

Whether it is to a wedding, a dinner party, shower or gala event, an invitation comes with some important obligations. Here's a quick guide to keep you on the guest list.

### 1. RSVP



From the French, it means “Répondez, s’il vous plaît,” or, “Please reply.” This little code has been around for a long time and it’s definitely telling you that your hosts want to know if you are attending. Reply promptly, within a day or two of receiving an invitation.

### 2. How do I respond? Reply in the manner indicated on the invitation.

- RSVP and no response card: a handwritten response to the host at the return address on the envelope.
- Response Card: fill in and reply by the date indicated and return in the enclosed envelope.
- RSVP with phone number: telephone and make sure to speak in person – answering machines can be unreliable.
- RSVP with email: you may accept or decline electronically.
- Regrets only: reply only if you cannot attend. If your host doesn’t hear from you, he is expecting you!
- No reply requested? Unusual, but it is always polite to let someone know your intentions. A phone call would be sufficient.

### 3. Is that your final answer?

- Changing a ‘yes’ to a ‘no’ is only acceptable on account of: illness or injury, a death in the family or an unavoidable professional or business conflict. Call your hosts immediately.
- Canceling because you have a “better” offer is a sure fire way to get dropped from ALL the guest lists.
- Being a “no show” is unacceptable.

- Changing a 'no' to a 'yes' is OK only if it will not upset the hosts' arrangements.

#### 4. "May I bring..."

Don't even ask! An invitation is extended to the people the hosts want to invite—and no one else.

- ...a date. Some invitations indicate that you may invite a guest or date (Mr. John Evans and Guest) and when you reply, you should indicate whether you are bringing someone, and convey their name.
- ...my children. If they were invited, the invitation would have said so.
- ... my houseguest. It's best to decline the invitation, stating the reason. This gives your host the option to extend the invitation to your guests, or not.

#### 5. Say "Thank You."

Make sure to thank your hosts before you leave, and then again by phone or note the next day.