

A photograph of a young couple sitting on a couch. The woman, on the left, has short reddish-brown hair and is wearing a white sleeveless dress. She is holding a bouquet of white flowers. The man, on the right, has short blonde hair and is wearing a white shirt with an orange bow tie and tan trousers. He is holding a small, light-colored dog. Both are smiling and looking at each other. A purple semi-transparent banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text "YOUR BRIDE SPEECH: THE CONTENT-CREATOR".

YOUR BRIDE SPEECH: THE CONTENT-CREATOR

HOW IT WORKS

This is a build-as-you-go template designed by a team of TV scriptwriters, wedding connoisseurs and some rather clever people. How you approach it depends on your timescale, enthusiasm and what's on telly.

You can write a great speech in a few hours simply by picking a **Speech Theme** & filling in the blanks, but we recommend using this **Content-Creator** first. Either way, your wife is going to love it.

Step 1

Read the three Speech Themes to understand how your Content-Creator material will be used.

Step 2

Fill in the Content-Creator, either in one sitting or just keep adding to it as inspiration hits. Remember to save as you go.

Step 3

Now you have your material, pick one of the Speech Themes. They're all great, but there's probably one that's more 'you'.

Step 4

Add the material from your Content-Creator to your Speech Theme and personalise your speech.

Step 5

Print off your speech and use the advice in this PDF to deliver your speech like a pro. Kapow!

CONTENT-CREATOR

Our Content-Creator is designed to inspire and get you thinking differently. When you've filled it in, you can pick your favourite bits and fit them into your chosen Speech Theme. Don't worry, we'll direct you along the way.

We've added some inspiration to this Content-Creator but use your own noggin if you can. We can guide you but only you can make your speech truly insightful.

YOUR FIRST CONSIDERATION

Is your fiancée also giving a speech? If so discuss how to divide the content. You need to ensure both speeches are distinct. Perhaps one of you could focus on your relationship history and the other could imagine your future married life. We have options of both in our Speech Themes.

Of course if your partner's opting not to give a speech then remember you're speaking on behalf of her too.

THE THANK YOUS - WHO TO THANK AND WHAT TO SAY

Discuss the thank yous with your fiancée. As there's quite a list to get through it makes sense to divvy them up. It's still crucial for you both to thank both sets of parents!

- **Everyone for coming**
- **Your parents**
- **The in-laws**
- **The 'helpers' – best man/maid of honour/bridesmaids etc**

Of course there could be others, for example any children you or your partner may already have, but resist the urge to give a rollcall of guests. There's nothing worse than a tedious thank you list so caterers, or anyone you've paid, don't get a look in.

Admittedly, thank yous have become more complicated in recent years with parents often separated and with new partners. If this is the case, simply thank parents separately and be careful to honour them both appropriately. Depending on the politics we'd also recommend acknowledging their new partner if they're attending the wedding.

If you're planning on handing out gifts, we recommend saying you'll 'be personally handing out gifts later' as delivering them during the speech is often awkward.

It's important to remember the thank yous should be entertaining as well as heartfelt. They should also be concise - shorter is definitely sweeter.

Use the table on the following page to think about your thank yous...

TOP TIP:

ONCE YOU'VE WRITTEN YOUR THANK YOUS, GO BACK AND CHECK FOR CLICHÉS
ANYTHING YOU'VE HEARD BEFORE NEEDS TO BE BINNED!

Who	Why are you thanking them	Inspo
Mother in law		<i>I'd like to thank my new mum-in-law for welcoming me into the (Surname) family and introducing me to all its mad traditions. Who knew you could have key lime pie for breakfast? Of course I also have to thank (M-i-Law) for passing down such wonderful traits to her daughter. (Bride) and (M-i-Law) clearly share the same bubbly nature and sense of humour – though unfortunately an unwavering support for West Ham has also slipped down the genetic line.</i>
Father in law		<i>I'd like to thank (F-in-Law) for not only welcoming me into the family but also introducing me to his malt whiskey collection. I certainly have a new appreciation for the Scottish Islands and, possibly, a hint of liver damage too. (Bride) and I would like to thank both of you for your contribution towards the wedding. We don't know how we'll ever repay you ... and considering we're both freelancers, we probably won't.</i>
Mother		<i>Thank you to my parents. I've been spoilt with a lifetime of love - unfaltering even through my Slipknot phase. Your unconditional support has been priceless, though when you consider the free rent I had after Uni it's probably more in the region of £18k!</i>
Father		<i>Thanks to my dad for his all unconditional encouragement. He went to all my ballet and theatre performances despite my distinct lack of talent. He never complained and I never spotted those earplugs he used to put in. Thanks dad for always giving me belief in myself.</i>
Maid of honour / Bridesmaids		<i>Thank you to my lifelong friends and bridesmaids, or as I know them, the Pinot Posse. As ever, they look absolutely gorgeous but please don't be fooled by their demure attire. One hint of Taylor Swift and they'll turn the dancefloor into a rugby scrum.</i>
Who else? Children, step children, absent friends?		<i>I'm so chuffed that marrying (bride) means I also have (step-son) in my life. I realise it's a big disappointment to him that I don't support Manchester United but at least we share a mutual appreciation of chicken nuggets. And I must say I'm also gutted they're not on the menu today.</i>

THE DEARLY DEPARTED - HOW TO PAY TRIBUTE TO AN ABSENT LOVED ONE

How you handle the loss of a loved one very much depends on how raw the emotions are. Even when you think you 'have things under control', a wedding can heighten or even reignite a sense of grief. Prepare for that.

Of course, don't be tempted to turn your speech into a eulogy. Every wedding speech needs to be joyful, so think about thoughtful & upbeat ways you can acknowledge an absent loved one.

For example, could the guests join you in a toast to your father by drinking his favourite malt whisky? Or could you point out your bouquet was made from your gran's favourite flowers?

Our advice is keep it short, sweet and script it towards the end of your speech.

Who	How to pay tribute to them	Inspo
		<i>Of course there's someone who's missing today and that's my dad. He never got to meet (bride) but I know he would have loved her. In betting terms he would have called her 'an odds on favourite'. In his honour we'll be playing some of his favourite tunes later tonight, and OK dad, if you insist, I'll be having a few cheeky ales too.</i>

NOTE:

ONCE YOU'VE WRITTEN THIS SECTION PRACTISE IT AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE TO ENSURE YOU'RE COMFORTABLE DELIVERING IT ON THE DAY

THE LOVE - HOW TO BE SWEET WITHOUT BEING CHEESY

A heart-warming tribute to your new wife needs to be the focus of your speech. Of course every bride is caring, gorgeous and generally *amaazing* so you need to concentrate on what makes your partner unique.

Is she an indie chick, a library-lover, a technology fiend? Nailing her individual and quirky characteristics shows you 'get her' and helps us avoid all the usual clichés. Guests are also better at stomaching declarations of love if they're insightful & funny, rather than boastful & brash.

THE FUNNY STUFF

Think about	Your ideas	Inspo
Her quirkiest habits		<i>Ironing pants / quoting Kanye West lyrics / inability to sleep if there's uneaten chocolate in the house.</i>
Her guilty pleasures		<i>80s music / kissing the dog / Wotsits.</i>
Things that she's good at (that you aren't)		<i>Loading the dishwasher / understanding pensions.</i>
Things she enjoys (that you don't)		<i>Radio 4 / crosswords.</i>
Things that you're good at (that she's not)		<i>Responding to texts / understanding why a t-shirt can cost £40.</i>
Things you enjoy (that she doesn't)		<i>Zumba / watching rubbish on telly.</i>
Hobbies and passions that you share		<i>Game of Thrones, retro Spanish films & Dire Straits.</i>
Qualities your bride might like to change in you		<i>Refusal to share even a crumb of food.</i>

THE ROMANTIC STUFF

Think about	Your ideas	Inspo
What makes you smile when you think about her?		<i>Her habit of always saying the wrong thing / being rubbish at pub quizzes.</i>
When did you know she was the one?		<i>... when we went to Glastonbury and she gave me her last wet wipe. I thought- she's kind, caring and still looks gorgeous even when she hasn't showered in days.</i>
Her three best qualities		<i>Kind, gregarious, witty.</i>
What attracted you physically?		<i>Great smile, killer legs, a Ramones t-shirt.</i>
What positive effect has she had on you?		<i>She calms me down when I'm stressed. She encourages me not to spend £40 on a t-shirt. And she's taught me how to play a mean game of poker</i>
If you already have children together, what qualities have they inherited from their mum (the charming and the funny ones)?		<i>Our son/daughter is a testament to what a darn fine specimen of a woman (bride) is. The energy, the curls, the ridiculous sense of humour. They gang up on me occasionally but they make me happy even when they're telling me off.</i>
Quotes from songs / books / films that mean something to you / her / both of you		<i>Unlike stealing jokes from the internet, quoting lines from films or books is ALLOWED as long as you credit the source.</i>
List everything you love about your bride. This is your version of the Harry Met Sally quote. It should be a mix of both profound and funny things.		<i>'I love that you get cold when it's 71 degrees out. I love that it takes you an hour and a half to order a sandwich. I love that you get a little crinkle above your nose when you're looking at me like I'm nuts. I love that after I spend the day with you, I can still smell your perfume on my clothes. And I love that you are the last person I want to talk to before I go to sleep at night.' - Harry Burns</i>

THE STORIES - THE TALES THAT TELL US HOW YOU TWO TICK

One liners or funny gags might make your guests laugh but it's proven it's stories that really engage an audience. They add the meat to your speech bone.

Of course picking your stories is NOT an opportunity to show off. No one wants to hear about your proposal unless it didn't go to plan, and no one wants to know about your holiday to the Maldives unless it rained torrentially. Guests want to hear the stories that reveal how you, as a couple, tick.

Here's some prompts to get you thinking...

The story about when...	Your stories	Examples
... you met / started dating		<i>For our first date she accidentally took me to a 90s karaoke night. I loved it!</i>
...started living together		<i>It took 16 hours to put up an Ikea wardrobe. Day three we discovered our telly choices differed dramatically. We still regularly 'debate' the need for cushions on the bed.</i>
... met the parents / children / proposed (any other big milestones)		<i>Tried to impress (bride's) parents by pretending to be a domestic goddess. Attempted to cook lemon cheesecake but didn't understand what the zest was. Made them lemon pith cake instead.</i>
...one of you was daft. Or maybe both of you?		<i>She called the police to report the car was stolen but she'd just forgotten where she'd parked it.</i>
Others...		

NOTE:

ONCE YOU HAVE YOUR SPEECH THEME YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO SLOT IN ANY OF THE GREAT STORIES YOU'VE JUST DISCOVERED

WRITING YOUR SPEECH

Now you've got your material, it's time to start writing your speech. Choose the Speech Theme that works best for you and the material you have.

Tweak or delete the bits that don't work for you or add extra 'chapters' if you've got more to say or stories to add. Remember you want to make this speech your own, so feel free to play with it.

If you're delivering the only bride's speech aim for less than 1200 words, or around an eight minute delivery. If, however, you're both speaking, aim for less than 1000 words or no more than 7 minutes each. It's fine to be shorter.

YOUR CHOICE

You need to decide...

How to address your guests - 'Ladies and gentlemen' seems overly formal to us and we prefer something more relaxed (as suggested in our Speech Themes). Ultimately it's your call.

Who to toast - There's no rigid etiquette for brides so you can check out our suggestions in the Speech Themes. Speakers can also choose to toast people within the speech (e.g. the parents, bridesmaids or absent loved ones) but be warned, toasts can break the flow of the speech and can prove tiresome as guests repeatedly have to stand up/sit down. It's absolutely fine just to have one toast at the end of the speech.

SPEECH THEMES - HOW TO CHOOSE

- **'The Beginners Guide to Marriage'** - This theme allows you to ask your guests for their marriage advice (include the request on the RSVP or just email them). It guarantees a bit of fun on the day.
- **'Unconventional Fairy Tale'** - is a humorous theme that chronicles your relationship history. It literally 'tells a story', from your first date to your 'happily-ever-after'.
- **'Lucky in Love'** - lists the quirks of fate that turned you into a married woman. It culminates with some interaction with the guests.

If you're nervous about memorising your speech, '*Unconventional Fairy Tale*' and '*The Beginners Guide to Marriage*' both have book props scripted into them meaning you can legitimately read your speech! Clearly you still need to maintain eye contact with the guests, but the book is a useful reference if you know you're going to be nervous:



You can 'design' a book yourself (just print a mocked up cover & paste it onto a hardback) or commission a keepsake from our favourite supplier of bespoke books:

www.notonthehighstreet.com/andsotheymade

Of course we still approve of cue cards if you opt for 'Lucky in Love'.

DELIVER YOUR SPEECH LIKE A PRO

When you've written your speech it's time to start thinking about delivering it. Here's our tips...

- Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse. If you keep stumbling on the same section, just change it.
- Try to memorise your speech but use notes. Even if you're normally great at presenting, you'll be shell-shocked on your wedding day and you may need some help. Either use cue cards, our book prop idea or print your notes on to quality paper to avoid the paper shaking.
- Make sure you look up and make eye contact with your guests. Remember to smile – it's literally infectious.
- Talk slower than feels natural. You'll come across as more confident.
- Leave pauses where you expect laughter. Sometimes the humour is slow to land and people need that extra moment to 'get it'. Never talk over the laughs you've worked so hard to get.
- Prepare for some affectionate banter throughout the speech and ad lib accordingly.
- Check the acoustics of the venue and source a microphone if necessary.
- On the day, feel free to have a drink before your speech!

FINALLY

Hopefully you know you have a corker of a speech on your hands but check out our 'Review' or 'Bespoke Speech' service if you want more expert guidance.

If you have a minute, we'd love to know what you thought of our template. We always want to improve and it makes our day to know we've helped a bride rock it - [Email *heidi@speechy.co.uk*](mailto:heidi@speechy.co.uk) with any thoughts.

WISHING YOU ALL THE BEST FOR THE BIG DAY!