

Invitations

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Whether you are planning a wedding, shower, benefit, or birthday party, an invitation is your first chance to make an impression on your guests. Use this opportunity to create intrigue, mystery, and excitement about the upcoming event while delivering all the necessary details in a concise and understandable way. Depending on your time, budget, skills, and the number of pieces you need to make, you can produce invitations by hand using desktop printing and a variety of found or purchased materials, or you can work with a commercial printing service.

DINNER PARTY VS. BBQ The style of your invitation should reflect the tone of your event. Will the party be relaxed and casual or formal and elegant? Will it include people from different backgrounds and generations (as in a wedding or a baby shower) or just your friends?

Your choice of imagery, typeface, colors, language, and materials will reinforce your message. The invitations to the left convey the elegance of a dinner party and the casual feel of a BBQ; in each one, the written information is integrated with the imagery.

PLANNING YOUR INVITATION

- What type of event will this be (birthday, wedding, graduation, baby shower, family reunion)?
- What is the age group (children, young adults, families, adults)?
- Will there be a theme (western, holiday, cocktail)?
- Is there a dress code (casual, semi-formal, formal, black tie)?
- What is the tone of the event (serious, humorous, relaxed, energetic)?
- What is your budget?
- How many invitations do you need?
- How much time do you have to make them before they need to be distributed?
- What are your output options (home printer, copy center, fax machine, e-mail)?

CONTENT CHECKLIST

- event
- time
- date
- location
- dress code
- RSVP
- contact information

POSTCARD INVITATIONS
Set the tone for your event with a simple postcard. Print it on your home or office printer, or have a large-scale job produced by an online postcard company, such as modernpostcard.com
Design: Ida Woldemichael
Jessica Rodríguez

PARTY INVITATIONS You don't need to spend a lot of money to create interesting and fun invitations. Recycle, reuse, and repackage for low-budget but high-style invitations. Get ideas by looking around for materials and discovering new ways to use them. Give new life to interesting objects, paper scraps, old photos, containers, and packages that you might otherwise throw away.



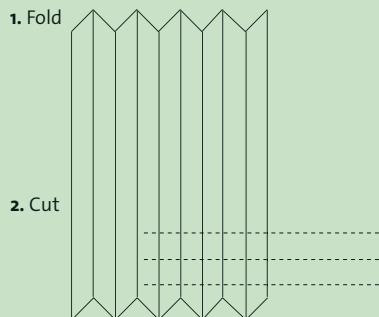
ALTOID TIN INVITATION

Materials: Altoid tins, papers

1. Candy tins come in a variety of shapes and sizes. These are fun invitations to hand around at work or school.
 2. Create a labeling system for the outside of the invitations. You can use sticker paper or a band of paper or ribbon with a guest's name on it. You can cover up the printing on the tin, or let it show.
 3. Type or hand-letter the text, then print or photocopy.
 4. Make confetti by cutting an accordian-folded strip of paper into narrow ribbons. Fill the box with confetti and lay the invitation on top.
- Design: Ida Woldemichael
Photography: Dan Meyers*



To make confetti:



TEA-PARTY INVITATION

Materials: printable colored paper, glue, tea bag

1. Using a tea bag wrapper as a measuring guide, set up your dimensions in a layout program. Don't forget to leave an area for tabs that will be glued to close the sides of the tea bag.
 2. Put address on the back of the tea bag or on an insert card. You can also place a message on the insert card like the ones shown above.
 3. Close the tea bag with double-stick tape, and hand out your invitations.
- Design: Ida Woldemichael
Photography: Dan Meyers*



WEDDING INVITATIONS A wedding invitation may need additional pieces such as a map and directions to the event, a reply card and stamped reply envelope, bridal registry information, or special discount rates for hotel accommodations and airline group fares. Design all these elements to coordinate with each other. Some people hire a calligrapher to address the envelopes, but your own handwriting in wonderful ink can be just as nice. Don't forget to choose a great stamp.



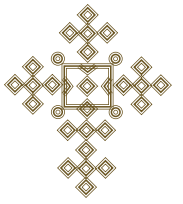
TRANSLUCENT OVERLAY WEDDING INVITATION

Materials: decorative paper, translucent or medium-weight tracing paper, string or ribbon, hole puncher.

1. Research envelopes and decorative paper at a stationary, craft, or art supply store. Trim the decorative paper to desired size. (Consider the envelopes that you will use.)
2. Type or hand-letter your text in an area slightly smaller than the decorative card. Use guidelines or crop marks to make trimming easy. Print or photocopy the text onto translucent paper. Test the paper in your printer; the ink may need time to set and dry on this surface.
3. Trim the printed translucent page and place on top of the decorated sheet.
4. Punch two holes along the top edge of both papers simultaneously. Insert string or ribbon through the holes and tie into a bow.

*Design: Jessica Rodriguez
Photography: Dan Meyers*

In this design, the printed text of the invitation lays over a sheet of decorative paper, and the two sheets are tied together with a ribbon. Decorative papers and ribbons are available at craft stores.



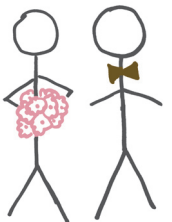
Eritrean cross or other cultural symbol



couple's initials



couple's initials and interlocking circles



bride and groom stick figures

An icon can provide a look or "brand" that brings together the different parts of a wedding, from invitations to party favors and thank-you notes. The icon should reflect the couple: their profession, initials, humor, or culture.



BRAND YOUR WEDDING

1. Choose or construct a graphic symbol that is meaningful to the couple, such as interlocking circles, the couple's initials, an icon from a dictionary of symbols, or a religious mark.
2. Research paper and envelopes. The final invitation should be .25 inches smaller in both directions than the envelope. You can print the invitation on white or colored paper, or you can print a colored background,

as in the design shown here. The invitation can match or contrast with the envelopes.

3. Create a cover for your invitation with your symbol. Make a pattern by repeating the symbol, or use it by itself.
4. Apply your design to additional items such as a reply card and directions to the event. (The reply card will require its own envelope.)
5. Write and layout the content for the invitation and other inserts.
6. Print your invitation and

inserts back to back. (Test one before you print them all.) Trim as needed and fold in half to create a finished card.

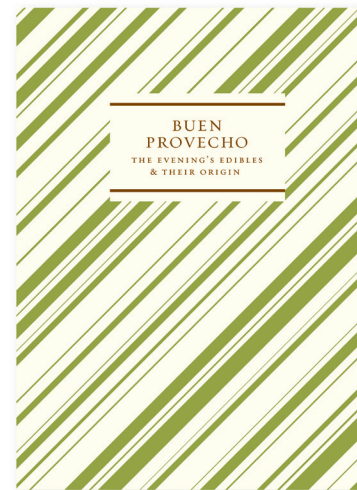
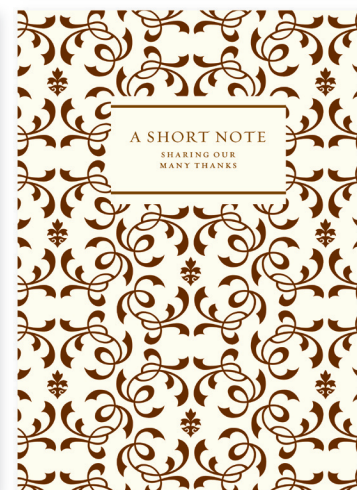
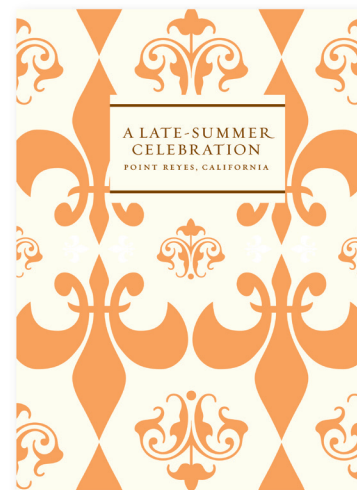
7. For a small wedding (under fifty guests), this design is practical to print yourself on a desktop printer. For a larger event, consider having your design printed commercially.
8. You can apply your graphic symbol to other items needed for the wedding, such as programs, napkins, or thank-you cards.

Design: Ida Woldemichael

TIE YOUR OWN KNOT

This wedding invitation plays with the vocabulary of do-it-yourself literature. The knots reappear throughout the various pieces, becoming an icon for the event.

The casual, homey tone of the invitation is offset by the formality of the hand-lettered envelopes. *Design: Jill Conrad and Christopher Hufnagel*
Photography: Dan Meyers



WEDDING IN YOUR POCKET

This wedding invitation was designed by a couple who have their own design studio in San Francisco. They created a series of tiny books that provided a useful guide for their guests and a wonderful way to remember the event. Each book is 3 1/4 x 4 1/2 inches, designed to fit into a purse or breast pocket. The whole series fits in to a hand-sewn linen sleeve. *Design: Becca Rees and Alex Ashton, Zipfly Design and Photography*
Photography: Holly Stewart