



The Fine Art of Writing a *Thank You*



Even today, when etiquette often appears an outdated notion, thank you notes are still an expected courtesy where weddings and showers are concerned. Since this gesture demonstrates thoughtfulness and kindness toward those you care enough about to include on your guest list, and who go to some effort and expense to purchase a gift, it truly *is* important to put pen to paper. In addition it shows a degree of respect and social adeptness that will only benefit your relationships with family, friends, and the new in-laws to whom you are writing.

The good news is, thank you notes don't have to be daunting or cumbersome. Here are just a few guidelines and tips to help keep you from landing on the bad behavior blacklist.

Guidelines

- ♥ **Anyone who attended your wedding should receive a personal, handwritten message from the happy couple. It is gracious to thank those who spent considerable time and money to attend your ceremony, and their presence is to be considered a gift. Pre-printed notes are not acceptable, as they are not personal.**
- ♥ **Even if you've thanked someone in person as you opened a gift, follow up with a note. As it's said, talk is cheap. The written word carries more weight of appreciation and thoughtfulness. And yes, this is true even for gifts that are not your favorites. Also, send a separate note for a shower and wedding gift from the same person. Each one deserves its own acknowledgement.**
- ♥ **Send your thanks in a timely fashion. A prompt response reinforces your appreciation. First class etiquette necessitates acknowledging a gift within two or three weeks of its arrival, six to eight at the very outside.**
- ♥ **Use nice stationery or an attractive card and a quality pen with dark ink. Avoid pencil, colored markers, and lined paper. Email is generally not viewed as an appropriate option for gifts given at formal occasions, and is perceived as marginal thank you protocol.**



What to Include

- 1- Begin with a salutation. "Dear" is often used. A less formal "Hi" is also acceptable. Address the salutation as the name is signed on the gift card. If it's signed "Dan & Jenny" then you may begin with "Dear Dan & Jenny." A more formal approach would begin, "Dear Mr. and Mrs. Evans."
- 2- Open with a short sentence that thanks the giver in a general way. "Thank you so much for the (lovely, thoughtful, generous, beautiful, fun...) wedding gift. Try to avoid overused words like wonderful and awesome.
- 3- Write a sentence that references the gift specifically. "We were thrilled when we opened the cookware set..."
- 4- Mention some details, describe what makes it special and how you plan to use it. "Brad and I love to cook together and since you gave us such an array of pieces we'll be able to create truly gourmet meals." If the gift was monetary, you should also indicate how you plan to use it. "Brad and I love to go camping, so we're planning to purchase a tent just as soon as we have time to shop."
- 5- Refer to any special contribution made by the person(s) on your behalf, such as traveling a great distance to attend the wedding, or picking up all the tuxedos for the wedding party, etc.
- 6- If a gift was sent but the guest was not present at the wedding, include a line saying how sorry you are that they were unable to attend.
- 7- Include a second statement that restates your gratitude: "We're so thankful for your generosity and we'll think of you as we make many delicious recipes over the years."
- 8- Whomever is writing the message should sign it: "Love (or sincerely, affectionately, warm regards) Angie", but both of your names should be included in the body of the card.



Extra-Thoughtful & Fun

- ♥ If you're able to budget the expense, include a wedding photograph of yourselves, or a shot of yourselves taken with the gift-giver at the wedding.
- ♥ Use stamps printed with *your* picture (search the web for "personalized postage stamps").
- ♥ Send a note of thanks to each of your wedding vendors, especially those that provided a great service or product.