



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?

The Gettysburg Address, a historic speech by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863, was 272 words and about two minutes long.

Speak with confidence

Find out how you can give a speech that leaves a lasting impression.

Whether you are preparing a presentation for a class, making a speech at an awards ceremony, or planning to join the debate team, knowing how to give a speech is an important skill to have. Learning to be more comfortable with public speaking will help you gain confidence. Here's how to get started.

Research your topic

Check out books from the library, talk to people who have knowledge about your subject, and search online for information. Write down facts that interest you, especially ones with numbers. Numbers help to make a speech memorable. For example, if you were preparing to talk about protecting tigers, it would be more compelling to say, "There are fewer than 6,000 tigers left in the wild," rather than "There aren't many tigers left in the wild."



Speak slowly and clearly.

Write your speech

Once you have done your research, you can start drafting your speech. Writing a speech is different from writing an essay because your audience isn't going to read what you write. They're going to listen to what you have to say. Think of your speech as your script. Read it out loud to

make sure it sounds like you. Many people will generally remember one or two main points from a speech, so your speech doesn't have to be long to be effective.

Begin practicing

At first, you may read your speech without looking up from your paper. As you practice, try to memorize the main points. This will help you speak more naturally. You can also try writing your main points on note cards and highlighting words you want to emphasize.

Number the cards so you can put them back in the right order if they get mixed up.

Rehearse for others

Now it's time to practice your speech in front of friends or family members. This helps you with making eye contact, speaking slowly, and pronouncing words clearly. You can try hand gestures and see how that feels. When you're done, ask for feedback.

Manage your nerves

When the time comes to give the speech in class or at an event, it's normal to feel nervous. Remember that audiences usually don't notice when a mistake is made. So if you make one, take a breath and keep going. Be proud of having the chance to make a speech!

3 types of speeches



Toast A toast is a brief speech that honors someone on a special occasion. The goal of this speech is to make the person feel special. At the end of the toast, the speaker typically asks everyone in attendance to raise their glass.

Commencement speech This is a formal address made to a class during a graduation ceremony. It's often given by a prominent person and is intended to congratulate and inspire the graduates.

Motivational talk You might hear this kind of speech before an important event, like from a coach before a big game. It's meant to be a call to action to perform your best.