

Best Man Basics

FOR
DUMMIES[®]

**in a
day**

Dominic Bliss

***Best Man
Basics
In A Day***
FOR
DUMMIES®

by Dominic Bliss



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Introduction

In a previous existence, I was launch editor and feature writer for a men's wedding magazine called *Stag & Groom*. Among the articles we published, there was loads of no-nonsense advice on stag parties, speech content and wedding suits. Inevitably, whenever friends or colleagues got engaged or were appointed best man, the first person they would call for advice was me. Every springtime, just as the wedding season was starting to hot up, I used to get at least a couple such calls a week, and the two topics they would be panicking about most were the stag party and the speech.

Those are the two topics I've allocated the most space to in this book. A best man needs to consider loads of other duties – and they're all covered in detail as well – but the stag do and the speech are the most important. They're the bench marks on which all best men are ultimately judged. Wear the wrong wedding suit and you're forgiven. Forget to don your button-hole or do up your flies and the chances are that no one will notice except the bride. But mess up the stag do or the speech and you're remembered for all time as the best man who got it wrong.

This book makes sure that you get these things right.

What You Can Do in a Day

As part of the *In A Day For Dummies* series, I designed this book to contain about a day's reading (or a couple days if you're taking your time). After said day, my goal is for you to walk away from this fantastic little title with a clear sense of purpose and the tools you need to be the best best man you can be. Okay, enough with the motivational speechifying for the time being.

Foolish Assumptions

Forgive me, but to make things a lot easier I've made a few assumptions about you, the reader. I'm assuming that you:

- ✓ Are male. Granted, nowadays you do occasionally get female best men. But few of them buy books advising them on their duties. If you're the exception, then I'm sorry, but you'll have to get used to all the male pronouns.
- ✓ Like a drink. Stag dos and weddings tend to be well lubricated. Grooms know this. Best men know this. And a groom is unlikely to appoint a best man who's not willing to play along. Even just a little bit.
- ✓ Are going to be best man at a church or a registry office. In our multiracial society people get married under many religions and beliefs, but to keep things simple I've referred to Church of England or civil wedding conventions throughout.

Icons Used in This Book

Stag parties and wedding days are all about planning ahead and then thinking on your feet when those plans go awry. Often it's simply a case of damage limitation. To help you, I've scattered lots of icons at key stages throughout the book.



Soon after being appointed best man, you'll be glad of any advice offered to you. These little nuggets provide the most useful bits of advice.



When you're part of the wedding party, you have so many things to remember. Add to this list your duties as stag party organiser and you can see why some best men crack under the pressure. These little icons serve as mini checklists, or mental sticky notes.



The entire marriage process is a diplomatic minefield. What with the bride, the groom, their parents, the vicar, the chief bridesmaid, the ushers and all the stags to keep happy, you need some help to steer yourself clear of the mines, and you find such help under this icon.



Quick jobs you can do in no more than five minutes are indicated by this icon.



This icon indicates that bonus content accompanying the text is available at www.dummies.com/inaday/bestmanbasics.

Chapter 1

Best Man Basics

In This Chapter

- ▶ Understanding the best man's role in the wedding build-up
- ▶ Knowing what to do on the wedding day
- ▶ Grasping the qualities of a best man

Every member of the wedding party has a precise and well-defined role. The groom's job is to turn up on time and behave like a saint all day. The bride smiles, looks gorgeous and keeps one eye on the reception. The minister or registrar directs the ceremony. The ushers get everyone seated and organise the car parking. The bridesmaids fuss about the bride's dress. The bride's father worries about how much everything's cost him. And the bride's mother cries like a baby.

Interconnecting these roles in order to keep everyone happy and everything running smoothly is the linchpin of the wedding party. Yes, that's you, the best man. But don't worry: I'm here to help.

Important Advice to Heed

The best man receives advice from all corners, some of which is good, some of which is bad. This book gives you plenty of great advice, but before you go any further, I've pulled together a few basic tips to bear in mind right from the start.