

Brides: changing to your married name

After a bride says “I do” to a life with her new husband, she often says “I do” to a new last name. Whether she takes the name as a loving gesture, to make it more convenient when having kids, or simply to rid herself of an unappealing maiden name, changing her surname will require some steps to ensure the legality of a change in identity.

Because a name change will require a copy of the marriage certificate—something that isn’t often obtained until after the ceremony—it’s best to wait until after you’ve returned from a honeymoon to change documentation. Also, in order to travel, you may require birth certificates, passports, a license, or another form of ID. It will be impossible to change all of those forms of identification before the wedding. Inconsistent documentation could cause hang-ups in the travel process. Additionally, you may be charged if you try to change your name on airline tickets after they’ve already been issued. Therefore, enjoy your maiden name a little longer until the honeymoon bliss is over and it’s back to reality.

Ready to get started? Here are most of the documents you’ll need to change as you take on your new married name.

- **Social Security card:** If you are a U.S. resident, you will need to go to your local Social Security office, or download a form from the IRS web site to apply for a change of name on your Social Security card. It takes approximately 10 days after the application is received for the IRS to update the records.
- **Driver’s license:** In order to change your driver’s

license and vehicle registration, you’ll likely have to visit the Department of Motor Vehicles, or whatever the agency is called in your area. You will need several forms of identification, two of which will be your marriage certificate proving change of name and your Social Security card. Also have your old driver’s license with you.

- **Passport:** Contact the passport agency to update your name on your passport. You may or may not be charged for the new issue depending upon how long it’s been since you applied for a passport.
- **Insurance policies:** If you have health insurance, life insurance, or a 401(k) plan, you should communicate your change of name to the respective companies.
- **Bank accounts:** Guests will likely issue gift checks in your married name or as a couple. It helps to have an account available in which to deposit those checks.
- **Employer:** Have your employer change your name in their records and update payroll and any other services. You will also want to update email stationery to reflect your new name and have your IT director change your information for computer logins and email addresses. A courtesy email to clients will fill them in on your name change.
- **Credit card & utility companies:** Notify these companies of a change of name. Some may require written documentation to complete the change.
- **Wills and other legal contracts:** Have legal documents amended to feature your updated name. You may want to change your beneficiary to your husband.

—Metro Creative Connection

Name change checklist

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security card | <input type="checkbox"/> Property titles | <input type="checkbox"/> Stocks, bonds | <input type="checkbox"/> Lawyers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driver’s license | <input type="checkbox"/> Leases | <input type="checkbox"/> Will | <input type="checkbox"/> Subscriptions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Passport | <input type="checkbox"/> Voter registration | <input type="checkbox"/> School registration | <input type="checkbox"/> Business cards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Credit cards | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional information | <input type="checkbox"/> Letterhead |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Motor registration | <input type="checkbox"/> Checking account | <input type="checkbox"/> Your employer | <input type="checkbox"/> Return address labels |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Savings account | <input type="checkbox"/> Employee records | <input type="checkbox"/> Post office |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> IRAs & CDs | <input type="checkbox"/> Doctors | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home owner’s insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe deposit box | <input type="checkbox"/> Dentists | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Loans | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |