

## 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 favourite. You can also use humour or quotes to get started.
5. **Always use humour in good taste.** While poking fun at the bride and groom can add the touch of humour 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.