

Ah yes the speeches, the moment where everybody is nervous, yes everybody. Remember the audience are on your side they are a warm and friendly crowd. This isn't 'The comedy store late night performance'. Take your time, breath and follow some of our tips and you will get it right.

Write a speech to practice as soon as you can. That'll give you more time to hear how it sounds, and adjust it to sound like your usual style of speaking. Make yourself familiar with the speech that by the time you stand up, you'll know just what you want to say. The more you practice the more confident you will be on the day.

It's all a question of saying the things that matter to you, and having the people who matter to you involved. Choose the people who you would like to say something, decide who should be recognised and thanked, and then work out an order that suits you best. This is a chance to say some things that mean a lot to you about people you care about, in front of your friends and family. That's not a chance people get very often, so make the most of it.

Humour is always welcomed in the speeches and can be a way of breaking up what can become a long list of thank-yous. But be warned, the wedding guests are usually comprised of many different generations and tastes. Aunty Maureen does not want to hear about the vulgar carryings on at the stag night!

If Possible it is ideal for all those giving a speech on the day to get together and compare speeches, it will make sure nothing is duplicated and also can marry up some ideas (pardon the pun).
If you are planning a traditional style of progressing through the speaches I have listed the format of how the traditional speeches proceed, and what to consider when writing them.

Father of the Bride
The bride's father's speech is the first to be delivered. The master of ceremonies, (if there is one) will call on the father of the bride to propose a toast of health and happiness to the bride and groom. If there is no master of ceremonies, the best man will take this role.

- Welcome the wedding guests on behalf of your wife and yourself
- Thank them for attending the wedding of your daughter. And encouraging their celebration
- Introduce your daughter and son in law by recounting -accomplishments, abilities, character, anacdotes. It is common for there to be good humoured teasing.
- Toast the Bride and Groom. "So, ladies and gentlemen, family and friends, let us raise our glasses and join together in wishing them every happiness. I give you the toast of the Bride and Groom.

As the father of the bride you have the advantage of knowing your daughter for a considerably longer time than the Groom and best man. They ofcourse will be making their speech remembering her with anacdotes and achievments as a woman, you are the only speech maker that knew her well as a child. It is ideal to draw on this when making a speech, but remember that her opinions and attitudes will be different from her childhood so do not recount anything that she would be embarrassed or upset about. (that's what christmases are for).

The Groom
The groom speech traditionally comes between the fathers and the best mans speech. He has a lot of people to thank so make sure the thanking sounds sincere by breaking it up a bit to talk briefly about the person they are thanking. It can be shaped by following the below:

Thank the Bride's father
- for proposing the toast

Thank the Brides Parents
- for the wedding feast (if appropriate)
- for their kindness and friendship

Thank both sets of parents
- for any help and support given

Give the mothers flowers if you wish
Thank the guests
- for attending
- for their good wishes and gifts

Thank your new wife for marrying you.
- comment on her dazzling beauty!

As well as the traditional thank you's the Groom may wish to add a few words about him and his new wife such as charming anacdotes of when they met or what it is that brought them to marry.

Thank any individuals who have helped organize the event. It is wise to avoid mentioning who paid for what as this can be embarrasing. Just mention that they ‘helped and supported’ and leave it at that.

Thank the Bridesmaids for their the work they have done looking after the bride and how lovely they look today.
- Toast the Bridesmaids: "Ladies and gentlemen, will you join me in drinking the toast to 'The Bridesmaids'.
- Give out gifts to the bridesmaids

Thank the best man for any help during the day (you may specify with an anecdote)
- Give out gifts to any groomsmen including the best man (if you wish)

The Best Man
This is the speech that is supposed to be a little humorous. Possibly because it is the final speech. The best man talks about the groom’s life, experiences, qualities.
- Thanks to the groom for his toast, on behalf of the bridesmaids, ushers, and other helpers.
- Some jokes & anecdotes about the groom, and also possibly some about the bride and groom, such as how they met.
- A toast to the parents.
- Traditionaly there is a reading of ‘telegrams’ from a selection of people unable to attend. Lets face it, to most of the wedding guests this is a bit boring, so if it must be done keep it brief.

The best man talks about the groom:
- How did you meet and what similarities you have (such as hobbies, sports etc

- Your first impressions of him
- What it is that makes you remain friends with the groom

In deciding what to include, choose incidents that are humorous, or can be recounted in a humorous way. Keep any laddish humour to your stag night please! Ask the wedding couple in advance if there is anything they particularly want you or do not want you to recount. Mention past relationships at your own peril, never good. Remember the speech is not an exam. There is not a minimum time limit for you speech so just say what works well and leave it at that.