



Correspondence Bites

What Doesn't Belong in an Invitation

An invitation should provide the information your guests need to decide whether they can attend.

It should **not** read like a long story or a personal letter.

Avoid including information that is unnecessary, overly detailed, or unrelated to the event.

Then discuss each point.

1. Long personal stories

**

I've been thinking for months about having a party because this year has been very stressful...

Guests don't need your life story.

Simply invite them.

2. Too many unnecessary details

**

We bought new chairs, painted the dining room, and ordered special flowers...

Interesting perhaps—but not relevant.

3. A complete menu

Unless guests must choose a meal in advance, they don't need to know every dish.

Instead:

** Dinner will be served.

** Refreshments will be provided.

4. Overly detailed directions

Don't write:

**

Turn left after the gas station, then drive 0.3 miles until you see a large oak tree...

Instead:

** Parking is available behind the building.



** A map is attached.

** Here's the address.

5. Too much information about gifts

One polite sentence is enough.

Good examples:

** Your presence is the only gift we need.

** In lieu of gifts, donations are welcome.

Avoid sounding like you're giving shopping instructions.

6. Pressure or guilt

Avoid making guests feel obligated.

**

It will really hurt my feelings if you don't come.

**

Everyone else is coming.

**

You have no excuse not to come.

Invitations should feel welcoming—not demanding.

7. Unnecessary apologies

Many learners write:

I'm sorry to bother you...

Sorry for inviting you...

There's no need to apologize for extending an invitation.

8. Private or embarrassing information

Don't explain why another guest wasn't invited.

Don't discuss family drama.

Don't gossip.

An invitation isn't the place for it.

9. Too many exclamation points

**

You're invited!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

One exclamation mark is enough.

Sometimes none is better.



10. Complicated language

Many learners believe formal means difficult.

Actually, the best invitations are usually simple and clear.

Compare:

**

It would afford me immense pleasure if you would graciously honor us with your esteemed presence...

**

We would be delighted if you could join us.

In sum –

Include everything your guests need to know, but nothing they don't.

