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[Home](#) > [Articles](#) > [Planning Potpourri](#) > Wedding Toasts: The 10 Commandments of...

Wedding Toasts: The 10 Commandments of Toasting ... and the 5 Biggest Mistakes to Avoid!

by Rick Pieczonka, Owner & Founder, InstantWeddingToasts.com

The only one required to propose a Wedding Toast is the Best Man, but watch out for some competition...many weddings are now including a toast from the Maid of Honor as well!

The 10 Commandments of Toasting

1. Plan to speak from 1 to 4 minutes. No one wants to be bored with an extraordinarily long toast covering the entirety of your friendship. With wedding toasts, even a short toast will do if delivered with feeling and sincerity.
2. Make sure all other glasses are full before beginning. You may want to announce to the guests, or have the MC announce to the guests, to fill their glasses because toasting will commence shortly. Then give guests 3 - 5 minutes to fill their glasses.
3. Stand to give a toast (sit to receive one) and hold your glass with your right hand as you

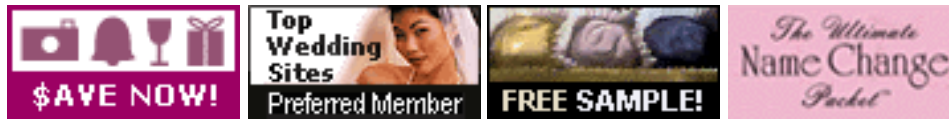
toast. After the toast, it is tradition to then clink the glasses together before sipping.

4. Start with something personal. How the bride and groom met is always a favorite. You can also use humor or quotes to get started.
5. Always use humor in good taste. While poking fun at the bride and groom can add the touch of humor you're looking for, poking too much fun will only gain you a disapproving audience.
6. Speak in your normal voice, and avoid unnatural hand gestures or fake accents. Wedding audiences want to hear what you have to say, not watch a drama unfold. Just remember you were chosen to be you, not someone else.
7. Practice your toast. Unless you are an accomplished public speaker, just 'winging it' for the wedding toast is always a bad idea.
8. Look around the room at the audience and to the bride and groom as you toast. Eye contact is an important characteristic of a good speaker.
9. Speak clearly and don't rush. Take your time and take a deep breath, because if you speak too fast, no one is going to understand you.
10. And finally, finish your toast with a wish, blessing, congratulations, or cheers.

5 of the Biggest Mistakes to Avoid

1. Having more than one drink to calm nerves beforehand. It may seem like a good idea, but besides calming your nerves, too much alcohol will also keep you from speaking clearly and hinder your good judgment of appropriate speech material.
2. Swearing and/or lying.
3. Apologizing for being a bad speaker - Never apologize for being a bad speaker, and don't say you really didn't want to speak. It's a rule for all speeches and all occasions, not just weddings.
4. Mentioning previous girlfriends, past marriages, or past relationships. Not only could it be potentially embarrassing, but it's inappropriate at a wedding. Leave this for the stag party.
5. Stories about the Bride and Groom that aren't rated PG. Remember, Grandma, Grandpa and possibly even children will be present at the wedding. Make sure your stories are appropriate for the audience.

So here's to your next toast, my friend, may it be a sweet success!



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