



## Forms of Address in Correspondence

### OPTIONS / NOTES

<b>Addressing a woman:</b>	
Maiden name	Ms. Jane Johnson Miss Jane Johnson* <i>*usually 'Miss' is for girls under 18</i>
Married, keeping maiden name	Ms. Jane Johnson
Married, uses husband's name socially	Mrs. John Kelly Mrs. Jane Kelly* <i>*Nowadays this is acceptable</i> Ms. Jane Kelly
Separated, not divorced	Mrs. John Kelly Mrs. Jane Kelly Ms. Jane Kelly
Divorced	Mrs. Jane Kelly Ms. Jane Kelly Ms. Jane Johnson (maiden name)
Widowed	Mrs. John Kelly* <i>*If you don't know the widow's preference, this is the traditional and preferred form</i> Mrs. Jane Kelly Ms. Jane Kelly

<b>Addressing a couple:</b>	
Married, she uses her husband's name socially	Mr. and Mrs. John Kelly
<i>NOTE: Traditionally, a man's name preceded a woman's on an envelope address, and his first and surname were not separated (Jane and John Kelly). Nowadays, the order of the names - whether his name or hers comes first - does not matter and either way is acceptable. The exception is when one member of the couple 'outranks' the other - the one with the higher rank is always listed first. (see below)</i>	
Married, she prefers Ms.	Mr. John Kelly and Ms. Jane Kelly Ms. Jane Kelly and Mr. John Kelly <i>Do not link Ms. to the husband's name: Mr. and Ms. John Kelly is incorrect</i>
Married, informal address	Jane and John Kelly John and Jane Kelly
Married, she uses maiden name	Mr. John Kelly and Ms. Jane Johnson Ms. Jane Johnson and Mr. John Kelly <i>If you can't fit the names on one line (note indent):</i> Mr. John Kelly and Ms. Jane Johnson <i>Either name may be used first</i>
Unmarried, living together	Mr. John Kelly Ms. Jane Johnson <i>Note: Use two lines, do not indent and do not link the names with 'and.' Either name may be used first.</i>



A woman who outranks her husband: elected office, military rank	The Honorable Jane Kelly and Mr. John Kelly <i>If you can't fit both names on one line (note indent):</i> The Honorable Jane Kelly and Mr. John Kelly
A woman who outranks her husband: professional or educational degree	Dr. Jane Kelly and Mr. John Kelly
Both are doctors (PhD or medical) and use the same last name	Drs. Kelly ( <i>omit first names</i> ) Drs. Jane and John Kelly / Drs. John and Jane Kelly Dr. John Kelly and Dr. Jane Kelly / Dr. Jane Kelly and Dr. John Kelly
Both are doctors (PhD or medical), she uses her maiden name	Dr. Jane Johnson and Dr. John Kelly Dr. John Kelly and Dr. Jane Johnson

<b>Business:</b>	
Woman	Ms. is the default form of address, unless you know positively that a woman wishes to be addressed as Mrs.
Professional designations - use only for business	Jane Kelly, CPA <i>Note: Do not use Ms. or Mr. if using a professional designation.</i> <i>Socially, drop the professional designation and use Mr., Ms., or Mrs.:</i> Ms. Jane Kelly
Esquire: Attorneys and some court officials	Jane Kelly, Esquire <i>Note: If using Esquire, do not use Ms. or Mr.</i> <i>In conversation or socially, 'Esquire' is not used; use Mr. or Ms.: Ms.</i> Jane Kelly
Attorney at Law	Ms. Jane Kelly Attorney at Law <i>This is an alternative to 'Esquire' for attorneys. Use Mr. or Ms. and use two lines with no indent</i>