Wedding speech order: who speaks when, and for how long

The traditional UK wedding speech order is three people: the father of the bride, then the groom, then the best man. Modern weddings often add the bride, a maid of honour or another parent. In the US, toasts are split between the rehearsal dinner and the reception, and there is no single running order. Ask the couple. Do not guess from custom.

Checklist

- [ ] The traditional UK order
- [ ] Traditional and modern, side by side
- [ ] How long each speech runs
- [ ] Before the meal, or after
- [ ] Who introduces whom
- [ ] The US order
- [ ] What the best man should check
- [ ] After the meal. People are fed and a bit restless. You can take the longer end of your range, but you should still know you are the person between them and the evening.
- [ ] Before the meal. Keep it tighter. A hungry room is a kind room for about four minutes and a frank room after that.
- [ ] Between courses. You need a clean start and a clean stop, because the kitchen is waiting. Agree who cues the serving staff.

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