



*emily rose ink*

*Artful Calligraphy & Wedding Paper Goods*

ENVELOPE  
ETIQUETTE GUIDE

# Address Etiquette Guide

## ADDRESSING NEXT STEPS

You've picked out your wedding invitations, you've finalized your guest list, and now it's time to think about addressing your envelopes. I provide calligraphy and envelope printing for my invitation clients, but before they send me their lists, I ask them to double-check every name and address to make sure they are correctly formatted.

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There are all kinds of rules when it comes to the proper way to address an envelope for a formal invitation, and they vary based on a guest's marital status, title, or living situation. There are also rules about how to format the addresses themselves to give your envelope the formality deserving of a wedding invitation.

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To avoid offending your guests, and to help clarify who is being invited to your wedding, make sure you adhere to the guidelines below. I've included two parts for your reference: first, a list of address formatting tips, and second a list of proper etiquette for addressing your guests.

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*NOTE: these rules apply mainly to formal invitations, but you can apply them to your Save the Dates if you prefer to convey a more formal tone from the start.*

# Address Formatting Tips

## **INVITEE & GUEST**

*If an invitee is allowed to bring a guest, make sure you denote this on the envelope by including “and guest” OR the guest’s full name (if you know their name, this is preferred) written on the line before your invitee’s name.*

## **MULTIPLE GUESTS WHO LIVE TOGETHER**

*Adults who are not romantically involved but who live together (for example, if they are roommates), should each receive their own invitation.*

## **ADDRESSING TO CHILDREN**

*Children BELOW the age of 18 should receive the same invitation as their parents (but their names should be written on the inner envelope to clarify that they are invited; if the inner envelope is addressed only to the parents, they will assume their children are not invited). Children ABOVE the age of 18 should get their own invitations, even if they are living at home.*

## **NO ABBREVIATIONS**

*Words such as “Street,” “Drive,” “Apartment,” “Unit,” or “Boulevard” should be spelled out. Cities and states should also be spelled out (i.e. “New York, New York.”)*

## **STREET NUMBERS, APARTMENT NUMBERS & ZIP CODES**

*Apartment or unit numbers should be written on a separate line than the street address. I also prefer the zip code, spaced out (one space between each number) for aesthetics, on the line after the city and state. Street numbers and apartment numbers under 10 should be spelled out (i.e. “nine” instead of “9”)*

## **WOMENS’ TITLES**

*“Miss” should be used for girls under the age of 18; “Ms.” should be used for women over the age of 18 who are not married.*

## **SPECIAL TITLES**

*Titles such as “Doctor” or “Captain” should be spelled out, but courtesy titles such as “Mr.” or “Mrs.” are typically abbreviated.*

# Addressing Guidelines

## INNER AND OUTER ENVELOPES

This guide was designed with the assumption that you will be using both inner and outer envelopes.

If you're using only outer envelopes, then children's names and the addition of "and Guest" should also be included on the outer envelope

## FORMAL VS. INFORMAL

These rules apply to formal invitations, but you can apply them to your Save the Dates if you prefer to convey a more formal tone from the start. For informal invitations, you may simply exclude the titles (i.e. "John and Jane Smith" instead of "Mr. and Mrs. John Smith")

## RECOGNIZING WOMEN & HONORING TRADITION

As a proud feminist, part of me cringes when I recommend to couples that they adhere to these traditional rules, which often means omitting a married woman's first name altogether from the envelope. For couples who are concerned with this element of the etiquette guidelines, I recommend including the woman's first name after her husband's, like so: "Mr. and Mrs. Robert and Gina Smith."

*For a more detailed guide to the correct way to address individual guests, refer to page 3 of this guide, which breaks it down by type of guest (married, single, bringing a guest, doctor, etc). For other questions of etiquette, I highly recommend Emily Post's Wedding Etiquette, an extremely useful handbook when it comes to wedding etiquette of all kinds.*

*And while it is important to make sure envelopes are addressed correctly, it's also important to remember that, at the end of the day, you're really just inviting your most closest friends and family to help you celebrate your love...and that's way more important than whether you remembered to spell out the word "Apartment!"*

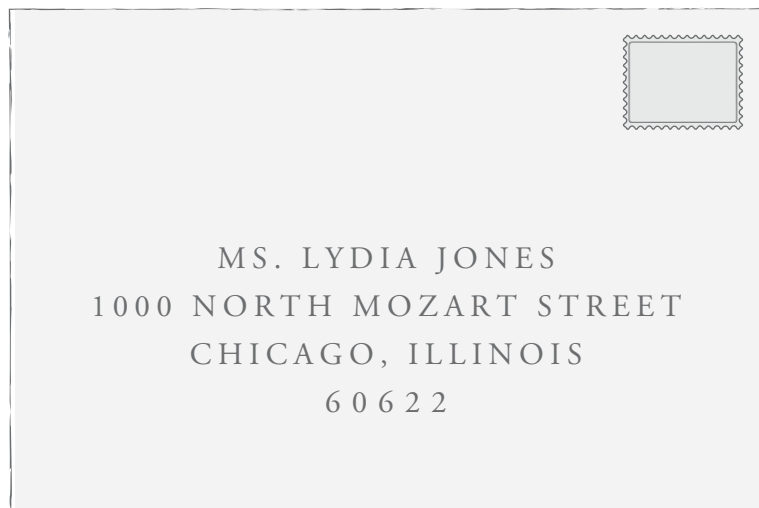
# Individual Guest Addressing

## SINGLE MAN



Inner envelopes should read Mr. Jones

## SINGLE WOMAN



Inner envelopes should read Ms. Jones

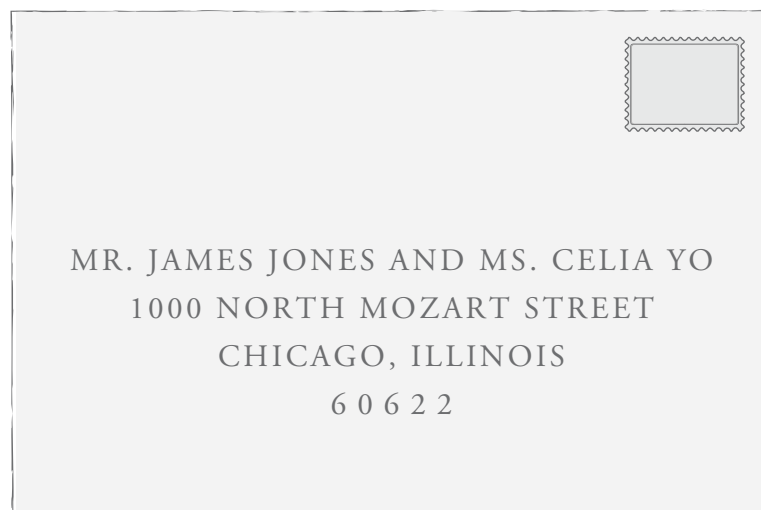
# Individual Guest Addressing

## SINGLE MAN OR WOMAN WITH GUEST



If you know the full name of the guest, you should include it on the line below your invitee's name. Inner envelopes should read Mr. Jones and Guest

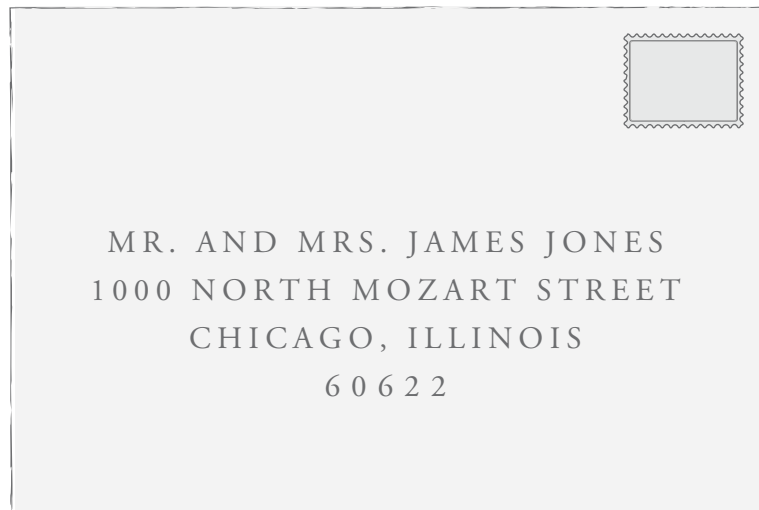
## UNMARRIED COUPLE LIVING TOGETHER



\*Traditionally, their names would be listed on separate lines with no "and," but this rule no longer applies. Inner envelopes should read Mr. Jones and Ms. Yo

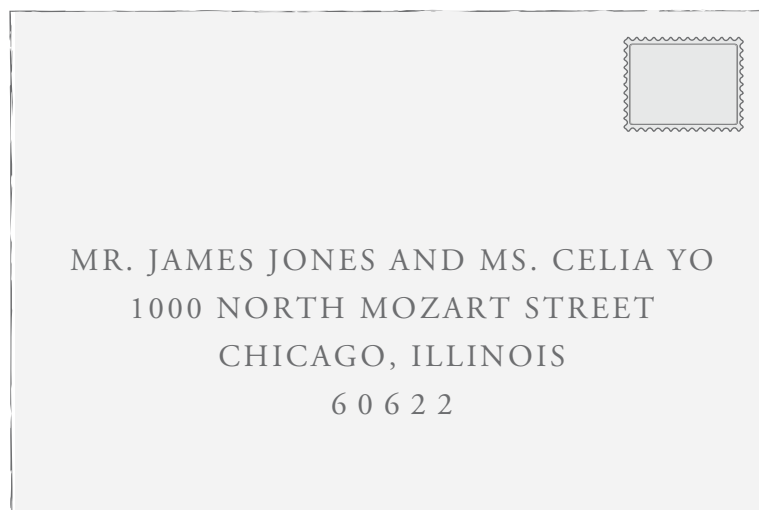
# Individual Guest Addressing

## MARRIED COUPLE, SAME LAST NAME



Inner envelopes should read Mr. and Mrs. Jones

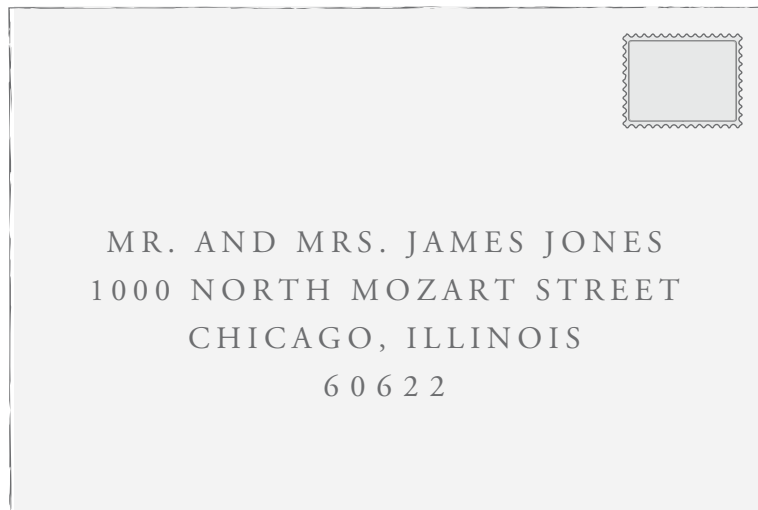
## MARRIED COUPLE, DIFFERENT LAST NAME



Inner envelopes should read Mr. Jones and Ms. Yo

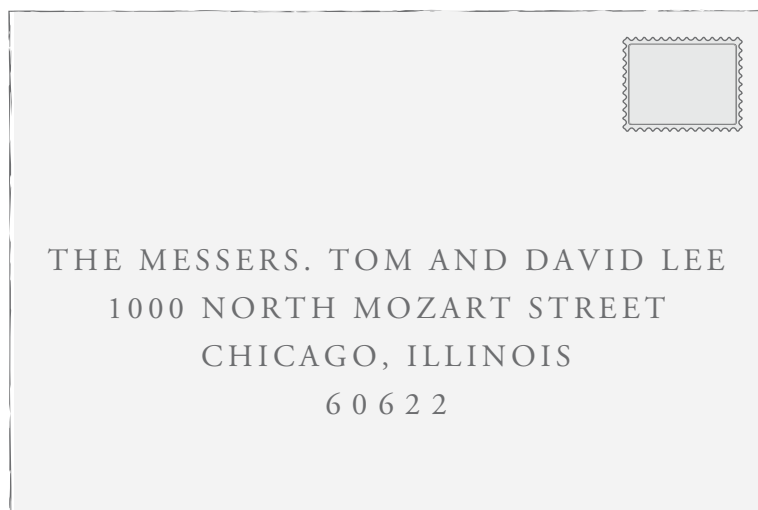
# Individual Guest Addressing

## MARRIED COUPLE WITH KIDS UNDER 18



Kids under 18 get their own invitations, even if they are living at home. Inner envelopes should read Mr. and Mrs. Jones - Grace and Miles Jones

## GAY COUPLE, DIFFERENT LAST NAMES

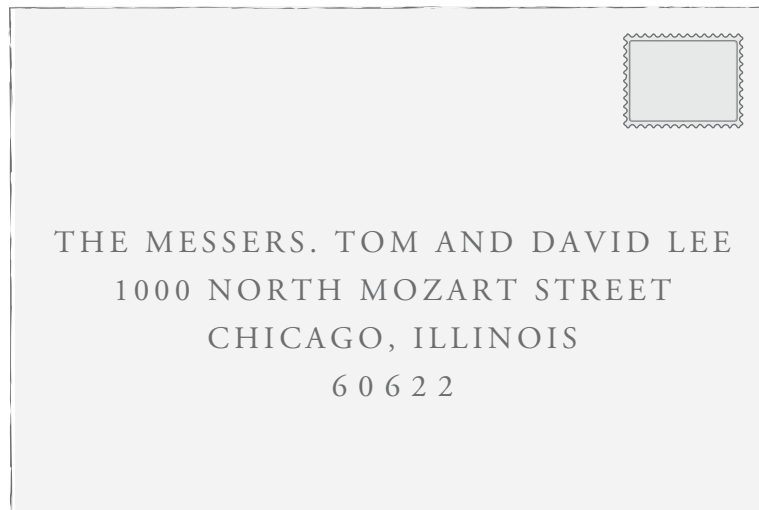


List names alphabetically. Inner envelopes should read Mr. Jones and Mr. Lee



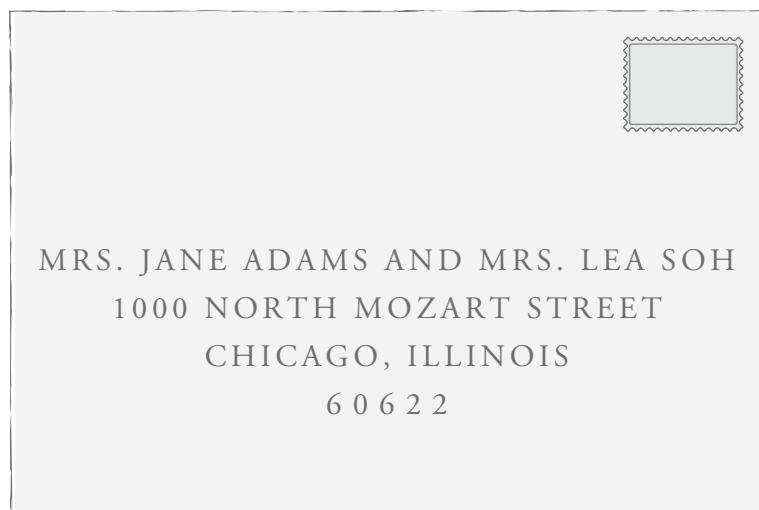
# Individual Guest Addressing

## GAY COUPLE, SAME LAST NAMES



List names alphabetically. Inner envelopes should read The Messers. Lee

## LESBIAN COUPLE, DIFFERENT LAST NAMES



List names alphabetically. Inner envelopes should read Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Soh

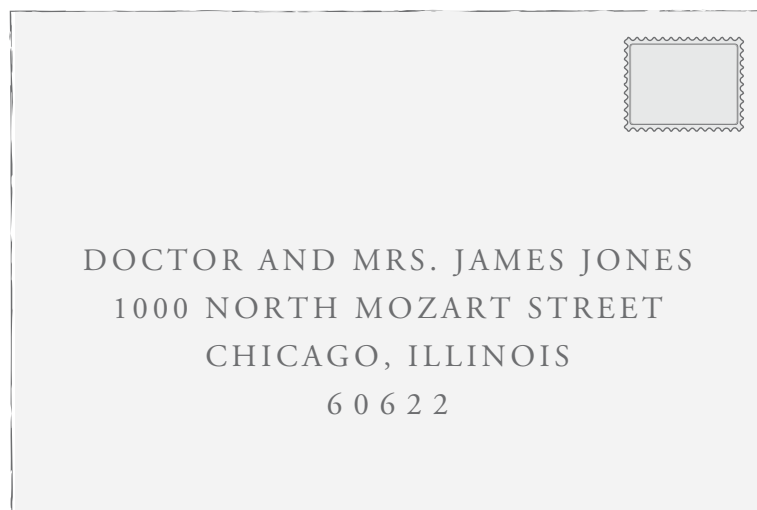
# Individual Guest Addressing

## LESBIAN COUPLE, SAME LAST NAMES



List names alphabetically. Inner envelopes should read The Mesdames Soh

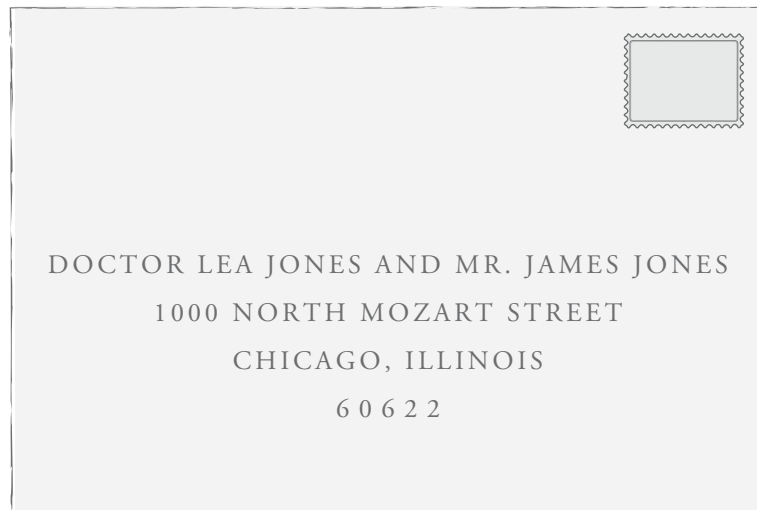
## MARRIED COUPLE, HUSBAND IS A DOCTOR



Inner envelopes should read Doctor and Mrs. Jones

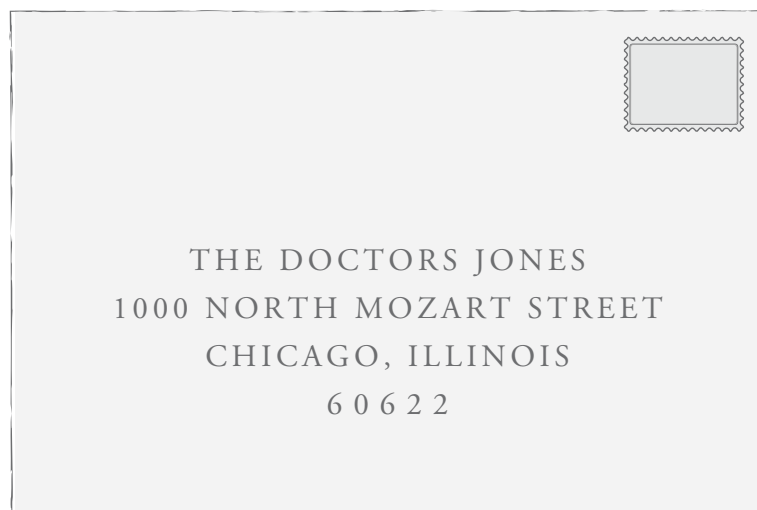
# Individual Guest Addressing

## MARRIED COUPLE, WIFE IS A DOCTOR



Inner envelopes should read Doctor Jones and Mr. Jones

## MARRIED COUPLE, BOTH ARE DOCTORS



Alternatively, you could write “Doctor James Jones and Doctor Lea Jones” (man first). Inner envelopes should read The Doctors Jones

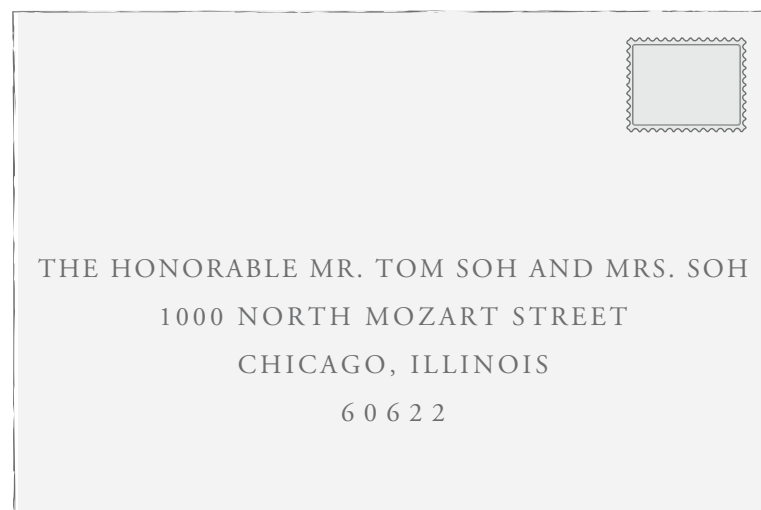
# Individual Guest Addressing

## MARRIED, BOTH DOCTORS (different last name)



Note that the woman's name comes first. Inner envelopes should read Doctor Smith and Doctor Soh

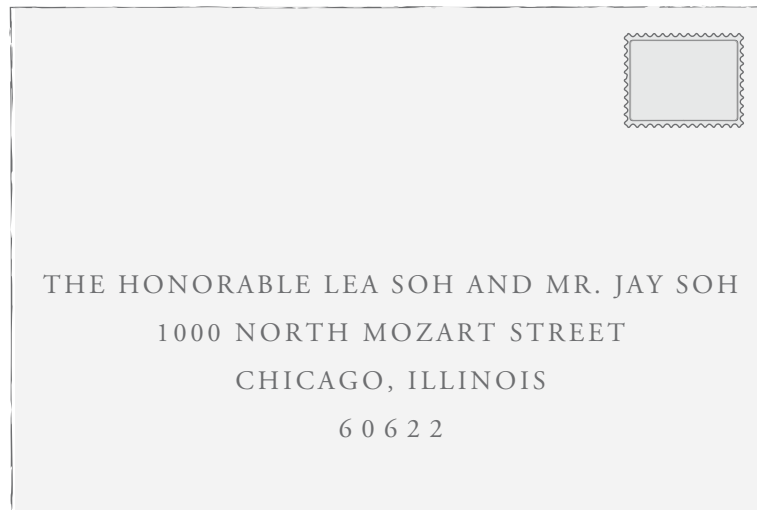
## MARRIED COUPLE, HUSBAND IS A JUDGE



Inner envelopes should read Judge Soh and Mrs. Soh

# Individual Guest Addressing

## MARRIED COUPLE, WIFE IS A JUDGE



Inner envelopes should read Judge Soh and Mr. Soh

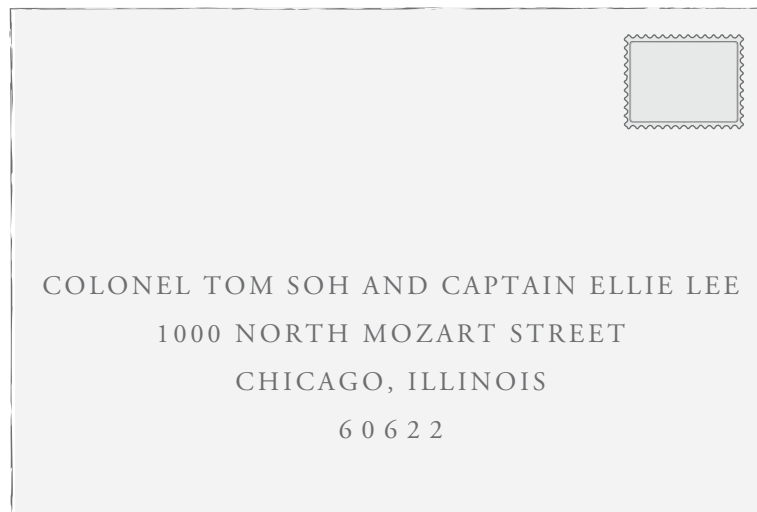
## MARRIED, HUSBAND IS COMMISSIONED OFFICER



Inner envelopes should read Colonel and Mrs. Soh

# Individual Guest Addressing

**MARRIED, BOTH COMMISSIONED OFFICERS**



Inner envelopes should read Colonel Soh and Captain Lee

**WIDOW**



Inner envelopes should read Mrs. Levinson

# Individual Guest Addressing

## DIVORCED WOMAN



Inner envelopes should read Ms. Jones