

RSVP:

HOW TO LET THEM KNOW YOU'RE COMING

RSVP is a French acronym that means "*Repondez S'il Vous Plait*" which is translated in English to mean "Respond if you please" or "Please respond". The acronym RSVP was typically used with invitations related to formal events such as weddings, engagement parties, or christenings or with professional events such as lectures, panels, or symposia. These are occasions when the number of attendees is significant to the host to ensure that the amount of food and seating is sufficient for all. However, the RSVP is now also used for informal gatherings as well as for dinner and cocktail parties.

Read the invitation. The host should have a telephone number, email address or some instructions on how to reply to the invitation. Less formal events typically note the RSVPs at the bottom of the invitation. Real formal events send a self-addressed, stamped RSVP card for you to answer and return via U.S. Mail.

Respond to electronic RSVPs, too. As the world is becoming more "e" based, many invitations are sent using electronic software such as Hallmark or Evite.com. It saves on stamps and is almost a guarantee the person will get it. Electronic emails arrive faster and allow you to answer the RSVP with a click of the reply button.

Pay strict attention to the deadline. Many times, your host will set a deadline for you to respond to an invitation. It is important that you adhere to this because event preparations are made based on the number of RSVP responses received. The caterer needs to be notified and many require a 24 hour notice. Don't wait until the day of the event and show up. That is poor etiquette and just plain rude.

If the invitation says "Regrets Only", you only need to RSVP if you cannot attend the event. Remember to contact the host if you cannot attend.

Respond to the invitation by means of how it was delivered. If the event is a formal one in which an invitation was mailed, use the specially made card that usually accompanies an invitation of this kind. Write a note of acceptance for a formal event

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in which no reply card is attached. According to Cathleen Hanson, founder of the International School of Protocol, the response should be written in the same tone as the invitation and should include: your name, that you will be attending (with polite wording such as, "the kind invitation of"), the host's name, the date and time of the event. An e-vite can be responded to by e-mail, and social networking sites usually have a tab you can click on to reply "yes" or "no". A simple phone call is sufficient for a child's birthday party or other informal event in which a phone number is listed with the request to RSVP.

Do not answer yes to the RSVP and fail to show up. Only a matter of serious illness or death in your family should keep you away. It is bad etiquette and rude to RSVP stating that you will attend and then fail to do so.

Adapted from eHow.com: http://www.ehow.com/how_4687412_use-proper-rsvp-etiquette.html

SAMPLE RSVP EMAIL:

Dear _____ :

Thank you for the kind invitation to attend the reception honoring John J. Justice on May 15th. I will gladly attend this event and will be bringing 2 guests: Joan Jobs and Leslie Smith. Please feel free to reach out to me at (555) 555-5555 or this email if you need further information.

Best,
Joe Steel