

Names of people

Alumni and their degrees and class years

Use the full name of the alumnus or alumna, followed by a space and the undergraduate class year, abbreviated to the last two numbers and preceded by an apostrophe.

In general, omit undergraduate degrees and only indicate advanced Cornell degrees. Degree abbreviations are without periods.

Jane Smith '10

Aditya Sodhi PhD '98

Zhang Wei MBA '80

If there is a potential for confusion about the century, indicate the full year. If referring to the undergraduate class year, offset "Class of XX" with commas; if referring to an advanced-degree year, no need to offset with commas:

George Ashton Oldham, Class of 1902, was a peace activist and writer.

May Gorslin Preston Slosson PhD 1880 was a suffragist and the first woman in the United States to earn a doctorate in philosophy.

For multiple degrees, use commas to separate.

Roberto Herrera '77, MArch '82, MEng '86, PhD '92

In running text, if you need to mention the name again, only repeat the surname.

Lin Zie '09, PhD '14 attended the event. Zie has always been excited to reconnect with her peers.

Additionally, avoid using a nickname, unless the individual strongly prefers it. Also, don't include the middle initial, unless someone else you are mentioning has an identical name or if the name is a very common name.

For name tags, follow the rules above, and, if needed, add the name of the school or college on a separate line. The college or school name could be fully spelled out (if space permits) or abbreviated to its official short form.

Rebecca Stoltzfus MS '88, PhD '92

CALS

Married Cornellians (alumni and/or non-alumni)

In cases of alumni married to other alumni or to non-alumni, indicate the class year in one of the following variations:

Nancy Meinig '62 and Peter Meinig '61

Nancy '62 and Peter '61 Meinig

Dina McQueen '88 and Andre McQueen '88

Dina '88 and Andre '88 McQueen

Dina and Andre McQueen, both Class of '88

Beth Klarman and Seth Klarman '79

Beth and Seth '79 Klarman

Note: Some guides on etiquette state that the woman's name should always go first. With same-sex couples, you may use alphabetical order.

Non-alumni

In general, don't mention the class years or degrees of non-alumni. If the individual's academic background is important to note, add that information in a separate clause or sentence, or mention it in some other way.

Kevin Rittinger, who earned a doctorate in theoretical physics from Harvard, was the guest lecturer.

Parents of Cornellians

If it's important to recognize parents of current students, add the child's class year (preceded by a "P") after the parents' names. When already mentioning the child's name and year, you don't have to repeat the class year with the parents' names.

For parents who are non-alumni, you can emulate one of these variations:

Janella and James Balewa P '20 are very proud of their Cornellian son, Alex.

Janella and James Balewa are very proud of their son, Alex '20.

Alex Balewa '20 made his parents, Janella and James, very proud.

For parents who are alumni, place the child's year after their own years. Here are a few variations:

Arnika Erikson PhD '76, P '19 and Tomas Erikson MA '78, P '19 attended the orientation.

Arnika PhD '76, P '19 and Tomas MA '78, P '19 Erikson attended the orientation.

Arnika Erikson PhD '76 and Tomas Erikson MA '78, parents of Anna '19, attended the orientation.

Arnika PhD '76 and Tomas MA '78 Erikson, parents of Anna '19, attended the orientation.

Professors and administrators and their official titles

Avoid using academic and administrative titles as honorifics in front of names (as mentioned in the section about [academic titles](#)). Instead, either mention the title in an appositive phrase after the person's name or include that information in some other way. Capitalize named positions.

Martha E. Pollack, 14th president of Cornell University

Jane Mt. Pleasant, associate professor in the Department of Horticulture

Gretchen Ritter '83, Harold Tanner Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

In running text, only repeat the surname.

David J. Skorton, former Cornell University president, came back to campus as a guest speaker for Reunion. Skorton received a very warm welcome.