

survival guide

YOUR ONE-STOP SHOP FOR EASY WEDDING PLANNING



"Dominique" letterpressed invitation mounted on merlot dupioni silk, \$2,665 for 100; custom-designed map cards, \$750 for 100, both from Dauphine Press, dauphinepress.com.



Most Inviting

The invitations are your guests' first glimpse of your special day. Here's everything you need to send the right message.

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What's the number-one rule for choosing amazing stationery and etiquette guru Nicholas Nicholson of Mrs. John L. Strong, a New York-based stationer whose clients have included the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. His response: "Don't think about what's appropriate for a wedding, think about what's appropriate for you. Anything done well and done beautifully will be appropriate." So no matter what kind of special day you have planned, you're sure to find the ideal invitation.



This page and opposite: "Trellis" letterpressed invitation and enclosures, all in a red square pocket folder with sage satin ribbon fast, \$1,796 for 100, includes reply card and envelope (reception and directions cards additional); wax seal with gold-custling, \$1 per seal, all from Dauphine Press, dauphinepress.com.

Invitation Intelligence

1. Order invitations at least four months in advance of the wedding date.
2. Have several pairs of eyes give the printer's proof the once-over to catch typos.
3. To cover last-minute additions to the guest list, order 10 percent more invites than you think you'll need—and 25 percent more envelopes, in case you or your calligrapher makes mistakes in the addressing.
4. Have a fully stuffed invitation weighed before you go ahead and buy stamps; the

complete package might cost more than the standard 37 cents to mail. Then go to USPS.com to order special stamps—such as the "Love" pattern—that work best with the color and style of your invitations.

MB TIP

If you're hosting the wedding with financial contributions from both sides, your names followed by "together with their families" elegantly includes everyone.

Special Touches

- Patterned envelope liners can make your white or solid-colored invitations pop.



- Bellybands made of grosgrain, velvet or silk are a pretty extra.

- Charms, such as silver pinecones for a winter wedding, add a sense of fun.

- Monograms and symbols can personalize your invitations.

- An old-fashioned wax seal, stamped

with your initials, a family crest or an icon, is a lovely way to finish off your look.

- Regardless of the level of formality you choose, hiring a calligrapher or addressing the envelopes yourself by hand makes the invitation much more personal and elegant.



The Tri-Fold Design

Typically, an outer envelope contains an inner envelope, the invitation, a smaller envelope, and a response card. For a more streamlined alternative, consider this modern triptych.



The invitation is placed in the center of the folder, so it's the first thing guests see and they immediately know the essentials: who's getting married, when and where.

The response card and any other extras, such as a map, go in the folder's pockets. If you're planning a destination wedding, you might also want to give your guests details about accommodations and additional events. Or you can enclose another small card reading "Information to Follow."

Printing Techniques

Set your invitations' tone and style with one of these four options:

ENGRAVED

An etched plate is used to press ink onto the paper, creating raised print for a superformal invitation. Costs average \$25 and up per invitation.

LETTERPRESSED

Moveable raised type is inked and stamped directly onto the paper, so text comes out indented. Costs average \$10 to \$35 per invitation.

THERMOGRAPHY

Its raised effect mimics engraving—but can provide a classic look for much less, usually about \$7 to \$10 per invite.

OFFSET LITHOGRAPHY

This flat printing works well with more fragile papers that can't stand up to presses or heat. It's also the least expensive option—prices can go as low as \$1.50 a piece. Great for designs with lots of colored ink, photos or graphics.

Initial Attraction

Personalize your new home with all things monogrammed. With embroidered albums, engraved goblets, and painted porcelain, we have your registry covered with the cutest must-haves. And what better hue than something blue?



1. "Signature Collection" dinner plate, \$69, from Pickard, pickard.com.
2. "Lismore" champagne flute, \$150 for 12, from Waterford, www.usa.com.
3. Silver-plated picture frame, \$48, from Reed & Barton, reedbarton.com.
4. Coaster for 100, from The Monogram Shop, themonogramshops.com.
5. "Signature Collection" coffeepot, \$304, from Pickard, pickard.com.
6. Engraved thank-you note, \$634 for 100, from Demsey & Carroll, demseyandcarroll.com.
7. Cocktail napkin, \$25, from The Monogram Shop, themonogramshops.com.
8. "Aldo" clock, \$29, from Pottery Barn, potterybarn.com.
9. "Fancy" napkin, \$60, from Daisy Hill, 502/339-9300.
10. Letterpressed place card, \$248 for 100, from Dauphin, dauphinpress.com; place-card holder, \$11 for 12, from Lucky Weddings, luckyweddings.com.
11. "Tropic" teacup and saucer, \$90, from Gracious Style, graciousstyle.com.
12. Silk photo album, \$40, from Neiman Marcus, neimanmarcus.com.

