

GUIDE TO SELECTING WEDDING RECEPTION MUSIC

True: Music plays a large role in the success or failure of a wedding reception. It can make or break the event. You may ask yourself, will the music I choose, or the DJ chooses to play, please everyone in the room? It can seem like an intimidating task to select reception music that fits all of your guests, simultaneously, since the age span at the average wedding reception can be as wide as very young children all the way up to and including Great-Grandparents. Since all are born into different eras, it's a pretty safe bet that the music Grandmom likes will differ immensely from the music that your teenaged cousins like. But they all have one thing in common: They all care about you (the wedding couple) enough to be there. This is the tie that binds all your guests together, so as a professional disc jockey, it's the point I start from when choosing music for each and every event I preside over. They all want to celebrate this special occasion TOGETHER! Everyone in the room should feel they are personally involved, moved to participate. That is my function and I will work tirelessly to achieve that for you.

Disc Jockeys who follow a formula, or cookie-cutter approach to DJ'ing for a varied audience are asking for trouble. I believe in starting with a base list of songs which has been selected by the Bride & Groom, and going from there. I give my professional input (if it is welcomed) about selections and why they will or won't work in terms of motivating people to dance. It's important to select songs you both like, but do so with an objective approach - "I love that song, but will my guests like it? Will it be a good dance song?" I can also recommend a more suitable placement of a particular music selection if it is not particularly danceable but you definitely want it played. . . maybe it would be a great song to include during the cocktail hour or during dinner.

Equally important is a DO NOT PLAY list. But remember, you may hate a particular song or genre of music, but a large part of your audience may love to dance to that song. For instance, maybe you hate the Electric Slide or the Cupid Shuffle, but it's extremely likely that at least one guest at your reception will request those songs, even expect them, and love to dance to them. You don't want them played. What is the DJ to do? It's important to let me know in advance how you want me to handle a situation like that.

Some wedding couples have compiled very common, predictable song lists, songs heard at every wedding reception, and then wonder why their reception lacks freshness. Others have compiled song lists based only on what they like and want to hear, and as the DJ, I have, in the past been presented with a song list that is totally UN-DANCEABLE, told not to deviate from it, and

Bride & Groom wondered why nobody danced at their reception. Do you trust your entertainment provider to gauge the crowd reaction and change the program if the song list isn't working? A skilled DJ will be able to select music that motivates the crowd.

The most important thing in compiling YOUR song list is to strike a balance between what you like and what you think your guests will like to listen to and dance to. As a DJ with years of experience, striking a balance by playing many varieties of music genres from a wide range of eras is key. In this way, you WILL please all of your guests because there will be something for everyone.

Besides general dance music, you will be selecting your "special songs", which include your bride & groom first dance, father/bride dance, mother/groom dance, bridal party dance, cake cutting, last dance, etc. Use the accompanying "Most Requested Combined Party Plus Wedding Songs List" as a guide, if you need ideas on song titles for different events. While these songs are popular, no such list is all-inclusive, and you may not even include all events at your reception.

Your first dance together as newlyweds is a special time filled with emotion and romance. The song you choose is most likely special because of the memory attached to it. A great first-dance song might be the one that was playing on the car radio when you had your first date. You may like one of the songs on the compilation list, or many couples have chosen lesser-known or less-requested but equally beautiful songs on their own. It is your moment, unique to you as a couple. The first dance selection should represent that above all else.

I hope this guide and the accompanying "Most Requested List" has been helpful in getting you started on your song list for your reception. Years from now, your wedding reception guests will remember few details of your reception, but they'll certainly recall whether they danced, laughed and enjoyed themselves. Together, we can ensure that we make it happen!

Sincerely,

Diane Pooler, DJ
Owner/Proprietor *DJ's DeeJays*