

When Are Evites Acceptable?

Evite and Facebook have taken over the invite world for the past number of years. The trend is moving us all toward a paperless world. There is no denying their convenience, but what has happened to the traditional invitation in the mail? Are those days long gone? Are paper invites making a comeback? It seems certain occasions still warrant a snail mail correspondence.

If someone takes the time to create a unique invitation – whether it is handmade or a beautiful, printed invitation – a guest can be made to feel quite honored and special to be receiving it. Possibly, when using a nonchalant Evite system there are always a number of people who don't feel the need to RSVP or even look at the invite. However, if you receive a thoughtful handmade or printed/written invitation in the mail, it elevates the event to a different level and just may change the energy and outcome of the gathering.

Wedding Evites and email

According to the Huffington Post (May 2014), Etiquette guru Peggy Post lists wedding invitations as a definite “email no”, making exception only for members of the military who wish to marry before deployment.

The Pros for using wedding evites:

- Digital communication is easy and inexpensive. For casual and informal weddings, people seem comfortable communicating through email and Evite invitations
- These days there are several online stationary companies that create beautiful wedding invitations designed for email.
- Using Evite invitations or email is much cheaper than paper invitations.
- Evite invitations and email are more environmentally friendly.

The Cons for using wedding evites:

- Most etiquette books still recommend paper wedding invitations. Formal weddings merit a formal wedding invitation that is consistent with the formality and tone of the wedding.
- With email wedding invitations or Evite, it can be unclear whom you are inviting. With paper invitations, one can signal who is invited by specifying to whom the invitation is addressed. Users of email and Evites cannot always do this.
- Some traditionalists in your family may feel slighted receiving your wedding invitation through email. Invitations in paper and ink convey a sense of importance.

- Spam filters can be tricky and may swallow up an Evite or email invitation.

Wedding Evites and the environmental impact

What about the impact on the environment? The pulp and paper industry is one of the largest industrial consumers of water in the world, and the fourth largest emitter of greenhouse gases among US manufacturers. And while you could choose 100% recycled or FSC (Forest Stewardship Council)-certified paper stock, you also have to consider the associated fuel costs of mailing your invitations around the country – and of your guests mailing back their response cards.

So is saying I Do or I Don't to online wedding invitations a deal-breaker? Probably not. When it comes to the environmental footprint of weddings, printing and mailing invitations pales in comparison to guests flying in from all over the country (or even the world) to attend your wedding. So, if you absolutely cannot budge on the invites, compromise: send the formal invitations by snail mail, but send the save-the-dates and invites to other pre-wedding festivities via email (Ms. Post approves of this option).

In general, when are evites an acceptable replacement for traditional snail mail invitations?

If more than 80% of the guest list is accessible via email

If the event does not require an RSVP

If the event is less than 30 days away

If it's an annual or regular event (birthdays, anniversaries)

It is best to send a physical invitation:

When more than 30% of the guest list isn't accessible via email

If the event requires more than a simple "yes/no" RSVP

If the event is scheduled more than 30 days away

If it's a once in a lifetime event (wedding, shower, retirement party)

www.apartmenttherapy.com/entertaining-etiquette

www.huffingtonpost.com/erica-laudon/evites-paperless-and-emai