

Spoken and Written Forms of Address for U.S. Government Officials, Military Personnel, Foreign Officials, Nobility, and Religious Officials

This section provides the correct forms of address for U.S. Public officials, diplomats, religious leaders, royalty, the [British peerage](#), and military personnel. For each personage the chart gives the appropriate form or forms to be used in addressing letters, in letter salutations, in direct conversation, and in more formal introductions.

In diplomatic and other public circles, "Sir" is generally considered an acceptable alternative to the formal address in both written and spoken greetings; this does not apply to religious or titled persons. The use of "Madam" or "Ma'am" for a female addressee is less customary but still acceptable, especially for high officeholders ("Madam Governor"). This rule also holds for high officials of foreign countries.

For greetings in which "Mr." is used, the feminine equivalent may be "Madam" or, less formally, "Mrs.," "Miss," or "Ms." Although there is no formal rule for the use of "Ms.," the preference of the addressee should be respected.

Person	Letter Address	Letter Greeting	Spoken Greeting	Formal Introduction
President of the United States	The President The White House Washington, DC 20500	Dear Mr. (or Madam) President	Mr. (or Madam) President	The President or the President of the United States
Former President	The Honorable John J. Jones Current address	Dear Mr. (Mrs., Ms.) Jones	Mr. (or Mrs., Ms.) Jones	The Honorable John J. Jones
Vice President	The Vice President Executive Office Building Washington, DC 20501	Dear Mr. (or Madam) Vice President	Mr. (or Madam) Vice President	The Vice President or the Vice President of the United States
Cabinet members	The Honorable John (or Jane) Jones The Secretary of _____ or The Attorney General Washington, DC	Dear Mr. (or Madam) Secretary	Mr. (or Madam) Secretary	The Secretary of _____
Chief Justice	The Chief Justice The Supreme Court Washington, DC 20543	Dear Mr. (or Madam) Justice or Dear Mr. (or Madam) Chief Justice	Mr. (or Madam) Chief Justice	The Chief Justice

Associate Justice	Mr. Justice Jones or Madam Justice Jones The Supreme Court Washington, DC 20543	Dear Mr. (or Madam) Justice	Mr. Justice or Mr. Justice Jones; Madam Justice or Madam Justice Jones	Mr. Justice Jones; Madam Justice Jones
United States Senator	The Honorable John (or Jane) Jones United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	Dear Senator Jones	Senator Jones	Senator Jones from Nebraska
Speaker of the House	The Honorable John (or Jane) Jones Speaker of the House of Representatives United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Mr. (or Madam) Speaker	Mr. Speaker; Madam Speaker	The Speaker of the House of Representatives
United States Representative	The Honorable John (or Jane) Jones United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Mr. (or Mrs., Ms.) Jones	Mr. (or Mrs., Ms.) Jones	Representative Jones from New Jersey
	United Nations Ambassador	The Honorable John (or Jane) Jones U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations United Nations Plaza New York, NY 10017	Dear Mr. (or Madam) Ambassador	The United States Ambassador to the United Nations
Ambassador	The Honorable John (or Jane) Jones Ambassador of the United States American Embassy Address goes here	Dear Mr. (or Madam) Ambassador	Mr. (or Madam) Ambassador	The American Ambassador The Ambassador of The United States of America
Consul-General	The Honorable John (or Jane) Jones American Consul General Address goes here	Dear Mr. (or Mrs., Ms.) Jones	Mr. (or Mrs., Ms.) Jones	Mr. (or Mrs., Ms.) Jones

Foreign Ambassador	His (or Her) Excellency John (or Jean) Johnson The Ambassador of <hr/> Address goes here	Excellency or Dear Mr. (or Madam) Ambassador	Excellency; or Mr. (or Madam) Ambassador	The Ambassador of <hr/>
Secretary-General of the United Nations	His (or Her) Excellency Milo (or Mara) Jones Secretary-General of the United Nations United Nations Plaza New York, NY 10017	Dear Mr.(or Madam) Secretary-General	Mr. (or Madam) Secretary-General	The Secretary-General of the United Nations
Governor	The Honorable John (or Jane) Jones Governor of <hr/> State Capitol Address goes here	Dear Governor Jones	Governor or Governor Jones	The Governor of Maine: Governor Jones of Maine
State legislators	The Honorable John (or Jane) Jones Address goes here	Dear Mr. (Or Mrs. , Ms.) Jones	Mr. (Or Mrs., Ms.) Jones	Mr. (Or Mrs., Ms.) Jones
Judges	The Honorable John J. Jones Justice, Appellate Division Supreme Court of the State of <hr/> Address goes here	Dear Judge Jones	Justice or Judge Jones; Madam Justice or Judge Jones	The Honorable John (or Jane) Jones; Mr. Justice Jones or Judge Jones; Madam Justice Jones or Judge Jones
Mayor	The Honorable John (or Jane) Jones; His (or Her) Honor the Mayor City Hall Address goes here	Dear Mayor Jones	Mayor Jones; Mr. (Or Madam) Mayor; Your Honor	Mayor Jones; The Mayor
The Pope	His Holiness, the Pope or His Holiness, Pope John XII Vatican City Rome, Italy	Your Holiness or Most Holy Father	Your Holiness or Most Holy Father	His Holiness, the Holy Father; the Pope; the Pontiff
Cardinals	His Eminence, John Cardinal Jones, Archbishop of <hr/> Address goes here	Your Eminence of Dear Cardinal Jones	Your Eminence or Cardinal Jones	His Eminence, Cardinal Jones

Bishops	The Most Reverend John Jones, Bishop (or Archbishop) of _____ Address goes here	Your Excellency or Dear Bishop (Archbishop) Jones	Your Excellency or Bishop (Archbishop) Jones	
Monsignor	The Reverend Monsignor James Harding Address goes here	Reverend Monsignor or Dear Monsignor	Monsignor Harding or Monsignor	Monsignor Harding
Priest	The Reverend John Jones Address goes here	Reverend Father or Dear Father Jones	Father or Father Jones	Father Jones
Brother	Brother John or Brother John Jones Address goes here	Dear Brother John or Dear Brother	Brother John or Brother	Brother John
Sister	Sister Mary Marshall	Dear Sister Mary Marshall or Dear Sister	Sister Mary Marshall or Sister	Sister Mary Marshall
Protestant Clergy	The Reverend John (or Jane) Jones*	Dear Dr. (or Mr., Ms.) Jones	Dr. (or Mr., Ms.) Jones	The Reverend (or Dr.) John Jones
Bishop (Episcopal)	The Right Reverend John Jones* Bishop of _____ Address goes here	Dear Bishop Jones	Bishop Jones	The Right Reverend John Jones, Bishop of Detroit
Rabbi	Rabbi Arthur (or Anne) Schwartz Address goes here	Dear Rabbi Schwartz	Rabbi Schwartz or Rabbi	Rabbi Arthur Schwartz
King or Queen	His (Her) Majesty King (Queen) _____ Address (letters traditionally are sent to reigning monarchs not directly but via the private secretary)	Your Majesty; Sir or Madam	Varies depending on titles, holdings, etc.	
Other royalty	His (Her) Royal Highness, the Prince (Princess) of _____ Address goes here	Your Royal Highness	Your Royal Highness; Sir or Madam	His (Her) Royal Highness, the Duke (Duchess) of Gloucester
Duke/Duchess	His/Her Grace, the D _____ of _____	My Lord Duke/ Madam or Dear Duke of	Your Grace or Duke/Duchess	His/Her Grace, the Duke/Duchess of

		Duchess		
Marquess/Marchioness	The Most Honorable the M _____ of Bridgeport	My Lord/Madam or Dear Lord/Lady Bridgeport	Lord/Lady Bridgeport	Lord/Lady Bridgeport
Earl	The Right Honorable the Earl of Franklin	My Lord or Dear Lord Franklin	Lord Franklin	Lord Franklin
Countess (wife of an earl)	The Right Honorable the Countess of Franklin	Madam or Dear Lady Franklin	Lady Franklin	Lady Franklin
Viscount/Viscountess	The Right Honorable the V _____ Tyburn	My Lord/Lady or Dear Lord/Lady Tyburn	Lord/Lady Tyburn	Lord/Lady Tyburn
Baron/Baroness	The Right Honorable Lord/Lady Austin	My Lord/Madam or Dear Lord/Lady Austin	Lord/Lady Austin	Lord/Lady Austin
Baronet	Sir John Jones, Bt.	Dear Sir or Dear Sir John	Sir John	Sir John Jones
Wife of Baronet	Lady Jones	Dear Madam or Dear Lady Jones	Lady Jones	Lady Jones
Knight	Sir John Jones	Dear Sir or Dear Sir John	Sir John	Sir John Jones
Wife of knight	Dear Madam or Dear Lady Jones	Lady Jones	Lady Jones	
Military Personnel	For commissioned officers in the U.S. Armed services, the full rank is used as a title only in addressing letters and in formal introductions: one writes to Major General Sarah Miller, U.S. Army, and introduces her as Major General Miller. In greetings the full rank is shortened to General: "Dear General Miller." Similar acceptable shortened greetings follow categorized by <i>full rank</i> then <i>greetings</i> :			
Army, Air Force, Marines	General of the Army Lieutenant General Brigadier General Lieutenant Colonel First Lieutenant Second Lieutenant	General General General Colonel Lieutenant Lieutenant		
Navy, Coast Guard	Fleet Admiral Vice Admiral Rear Admiral Lieutenant Commander Lieutenant, Junior Grade	Admiral Admiral Admiral Commander Lieutenant		
	For enlisted personnel, a similar principle applies. Sergeants -- whether staff sergeants, gunnery sergeants, or first sergeants -- are greeted simply as "Sergeant"; privates first class are referred to as "Private"; and, in the Navy and Coast Guard, chief petty officers are referred to as "Chief." Other noncommissioned officers are greeted by their ranks, although, informally, lower grades may be referred to generically as "Soldier" or "Sailor." The universal terms of respect that lower ranks must use when addressing senior officers are "Sir" and "Madam." These terms are not applied to noncommissioned officers, however; the appropriate affirmative response to a sergeant, for			

example, is "Yes, Sergeant."

*If the cleric holds a doctorate in divinity, it is customary to add the designation D.D. after his or her name in the letter address.

[Index Menu](#) | [Main Menu](#) | [Shopping Area](#) | [Message Board](#)

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