The Beginner’s Guide to

The Perfect Wedding Toast

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Intro Wedding Toasts 101

When your friend bestows the honor of the wedding toast upon you, it should spark feelings of respect and accomplishment. However, most people feel a deep sense of dread at the notion of getting up in front of a large gathering during a lifetime event and giving the couple their send-off. Public speaking is a common fear, and when you add the fact that this is the event that ties two lives together, it's only natural to be a little scared.

A million fears and questions can play out through your mind. Will you forget your speech halfway through? Will your palms start sweating? Will you shake so badly that your words come out in staggered bursts? Will you mumble? How much eye contact is enough? How should you move around? How do you gesture? Should you speak quickly or slowly? Are jokes okay? How sentimental is too sentimental? How long should this speech even be? (Don’t end up like this: Horrible Wedding Toast)

But fear not; the perfect wedding toast is just a few tips away. Before getting into that, what does a wedding toast entail? A wedding toast is given generally before the meal to commemorate the marriage, offer some personal back story and wish the couple well. That means that your speech should cover these three points. It’ll be less intimidating to think of the speech in increments rather than worrying about the whole package.

Start off by thinking of what you want to talk about. Don't worry about the actual performance yet. Think about what stories you would like to share. This research period will probably take you a few days. If you rush this part, you're going to have a weak speech to deliver come wedding day. Instead, give yourself a little time to remember how you all met, anything in their relationship that stands out, any
words of wisdom you can impart and your overall sentiment towards the couple. Above all, your words must be genuine. If you fall into trite verse or make the speech impersonal, you're going to leave your friends with a sour taste. Always keep in mind that this is an event that often comes once a lifetime, and you don't want to butcher it by not making the right time investment in your speech.

Another common worry is looking the part. Chances are that you don't have the creative freedom to wear anything you want. If you're the best man or maid of honor, you've no doubt coordinated with the groom or bride and other members of the wedding party. Wardrobe, at least on that level, should not be a concern. Instead, you should be focused on the other details about your appearance. You should be well-groomed, meaning you should have your hair neat and washed, styled if you prefer it that way. Men should either have trimmed facial hair or be clean-shaven. Additionally, you should make sure your hands and nails are clean so that your gestures aren't drawing attention for all the wrong reasons. Make sure your breath isn't offensive and you're wearing a nice spritz of cologne or perfume as well so that you don't offend nearby listeners.

Wedding day jitters are commonly associated with the bride and groom, but when you're speaking, you're going to be feeling those butterflies as well. You don't want to fall apart on stage, so you're going to need to go through some tips prior to help you deliver your speech with confidence and present a relaxed yet professional demeanor. You're going to be nervous, but the wedding party doesn't need to know that. A few pointers will have you cognizant of your body language, how to modulate your voice and how to ensure you aren't stumbling over your words in a cloud of forgetfulness come the big day.

Wedding speeches can be incredibly stressful, but you can make things easier on yourself by educating yourself beforehand. Take some time to read through what others have said about speaking,
and make a checklist if you need to. Once you’ve read through the advice, practice your speech over and over again using those points as highlights. By the time you get to the wedding day, no one will ever know you were worried.

Now that you’re geared up to give a speech, it’s important to know the sequence of the toasts so that you can understand at what point you will be speaking and who you will be speaking to.

**Sequence of the Toasts**

The wedding toast is usually given first by the best man, then the father, the groom and the bride, and then followed by those who would like to give a toast. Versions may vary, however.

Other traditional sequences of wedding toasts also feature the best man as the first one to give the toast, followed by the groom who says a few words to his bride, parents, family and members of the wedding party. Afterwards, the groom is then followed by other people such as family members or friends who also want to give a toast, and then lastly, the father of the bride who thanks everyone for attending the wedding.

On the other hand, a nontraditional manner of the sequence of wedding toasts starts off with the emcee toasting the bride and groom. This is followed by the groom saying a few words to the guests and his bride, followed by the bride giving a little speech to her parents and in-laws, and finally, the father of the bride thanking everyone who shared this special day with them.

You now know just when you might be speaking, but what other roles do you play in this wedding party?
What's the Role of the Best Man in the Wedding?

Best man: the title says it all. This isn't reserved for the guy who wrestled a grizzly bear one-handed; it's for someone even more impressive, the man who is going to be responsible for ensuring all the manly tasks of wedding planning are handled. The best man is the go-to guy from the moment he's asked until the couple leaves for their honeymoon, and in that large of a time frame, there's a lot to do.

For the modern best man, he has to get on board with wardrobe, plan the bachelor party and rehearse, rehearse, rehearse. During the actual wedding, he'll be keeping hold of the merchandise, escorting his female counterpart and delivering an awesome speech. For a best man, that last part can inspire more fear than taking his own trip down the aisle. But fear not, men. You're called best for a reason, and with a few tips, your speech can reach those same lofty heights.

You may be giving a toast, but don't start the toasting before your speech. If you drink beforehand, your speech might be memorable but for all the wrong reasons. Celebrate your victory afterwards; a best man always practices self-control. The toast is frequently given before dinner or sometimes before cutting the cake. Ask the bride and groom beforehand where they'd like for the toast to fall in the schedule. If it's fairly late in the day, you might want to eat before the event to ensure that you don't have your stomach accompanying you through your speech. The best man is expected to keep the groom company throughout the wedding, so that means you'll be getting there early. You may feel nervous about your speech, but it's your duty to keep the groom calm, and you can't do that without being calm yourself. Put aside any worries you may have, and offer calm encouragement if the groom gets any wedding day jitters. If you've reached the day of the wedding, you should have already practiced your speech so much that they've installed it into textbooks for the next generation to cherish. A little nervousness before speaking is fine, but you've done all you can to get to this point, and you wouldn't
be speaking if your friends didn't have faith in you.

The toast should introduce yourself and how you came to be part of the couple's lives. If you knew one person prior to the other, you can begin with a story of how you met your friend and then talk about meeting their partner. Stay away from inside jokes, and keep your speech appropriate. Don't bring up past partners or sketchy events. They might be funny to you, but keep in mind that these are friends and family members, and maybe your friend's mother doesn't need the details about the strip club. Your friend's partner might not need to hear it either, at least not from you.

You can use humor in your speech, but it should be tasteful. Use variations in your voice to keep the story exciting without getting too silly. You can change your pitch to help the audience identify speakers, but don't mock anyone during this time, especially the bride and groom. The average toast is three to five minutes, but you may be speaking longer if asked. Telling appropriate stories is a good way to fill up part of this time.

Use the rest of your time to speak positively about the bride and groom and their relationship. Always end by re-directing attention to the couple, and thank them for their presence in your life and asking you to be part of this day. Finish your speech by wishing the couple happiness, and reaffirm your commitment as well to be a friend to both as they transition into this new part of their lives.

But what about your female counterpart? She has her own speech to give as well, but what should she cover in it? Do her duties mirror the best man's?
Maid of Honor Wedding Toast

One of the more important decisions a bride will make when planning her wedding is choosing her maid of honor. The maid of honor plays a key role in the planning process and on the wedding day. It is an honor to be asked, but before saying yes, it is a good idea to understand the maid of honor’s responsibilities and the part she plays in the wedding, including delivering the maid of honor wedding toast.

Maid of Honor Responsibilities

For many, being asked to serve as the maid of honor is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to help a friend or family member prepare for the biggest day of her life. Depending on the bride’s temperament and organizational skills, she may rely on her maid of honor to help with many aspects of the preparations, including choosing the color scheme, decorations, bridesmaid dresses, or even the venue for the reception. During the planning process, the maid of honor is often asked to assist the bride with the fittings for her gown and arrange the fittings for the other bridesmaids. In addition, the bride may need the emotional support of her maid of honor or simply need someone else’s opinion before she makes decisions. The maid of honor will be as involved in planning the details as the bride wants her to be. However, she does have some responsibilities of her own.

The maid of honor is responsible for organizing and hosting both the bridal shower and bachelorette party. She may enlist help from the other bridal party members or the family members of the bride and groom, but she is the person who takes care of these pre-wedding events by organizing the details and paying the expenses. However, she can ask the other bridesmaids or family members to share the costs.

Typically, the maid of honor is actively involved in the wedding from the time she accepts the role until the last guest leaves the reception.
hall. On the wedding day, she will meet with the bride early in the morning to help her prepare for the big day and be on duty throughout the celebrations. Therefore, she is expected to behave in a manner that represents the bride and groom well, including interacting with guests, managing details with transportation, getting the wedding party ready for photos and anything else the bride may ask of her. The maid of honor needs to focus on the bride's needs, but one of the most important things the maid of honor will do is deliver the wedding toast.

**The Wedding Toast**

The wedding toast is a speech that the maid of honor will deliver at a key point during the wedding reception. The toast is an opportunity to share her thoughts and feelings about the bride. It can be sentimental, funny or serious, but it needs to be appropriate to the occasion.

The wedding toast typically takes place when the champagne service begins during the reception either before the meal or between courses. It is one of the highlights of the wedding reception and an element many attendees look forward to with anticipation. Therefore, it is crucial for the maid of honor to prepare and practice before the wedding day so that she can deliver an outstanding toast.

To create her speech, the maid of honor can draw from her relationship with the bride over the years or share stories from her adventures with the bride during the many months of wedding planning. The purpose is to entertain and uplift, so it should be positive and heart-felt.

Whether you're head of the guys or head of the girls, giving a speech might make you feel like the smallest person in the world. Before you get up in front of everyone, there are many points to consider to make your speech the best it can be on the day of the wedding.
How to Deliver a Wedding Toast

Public speaking can be a source of anxiety for many people, and giving a toast at a wedding may be intimidating. However, it does not need to be. With adequate preparation, the maid of honor can deliver a memorable wedding toast people will appreciate.

About a month before the wedding, the maid of honor should decide what type of speech she would like to create and begin preparing what she’d like to say. At least two weeks before the wedding, the speech should be written so that she can start practicing the delivery. Practice will help reduce anxiety and increase confidence. Given time to polish the speech, the maid of honor can enjoy delivering it, rather than stressing or making something up on the fly. It is a tribute to the bride and groom, so some preparation is needed to deliver a memorable toast.

The speech can be humorous or sentimental, as long as it is appropriate and in good taste. The last thing a maid of honor would want to do is embarrass, insult or offend the bride, groom or anyone else attending the wedding. Therefore, the she should avoid using profanity, telling off-color jokes and revealing secrets that will upset anyone in the room, particularly the bride. It is best to stay on neutral ground and develop a speech that will entertain the audience and create a beautiful memory for the bride.

Accepting the role of maid of honor for a friend or family member is an opportunity to participate in one of the most meaningful events of a person's life. Although there are many responsibilities, from the gown fittings to the bridal shower to the wedding toast, there is also much fun to be had while creating memories that will last a lifetime.
How to Write a Wedding Toast

Public speaking can be nerve-wracking even during a routine staff meeting, so when your family member or close friend enlists you in making the wedding toast, anxiety thresholds can reach a new maximum. A wedding toast isn't just a presentation; you'll be speaking during a lifetime event and will have to provoke emotions and laughter without stealing the show. Before you pull out your pen, there's a lot to consider to create the perfect wedding toast.

Start off by introducing yourself and how you know the bride and groom. Regardless if you've been asked to speak by one or the other, always include both the bride and groom in your speech. This is their day, and you need to keep the focus on them and their union. Once you've introduced yourself, explain how you all met. This is a good place to include a story if you think it's appropriate. If you met one of them first, start with the story of how you two met. Afterwards, share the story of how your friend met their spouse. You can comment on things like how awkwardly they may have started out or how smitten they instantly were, but always keep it positive. If the relationship started out cold, focus on its progression. You can use humor, but don't embarrass either person.

When you're giving this introduction, don't use material that falls under the realm of "you had to be there." If something is only funny because you know some inside secret, don't include it. If you need to test this, deliver your speech to someone who is not involved in the process and see if the humor is there. Keep humor accessible as well. This means that even if you joke around with your friend all the time and put each other down, don't make that the focus of your speech. One little comment might earn a laugh, but too many will confuse the guests and risks annoying the bride and groom. Don't use something trite to open your speech, and avoid jokes that insult yourself or a member of the bridal party. For example, don't say you're going to have a captive and miserable audience for the next
ten minutes and say the bride will be lucky to even get that long tonight. If you do have something funny to share, keep it tasteful. That includes omitting what happened at the strip club the other night or bringing up stories involving exes. Always keep the focus on the couple, and avoid saying anything that could get your friend in trouble like spilling a family secret.

Sentiment is fine and even welcome, but don't make things overly sappy. They'll be serving cake soon enough, so keep the sugar content to a minimum. Feel free to make your speech a little flowery as this is a formal occasion, but try not to get overwrought. It's fantastic if you love your friend because they once rescued you from fiery wreckage using only their teeth and iron determination, but some stories are too dramatic for a wedding party. If you're concerned about things getting too emotional, don't linger on any one topic too long. This will ensure that you can still touch on sentimental things without forcing the wedding party to dwell on them.

If there are multiple toasts, keep in mind that others are going to be speaking, and plan accordingly. This means that you should ask the bridal party for a time frame and practice your speech to ensure that you stay within it. You will likely speak more quickly when you're in front of others, so keep your speech towards the latter part of the time frame. Coordinate with the other speakers beforehand to ensure that you aren't duplicating material. It would be frustrating for two of you to build your speech around the same topic and then have one of you in a position where you have little to say. If someone speaks before you, applaud their speech and thank them for their words. If someone speaks after you, make sure to give them an appropriate introduction. Also, keep track of where you will fall in the wedding schedule so that you have time to prepare. You don't want to be off somewhere else when you're meant to be speaking.

If you choose to end with a quote, keep it short and sweet, and don't choose anything overly introspective or vague. A simple quote about
marriage, love or commitment will suffice. If your friend isn't normally a wordsmith but delivered beautiful vows, try a quote like, "At the touch of love, everyone becomes a poet." Use the bride and groom as inspiration for any quoted material. When you're finished with your speech, indicate that to the wedding party by returning their attention to the bride and groom. Like all things in your speech, you always want the focus to come back to them.

The most important thing to remember when delivering a wedding toast is to be yourself. These people chose you for a reason; they like you, and they want you to speak for them. If you're trying to be someone you're not, they're going to notice right away, and you could sour the mood for everyone involved. If you're not overly funny, don't try to be. If you aren't sentimental, don't give a saccharine speech. Stick to what you know. Particularly if there's more than one person speaking, the bridal party chose their speakers for a reason, and they're counting on them to be the same friends and family members they always are.

Delivering a wedding toast can seem a daunting task, but your friend wouldn't ask you to speak at this lifetime event if they thought you were incapable of rising to the occasion. Plan your speech well in advance, coordinate with the other speakers, keep calm and remember that your words are the send-off that marks these two people's union. Keep them simple; keep them true.

**Rehearsing The Wedding Toast**

Once you've written out your speech, you need to practice delivering it. It may seem tedious to do so, but you're going to need to practice giving your speech several times, particularly if you intend to have it memorized, which you should unless you've been asked at the last minute. When rehearsing your speech, you want to pay attention to your timing, modulating your voice, your body language and your confidence. (Know your Audience: What you can and can't say)
Before writing your speech, you should have asked the bridal party for what length of speech they're looking for. If you're the only one speaking, your speech might need to be fairly long. If there are several other speakers, you may only be up there for a few minutes. If you are confident in your speaking abilities, you might aim for a seven to 10 minute speech, but otherwise, three to five minutes is fairly common for a toast. Confer with the bride and groom beforehand to get their ideas on the subject, but if they're at a loss, go with what you're comfortable with.

A few minutes might not seem very long when you're speaking, but when you're nervous, you speak more quickly. Each page of your speech will probably take you around a minute to deliver, so use that as an estimate when crafting your speech. To get a feel for the time frame, get a stopwatch or check a clock when you begin. Once you've finished your speech, deliver it a second time. See if you're within the same time frame. You should practice out loud on your own a few more times as the date nears just to refresh your mind and make sure that you're within your range. Once you've memorized your speech, gather a small audience like a friend or a relative. When you're speaking to another person, you'll likely see your time drop. This is also an excellent time to solicit feedback about things like gestures or pacing. Also, work on modulating your voice so that you're not too loud or too quiet, and use your friend as a literal sounding board.

When delivering your speech, you should appear relaxed but confident. This is easier said than done when you're nervous, but you need to remind yourself that your friend chose you because they believe in you. Use that thought to bolster your confidence any time you feel it slipping. As you practice, pay attention to your gestures and eye contact. You should establish contact with everyone in the audience, but that doesn't mean that you should stare at each person one by one. Look in the general direction of an area, speak to that
group directly, and then adjust your focus to another area. Don't forget to also speak directly to the bride and groom. When giving a speech, it's common to get fixated on one point, but your audience will feel more connected if you give them each a bit of your attention.

Watch your gestures when you're speaking. Don't fidget with your clothing, keep your hands out of your pockets, and don't stand there stiff-armed. Most communication is nonverbal, and you want the guests to focus on what you're saying, not what your hands are doing. Instead, use your hands to emphasize your points. Look for places where it would be natural to draw attention to something, and think of an appropriate demonstration. Work this into your speech as you practice. Keep all of your gestures above your hips as anything you gesture below them will likely get lost.

Go to the venue beforehand so that you can get an idea of where you will be speaking. Look at how large the area is, and see if movement is possible. If you're going to be standing in one place, you may want to make your speech a bit more animated, and you might need to turn to address everyone. If you're in a more open area, practice moving around during your speech. If possible, go to the venue without the bridal party, and practice your speech in the location you will be delivering it. Try to imagine it with people gathered so that you don't overestimate your space, and know where the bride and groom will be sitting so that you can direct a lot of your focus to that area. If you do move, try and step out at an angle so that you can continue facing your audience. You don't want to turn away from them when you're speaking.

By the time the wedding rolls around, you should have practiced your speech so much that you're nearly sick of it. Keep that in mind when you're delivering it because it means you know it inside and out. Don't be afraid about forgetting a word or having to do a bit of ad-lib. No one else in the party knows your speech but you, and if you don't draw attention to it, they won't even be aware you've slipped up.
Giving a speech might make you wish the toast happened beforehand, but your speech will be so finely delivered that the guests will be reluctant to raise their glasses.

**How to Deal with Being Nervous Before and During a Wedding Toast**

Nerves are a normal part of the speaking process, but nerves can also make you a sour note in an otherwise lovely event if left unchecked. When delivering a wedding toast, it's normal for your hands to shake, your throat to go dry and your pace to quicken, but you need to be able to overcome this response if you want these few minutes to be remembered for the right reasons.

Very few people feel at ease when speaking in front of others. In fact, the body actually goes into a mild form of fight or flight during stressful situations. You might suddenly feel cold or shaky, and you may even stumble a bit in your speech. The key to avoiding this is by not viewing the situation as stressful, and you can do this by practicing frequently beforehand.

Start crafting your speech as early as possible. Create an outline immediately, and write notes about your speaking points. Over a few days, flesh out what stories you'd like to tell and any words you'd like to impart. Find out the length of your speech before you begin writing. Every page will take you roughly a minute, so keep the time in mind when you're writing. If you aren't sure what to write about, break your speech into three parts. Begin by introducing yourself and how you met your friends. This is an appropriate place to add a story. After that, focus on the couple. Talk about how they met each other and how you met them. Talk about their progression and what events led them to marriage. Finish by thanking the bride and groom and wishing them the best.
If you aren't sure about the tone of the piece, ask around to find someone who has written a toast before. Ask them what they did to prepare. Don't copy their methods, especially if they're in the bridal party, but take their advice and adapt it to your own situation when you're stuck. If you don't know anyone who has given a wedding toast, think of people you know who have to speak often. These people may be in management or have some sort of position in the community like church leader or teacher. Ask them what they do to prepare for their speeches. If there's a public speaker you admire, look up one of their speeches on YouTube, and pay attention to the way they deliver their speech.

Consider getting involved in an organization like Toastmasters. A driving force in leadership and communication, they can help you get on the right track and get comfortable with public speaking. While working with them, you'll develop your confidence and learn about gauging audience feedback, how to maintain eye contact, how to adjust the pacing, tone and volume of your speaking, how to gesture effectively and how to deliver strong material.

Once your speech is written, practice, practice, practice. Use any free time to go over your speech, even if it's in the shower or on the way to work. Record yourself giving the speech, and speak along with it. Practice delivering your speech differently by adjusting your tone, including pauses or even adding natural elements like laughter. When you play it back, you'll be able to gauge how well your speech is coming along and make adjustments where necessary.

Keep in mind that a wedding is a happy occasion, so try not to be overly serious. Your toast is a time to take everyone together through a reflective journey, and you want to be welcoming and warm, not stiff and stern. The people in the wedding party just want to have a good time, so don't be afraid to laugh along with them. Appropriate jokes capture your audience, and it shows that you can be relaxed while still being professional.
A point many speakers forget is how to breathe. You don't want to be gasping for air at the end of your sentences, and you don't want to be taking a breath every few seconds. Practice delivering your sentences naturally as you would in conversation, and take a deep breath if you need to steady yourself. If you're confident in your delivery, this will come off more like a pause than a period of realignment. Keep your body relaxed with your knees slightly bent, and allow your shoulders to drop a little to keep tension out of your neck.

The bottom line is that your friends and loved ones believe in you, and they aren't going to even know you're nervous unless you let them. They wanted to hear you speak for a reason. As long as you take the time to practice beforehand, you'll deliver a speech on the wedding day that the couple will remember for life.

**The Big Moment**

You've done the research. You've written your speech. You've practiced it so many times that you never want to see another word of it again. But now you have to deliver it. When the big moment arrives, remember how much time you've put into this and keep calm. You've got this handled.

When you get up to deliver your speech, smile at the audience, make eye contact, and finish by looking to the bride and groom. Make sure you're comfortable before you begin. If you have to take a moment to stand comfortably, do so. Just do so while maintaining contact with the audience, and consider introducing yourself during this time to fill the space. Don't do anything overt or rude like adjust the button on your trousers or the seat of your pants, but take a moment to find your spot and relax. Remember to bend your knees slightly while you're standing. The last thing you want to do is tear your meniscus or topple over during your speech. Keeping your knees slightly bent
will ensure that you have proper blood flow and aren't shaking from stick-straight posture.

While you may want to wear jewelry for this occasion, pay attention to your hands during your practice runs. Many people have a tendency to fidget while speaking, and a watch or a ring is a prime object for nervous attention. If you find you're unable to deliver your speech without fiddling with something, leave the jewelry at home. Keep your hands at your sides when you aren't gesturing, and don't pick at your clothing. Instead, make meaningful gestures with your hands. Use them to illustrate a point or guide the listener through the conversation. Keep your hands at waist-level or above to ensure that everyone can see your gestures. If you gesture below this line, it's unlikely that your audience will see it, and the slight movement may look more like fidgeting. Keep your gestures meaningful without being grandiose. There's no need for you to flap around elaborately to make a point. If you're worried about gesturing too broadly, keep your elbows at your waist. This will ensure that your hands don't go much wider than your shoulders.

If you can address the entire audience from where you are, you can get away with standing in place. If the wedding party is large, you will probably need to walk around a little. Don't just pace back and forth. Step off at an angle to maintain contact with the audience, and step purposefully to one side. Stay in this spot long enough to deliver a story or other point in your speech. Once you've delivered this point, step out the other way and stop to address that side of the room with a new point. When you're nearing the end of the speech, return to the middle and focus on the bride and groom.

If you're using a mic, practice giving your speech with one beforehand. If you don't have access to a mic, at least hold an object in your hand so that you don't fall into the habit of gesturing with the mic. You should keep the mic a few inches away from your mouth so that you aren't spitting words into it, but you also don't want to have it
so far that it isn't helping to amplify your voice. Don't breathe into the mic. The mic should be far enough away that it isn't picking up your breathing in the first place, but if you find yourself in need of a deep breath, pull the mic down a little first.

While speaking, say your words slowly and clearly, enunciating them without falling into a stilted staccato and without dragging everything out. You want to be understood, but you also need to speak naturally. If there's dialogue in your stories, adjust the pitch or tone of your voice to emphasize parts or denote who is speaking. Don't shout at the audience; that's what the microphone is for. Pay attention to your audience for feedback clues. If you see them leaning forward like they're straining to hear, raise your voice. If you see them leaning forward like they're interested, you're doing a great job.

If you're trying to evoke a certain emotion, use pauses and pitch adjustments to strengthen your message. Speaking softly in an emotional passage is appropriate; speaking softly during a joke is not. If you're telling a funny story, pauses can help heighten the effect and also gives the audience a chance to laugh without interrupting your speech. Pauses are particularly effective before a punchline or after a poignant moment.

When you're finished with your speech, say thank you to your audience, to the bride and groom for allowing you to speak and any speakers before or after you. Give your best wishes and love to the couple, and wish them a long and happy future. If your speech marks the toast, you may remain standing to toast the couple, but you should otherwise take your seat. You might still feel a little jittery after your speech. This is normal and will resolve itself within a few minutes. Others may speak to you during this time about your speech. Be gracious without being arrogant. As always, return the focus to the bride and groom. You may no longer be speaking, but you want to remind the guests that this is still their day.
You now have all of the information necessary to prepare yourself for the perfect toast. As long as you practice these points, you will deliver a speech full of confidence that's sure to have family members complimenting you for years to come. Speaking of family, there are a few things to consider when it comes to them as well to ensure that the wedding day isn't overshadowed by hurt feelings or drama.

**The Role of Family in the Wedding**

The role of family members during weddings can be confusing to all involved. Those with small families may wish to highlight each member in a very special way. Those with large families may struggle with who to include and how to include them. The family members themselves might worry about what is expected of them as well. ([Awkward Wedding Toast from Family Member](#))

**The Bridal Party**

It is traditional for siblings to stand with the bride and groom during the ceremony. This can be troublesome when there are multiple siblings from which to choose. Many brides and grooms opt to ask their siblings to serve as bridesmaids and groomsmen. They then opt to ask a close friend to stand as maid of honor and best man. Other brides may choose to divide the Maid of Honor responsibilities among their siblings so that no one is left out.

Another option for including families in the ceremony is to ask a beloved family member to serve as a family representative. This person may share a story, a religious passage or a poem during the wedding. If a unity candle is being used, the representatives from each side may also be responsible for lighting the taper candles that will then be used by the bride and groom during the ceremony.

A common concern with family members is when to arrive at the
ceremony. If a family member is not part of the wedding, they can arrive with the rest of the guests. Some family members may wish to arrive early so that they can meet with the bride or groom privately to give them some advice or tokens of affection. Most brides and grooms will welcome this with open arms. Family members who are taking part in the ceremony should arrive with the rest of the bridal party. These details should be planned well in advance and finalized during the rehearsal. As with everything, the key is communication. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to let their families know what is expected of them.

The Reception

Reception seating can also present a struggle with family members. Traditional seating places the bride and groom either with the wedding party or at a table with both sets of parents. In either case, immediate family should be seated as closely as possible to the bride and groom. They should also be served first when meals are presented and should have first dibs on the dancing with the bride.

If alcohol is to be served at the reception, members of the bridal party should take care to drink moderately. The maid of honor and bridesmaids are still tasked with aiding the bride throughout the night. This might mean helping the bride navigate the restroom in her wedding dress, letting her know when her makeup needs to be touched up, or simply being a voice of friendship and encouragement.

After the Party

The bridal party and other family members should inquire about clean up before the wedding day. Many brides hire staff to take care of cleaning the reception hall and taking down decorations. However, there may be some items that need to be transported. This is a task that no bride or groom wants to face on their wedding night. Rented items, like large pillars, archways and table linens, may need to be
stored and returned to their rightful homes. The gift table will likely be covered with presents from well-wishers. These gifts may need to be transported as well. These tasks should be divided before the wedding day so that family members know who is responsible. This is especially important if there is an open bar.

**Recapping the Perfect Toast**

One of the most memorable parts of any reception is the toast. The best man and maid of honor typically give the first toasts. The parents of the bride and groom may then follow with their own toasts. At this point, other friends and family members may step forward with a few words of their own.

The traditional time to toast is between the meal and the cutting of the wedding cake. However, it is also acceptable to begin toasts during the meal while everyone is seated. The best man, who gives the first toast, may take the lead on when to toast. He simply needs to make sure that everyone has been served a drink before he begins. Thereafter, each person planning to toast may take their turn in procession.

The toast itself should be planned and even written out before the happy day. Improvising a toast can lead to uncomfortable pauses or poorly chosen anecdotes. A toast often starts with a bit of humor to lighten the mood. This is followed by a personal story about the couple. The toast ends with a wish for a happy future, advice, or even a meaningful quote or small poem.

Toasts should not be overly long. A short and sweet toast is generally better than a long, rambling one. Likewise, while self-deprecating humor can be accepted, the speaker should only make complimentary statements about the happy couple. Lastly, if someone is expected to toast, they should not start drinking until after the toast is completed.
Conclusion

A wedding day is a lifetime event meant to mark a union; because of this, the memories surrounding it should be as picture-perfect as possible. Whether you're the best man or the maid of honor, you can do your part by ensuring that your speech is practiced, appropriate and an honest representation of your character while highlighting the lives of these two people. When you deliver a toast with confidence and poise, you'll leave the bridal party with a memorable moment, and that's something you can raise a glass to. (Great Wedding Toast)
Quick Wedding Toasts FAQ

Q: When should I start writing my toast?

A: The sooner the better. Try writing your toast about 1 month before the wedding. Make sure you give yourself enough time to practice your toast.

Q: How Long Does A wedding Toast Last?

A: A precise and practiced wedding toast should be anywhere between 6-8 minutes. Enough to gain attention of the bride, groom, and audience, but not enough to have the toast drag on and bore the crowd.

Q: Who Starts off the Wedding Toast? Then who follows?

A: Things usually kick off with a toast from the best man. (His title does mean something!) Then usually the parents of both the bride and groom will say a few words – order generally goes parents of the groom and then parents of the bride. And then it’s generally expected that the groom will toast his lovely new wife – your hunch was right! Then you’ll reciprocate with some kind words to your new husband!

Q: Can I have a drink before the toast to calm me down?

A: Drinking before a toast could be a bad decision. Just breathe and relax before your toast. Drinking could make your stumble on your words, forget or say something you may regret later.
10 Great Wedding Toast Resources

The NY Times Art of the Wedding Toast
TLC-10 Short and Sweet Quotes Use for a Wedding Toast
The Knot- Wedding Toast Tips: 30 Inspiring Quotes
The Huffington Post –Wedding Toasts
Wedding Toasts.org- Wedding Toast Tips
Southern Wedding- Southern Etiquette: Giving a Wedding Toast
Slate.com- How to Give a Wedding Toast
MSNBC  Pop-champagne-tips-wedding-toasts/
BridalGuide- Maid of Honor Speech
About.com - Tips for The Best man on Writing a Wedding Toast
Bride Box

Bride Box is a division of DigiLabs Inc, devoted to serve brides and other life time events with the most professional and high quality albums and photo books. We have developed a unique and proprietary combination of technology, workflow and production that enables the modern bride to enjoy access to a product never before available to consumers direct and thus enjoy the control, flexibility, time and cost savings in the creation and delivery of these unique professional albums.

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For every step of the making of a great photo product, from creation to printing to sharing, we offer a superior experience. That is why our solutions are used by so many professional photographers, businesses and consumers. As a partner for Kodak, Xerox, HP-Indigo, Cannon, Fuji-Xerox and Fuji Film, we’re the platform of choice for individuals, and businesses.