

Etiquette Guide

Carol & Company is here to help you with all your wedding worries. If you have questions, please feel free to ask. We are the only addressing service in Hagerstown, and our experts are here to assist you. Once you have your envelopes addressed, we are happy to help with your place card addressing also. We pride ourselves on our attention to detail and look forward to making your wedding everything you dreamed it would be.

Addressing Wedding Envelopes

Finalizing your guest list can be one of the most time consuming parts of planning your wedding. There are so many different rules of etiquette, that it can be difficult to determine what abbreviations and titles to use or how to address the envelopes properly. Our experts at Carol & Company have combined many of the formal etiquette rules with today's more modern approach into a short guide to help answer many of your common questions.

Let's start with the formal traditional rules of etiquette, which apply as much to addressing the envelope as they do to wording the invitation. Wedding invitations are traditionally mailed in two envelopes. They may be addressed in your own handwriting, by a calligrapher, or Carol & Company offers a unique envelope addressing service to assist you. We can print the envelopes on a computer in a black calligraphy font, or we can closely match the font and color used on your wedding invitation.

The outer envelope is the mailing envelope. The recipient's name and address appear on the face of the envelope. The name and address may be staggered or centered. The sender's return address traditionally appears on the back flap of the envelope, although the post office prefers the return address to appear on the front of the envelope. No names appear with the return address, so if you live in an apartment building you must include your apartment number. The return address would traditionally be blind embossed, although today most people prefer to match the colors of the invitation.

Only the recipient's surname, preceded by a title, appears on the inner envelope.

Abbreviations should not appear on the envelopes except in the case of a title. "Dr.," "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Ms.," or "Jr.," are acceptable. Although "Ms." is too informal to appear on wedding invitations, it may be used on the wedding envelopes. The rules of etiquette are the same for invitations and envelopes with the exception of the use of "Ms."

The terms "and guest" and "and escort" (as in "Miss Strickland and escort" or "Mr. Keegan and guest") should not be used on wedding envelopes. If you would like one of your guests to bring a friend, ask for the friend's name and address and send him or her separate invitation. It is much nicer and much more personal to send a separate invitation than to add "and escort" to another person's invitation. Today's rules of etiquette are not as strict and it has become more common to use the "and guest" and "and escort" when the name of the guest is not available, keeping in mind it is not as formal or personal.

Likewise, "and family" should not appear on the envelopes. It is too impersonal and too ambiguous. Invitations that are extended to several members of the family should be addressed to the parents. The names of the children who are invited are written on the inner envelope beneath their parents' names. Older children living at home with their parents should receive separate invitations.

Envelope Addressing Examples

The following are some examples to help guide you through the process of formalizing your guest list.

Back Flap of Outer Envelope

**307 WEST SHORE ROAD
HUNTINGTON, NEW YORK 11743**

or

**APARTMENT 12C
233 EAST 73RD STREET
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10021**

Married Couple

OUTER ENVELOPE

**Mr. and Mrs. William Edward Lipton
458 Habersham Road, N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30305**

INNER ENVELOPE

Mr. and Mrs. Lipton

Married Couple with Children under the age of Eighteen Living at Home

OUTER ENVELOPE

**Mr. and Mrs. William Edward Lipton
458 Habersham Road, N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30305**

INNER ENVELOPE

**Mr. and Mrs. Lipton
Beth and Louise**

Children Over the age of Eighteen Living at Home

OUTER ENVELOPE

**The Misses (or Messrs.) Lipton
458 Habersham Road, N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30305**

INNER ENVELOPE

The Misses (or Messrs.) Lipton

Married Couple – Woman Kept Maiden Name

OUTER ENVELOPE

**Ms. Elaine Lorinda Atkins
Mr. William Edward Lipton
458 Habersham Road, N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30305**

INNER ENVELOPE

**Ms. Atkins
Mr. Lipton**

Married Couple – Both Are Doctors

OUTER ENVELOPE

**The Doctors Lipton
458 Habersham Road, N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30305**

INNER ENVELOPE

The Doctors Lipton

Married Couple – Woman Is a Doctor

OUTER ENVELOPE

**Dr. Elaine Lorinda Atkins
Mr. William Edward Lipton
458 Habersham Road, N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30305**

INNER ENVELOPE

**Dr. Atkins
Mr. Lipton**

Divorced Woman

OUTER ENVELOPE

**Mrs. (Ms.) Elaine Atkins Lipton
458 Habersham Road, N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30305**

INNER ENVELOPE

Mrs. (Ms.) Lipton

Widow

OUTER ENVELOPE

**Mrs. William Edward Lipton
458 Habersham Road, N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30305**

INNER ENVELOPE

Mrs. Lipton

Man and Woman Living Together

OUTER ENVELOPE

**Ms. Elaine Lorinda Atkins
Mr. William Edward Lipton
458 Habersham Road, N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30305**

INNER ENVELOPE

**Ms. Atkins
Mr. Lipton**

Single Man

OUTER ENVELOPE

**Mr. James Keith Matthews
50 Devonshire Lane.
Kenilworth, Illinois 60045**

INNER ENVELOPE

Mr. Matthews

Single Woman

OUTER ENVELOPE

**Miss (Ms.) Ashley Grane Read
3738 Diamond Head Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96815**

INNER ENVELOPE

Miss (Ms.) Read