

Tips on Writing Your Own Vows

- *Make the decision together to write your own vows*
 - Decide if you will write them separately or together
 - If written separately, will they be kept a secret until the big day?
 - Set a deadline to get them finished
- *Get permission from your officiant*
- *Think about what a 'forever' relationship means to you*
- *Think about what is very important for you in your marriage and how you want to say it out loud*
- *Decide what prevailing tone your vows will take, i.e. romantic, humorous but poignant, wistful*
- *Take into account what could happen to your physical and mental capabilities as you age and leave out promises one of you may not be able to keep*
- *Use an outline so your vows are fluid*
 - State your significant other's name and say something general, loving and kind
 - State your promises and your intentions that you truly intend to keep
 - State an example of your personality of what you would do in a certain situation, but together, you want to work on that
 - Feel free to add some humor but only that would be meaningful during your one-time- only soliloquy
 - Avoid run on or tricky sentences. Keep them easy to say out loud
 - Use traditional vows as a jump off point, then make them your own
 - Use traditional vows and insert some of your own thoughts in your own words
 - Keep in mind that your guests are listening to everything important to you and they want to feel like they are right there, with you. Limit your use of embarrassing anecdotes, secret words and nicknames
- *Write more thoughts than you may want to say, then edit it*
 - Select the most important points, then make them your own
 - Vows should be about 1 minute long
- *Practice saying your vows out loud in front of a mirror*
 - Know your vows well enough to look up at your partner often
 - If you memorize them, have a copy handy in case you get nervous as you only get to do this once in your lifetime
 - Take a few deep breaths before speaking so you don't hyperventilate
 - Speak slowly
 - Have a hanky ready
- *Most importantly, make the vows sound like something that you would say, reflect your personality and promises that are most dear in your marriage*