

Tips for writing your own wedding vows

A wedding is a once-in-a-lifetime event for many couples, so brides and grooms wish for the event to be momentous and memorable. As such, couples are increasingly integrating personal nuances into their ceremonies and receptions to tailor weddings to their unique visions. The desire to include personalized wedding vows continues to be a popular trend.

If you are considering personalized wedding vows, first realize that it may not be a simple task. That's because you want the message conveyed to be dear to your heart, and that can be challenging when faced with the pressures and planning of the rest of the wedding. That

isn't to say that writing your own vows is impossible. Here are some guidelines for personalizing your ceremony with your own sentiments.

* Schedule time for writing. Amid the bustle of dress fittings and interviews with photographers, it can be easy to put off the important task of writing vows for another day. But as any great writer can attest, it takes writing — and rewriting — to achieve a finished product you can be proud of. Give the task of

writing your vows your undivided attention. Mark it on your calendar or set a reminder on your computer just as you would any other appointment.

* Be aware of ceremony guidelines. It is best to check with your officiant and confirm that personalized wedding vows are allowed. During civil ceremonies it's often acceptable to customize vows as you see fit. However, during religious ceremonies there may be lines of scripture that need to be read or certain passages required. Before you spend hours working on the task, be sure that it is allowed and that your spouse and you are on the same page.

* Jot down your feelings. Answer some questions about what marriage means to you and how you feel about your spouse. Try to avoid trite sayings and think from your heart and personal experiences. Think about what is the most important thing you want to promise to your future partner. These notes can serve as the starting points for the actual vows.

* Read inspirational writings. Perhaps there is an author or a poet who inspires you? You can quote certain writers in your



vows or let the tone of their words help shape the words of your vows. There also are suggested wedding readings and other quotes about marriage readily available at the library or with a quick search online.

* Decide on a tone. Although the day is based on love and affection, you may not feel

* Vows

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