses, please split up onto two lines so that nothing gets cut off in the printing process.
- Everything will be printed exactly as it is typed in the spreadsheet. Therefore, please make sure everything is spelled properly and capitalized correctly.
- DUE DATE: we need to submit your final Excel spreadsheet at the same time that we submit all of your other final files to the printer.

PREPARING FOR HAND-WRITTEN CALLIGRAPHY

Handwritten calligraphy can be modern or traditional, matte ink or metallic on any color of envelopes. Since there's a person doing these addresses by hand and they are all to be written perfectly centered, we will need the addresses submitted to us as a Word document or Google document or Text Edit document with all addresses typed out how they should appear on the envelope and centered. Everything needs to be spelled out correctly and please place the ZIP how you want it on the envelope (on the same line as city and state or on its own line at the bottom of the address). Here are the guidelines as the calligrapher

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requests it:

- Addresses are centered and therefore guest lists must be submitted typed and centered with no abbreviations (spell out states, post office box, street, lane, etc.)
- A Word document works best as you can create a "mail merge" document from your original Excel spreadsheet. We suggest doing a mail merge from your Excel Spreadsheet into a template for Avery labels 5134. If you want to submit it as an Excel spreadsheet, you'll need to include a column where the address is laid out all together as it should appear on the envelope, centered.
- Handwritten calligraphy Formatting Examples:

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Smith
123 Main Street ~ 7A
Milford, Pennsylvania
18337

---OR---

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Smith
123 Main Street
Apartment 7A
Milford, Pennsylvania 18337

- Type out your addresses exactly as you want the calligrapher to write them. Make sure you put the ZIP code where you want it (same line as city and state OR below on its own line).
- Use a standard font like Times New Roman or Arial (14pt).
- If you want the apartment on the same line as the street address, a tilde (~) is used instead of the word Apartment, Unit or Suite (it looks pretty and keeps the apartment number on the same line). Please type out apartments this way (with ~ instead of Apt, etc.). OR If you don't want a tilde used, then type a separate line, under the street name line, with the apartment number only (Apartment 7A).
- Use upper and lower case letters so there's no confusion.

THE FINISHED PRODUCT: PUTTING YOUR SUITE TOGETHER

You've received your gorgeous wedding suite, your envelopes are addressed properly, and now you're ready to put all the wedding stationery together and seal your envelopes. Below are some pointers:

- Separate out all the international envelopes and count the corresponding number of reply envelopes that you will need and set them aside.
- Apply one Forever stamp to all domestic reply card envelopes. International guests will need to apply

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postage from their county, so you can leave the stamp off their reply envelopes.

- Flip the reply card envelope so that your address is facing back. Tuck the reply card under the response card envelope flap. Put at bottom. Place the info card over that. Then the invitation card in the front. In this way, the stationery will be staggered from largest ensemble card to smallest or vice versa. Place the invitation suite face up inside the envelope (or inside a gatefold or belly band or ribbon, if ordering, then inside the envelope).
- Use a glue stick or a small double-sided adhesive tape dispenser to adhere the envelope closed. You can find a good double-sided adhesive tape dispenser in the scrap booking section of any arts and crafts store (choose one that says archival).
- We can do the assembly or mailing for you. Contact us for current rates.

MAILING: GETTING IT RIGHT

We know you're excited, but don't sprint to the nearest mailbox - not just yet! Postal rates change often and in subtle ways (the thickness or shape of an envelope, for example). We suggest that you or I go to the post office and have them tell us the correct postal rate for each component of your suite. At the risk of looking like a crazy person, we should ask two different postal workers to tell the rate. You'll often get a different answer. When it's time to assemble and mail your invites, here's how we'd do it (we can do the mailing for you as well - ask us about rates and procedures):

- Domestic sets: weigh and purchase postage, if you haven't purchased it yet. If you have, apply the domestic postage at home in the upper right corner of your invitation envelopes. But double-check it at the post office.
- International: purchase the correct postage for each envelope from the clerk.
- **DOUBLE CHECK THE POSTAGE BEFORE MAILING YOUR INVITATIONS AT THE POST OFFICE.** Postage rates can change overnight. You may get told different postage rates by different post offices. Always go with the postage rate that the post office you're mailing your invites from tells you.
- Request hand-canceling: This will cause the post office to stamp a seal over the postage instead of running your envelopes through a machine. Your invitations will arrive looking cleaner. If possible, ask if you can borrow their stamp and hand-cancel your invitations yourself. That way you can be sure they are indeed hand-canceled.

Now you know you've done everything properly! Get ready for the swooning texts and emails. We're here if you need anything at all.

Cheers,

Katie Fischer Cohen + The Katie Fischer Design Team