

GROOM

Words to the Wise

How to write a wedding speech no one will forget

IF YOU'RE THE FATHER OF THE BRIDE

It is traditional for the father of the bride to speak first. Your job is to toast the bride and groom, welcome the groom into the family and offer fatherly advice. You will speak on behalf of yourself and your wife (if she's the bride's mother).

- **Praise your daughter.** Tell her how proud you are of her and how thrilled you are with her choice of husband.
- **Welcome the groom into the family.** Congratulate the groom on securing your daughter's hand in marriage. Make sure to

welcome his parents into the family, as well.

- **Get to the body of the speech.** Try to include one or two anecdotes, which illustrate the bride's character. (These can be funny or sentimental.) Wish the couple all the best for their future, a long and prosperous life together, children, health and prosperity. If you want to share some advice for the future, this is the time. But don't go overboard. You don't want to embarrass the newlyweds.
- **Toast the bride and groom.** End your talk by making a toast to your daughter and her new husband. Ask the guests to raise their glasses.

10 SIMPLE STEPS

- 1 Prepare ahead of time.
- 2 Keep it short, simple and to the point! No more than five to 10 minutes.
- 3 Write out the main points of your speech. Keep a note card, which will be easy to refer to, even after a couple of glasses of champagne!
- 4 Rehearse your speech a couple of times in front of a friend, in the mirror, on a tape recorder or using a video camera.
- 5 Try not to repeat yourself.
- 6 Don't hesitate too much.
- 7 Speak slowly and clearly so that everyone can hear, even the people at the far end of the room.
- 8 Try to introduce a little appropriate humor.
- 9 Stand up straight and look authoritative.
- 10 Relax and smile.

IF YOU'RE THE GROOM

The groom usually speaks after the father of the bride, thanking him for his toast, kind words and good advice, responding officially on behalf of himself and his new wife.

- **Speak to family first.** First, thank your new father-in-law for his toast, kind words and advice. Thank both of your in-laws for creating such a beautiful wedding, or for their help in contributing and, of course, your parents and family.
- **Thank the guests for coming.** Make sure you remember those who traveled far. Acknowledge everyone who helped during the preparation, and on the big day itself.
- **Get to the body of the speech.** If there are

any funny stories, anecdotes, or sentimental moments you want to share this is the time to do it. Think of stories about you and your fiancé before or after you were engaged or something special the guests might not know about the bride.

- **Wrap it up.** Express your happiness at being accepted into your wife's family and a vow to take good care of her. You can also take the opportunity to thank your own parents for the love and support they have given you over the years. You should thank the best man and the bridesmaids for their help and support. Most importantly, thank your beautiful new wife for marrying you and making you the happiest man alive!

IF YOU'RE THE BEST MAN

The best man usually delivers the third and final speech of the day. This speech should be lighthearted and directed mainly at the groom.

- **Thank the groom.** Thank the groom for his kind words and gift.
- **Read letters from absent guests.** Many times a friend from high school or college lives far away and can't attend. Explain how much the friend wanted to be there. Also share kind words and thoughts the friend asked you to read on his behalf. (A word of caution: Do not use this opportunity to acknowledge every

long-lost cousin who couldn't attend. Guests will stop listening pretty quickly!)

- **Get to the body of the speech.** Like the groom's speech, yours should include funny anecdotes. Try to keep it light. If you want to acknowledge obstacles the groom had to overcome, keep comments short. And above all, make sure the stories aren't too private or embarrassing.
- **Toast the bride and groom.** Talk about how fortunate the groom is to have found his wonderful bride. And, of course, remember to tell them what a perfect couple they make. We promise: No one will argue with that! ☺