

Additional DJ Hiring Tips

Courtesy of Raymar Productions

Buyer Beware, Let Us Educate You Before You Hire Entertainment!

Your wedding day, what a special and happy day this should be. No expense should be spared to make it one you will remember fondly with each successive anniversary. If corners must be cut however, entertainment is not the area to compromise.

THE LIFE OF THE PARTY: Music and the performance of a professional Master of Ceremonies is the driving force and the life of the party, and it is very crucial and helpful to know what to expect from the DJ, and to be able to provide the services you desire.

PLAN WELL AHEAD: If at all possible start looking at least a year or more in advance of your event. The most popular DJ's schedule far in advance with the months of May through August, and December book the earliest.

SCHEDULE A CONSULTATION: Ask the DJ about meeting with him or her at the office or your home, or better yet at a live performance. If consultations cannot be arranged, ask for brochures and pricing information, referrals, and venues they have performed. Videotapes might also be available but because of the lower sound quality, and they may also be edited, they are often not an adequate measure by which to judge.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MUSIC REPERTOIRE: Check the library of music of the particular company. The better companies will have a wider selection of music for all ages, ranging from kids to grandparents. Music should be kept at a level comfortable to speak over dinner, and do not hesitate to ask the DJ to drop the level a few decibels.

INFORMATION SHEET: This information sheet/questionnaire is a great opportunity to make any specific requests to the DJ, such as your first dance song, father daughter dance, the names of the wedding party, parents and grandparents to be introduced, as well as agreed upon timing for the grand entrance, toast, cake cutting, and money dance. In order for the DJ to utilize your completed information sheet, it should be returned at least three weeks prior to the event. Don't forget to put the DJ in touch with the banquet manager to begin important communication to insure the smoothness of your event.

CEREMONY/RECEPTION LOCATION: If the ceremony and reception are at different locations, make sure someone is at the venue to let the DJ in before the party begins. Also regarding separate locations, consult with your DJ if a second system might be available for rental at the second venue for ceremonies. Many venues do not provide this service. If the reception is at the same place as the cocktail hour, it is advisable to hire a DJ to play music during the cocktail hour, or ask him to set up early.

THE BOTTOM LINE: Price is contingent on the popularity of the DJ, traveling required and duration of the party. Three hours is standard and usually the minimum with anything above that, it is considered overtime. In Southern California, the average price range for a full time qualified professional DJ is about \$1,000.00 - \$1,500.00. Overtime is anywhere from \$150.00-250.00 per hour. Weekend or part time DJs will run you about \$500.00. If they are charging such a low price you may start asking yourself as to what experience they have and what they offer in comparison to the qualified pros. Upon agreeing on the booking arrangements, you should sign a written booking agreement and return it with an initial payment, usually about 50%, unless otherwise stipulated. Make sure you know what services are to be performed as agreed between you and the DJ. Most entertainment companies will have an additional charge for wedding ceremony and/or cocktail hour to be included, as well as venues that have a flight of stairs and no elevator. It is also an industry standard to include a 15% gratuity. The hallmark of these professionals usually include a custom console, multi-channel mixing board, a matching pair of CD players, cassette decks, headset, power amp, two professional speaker enclosures and a music library in road worth cases. For many DJ's the use of a wireless microphone is a must for remote toasts, organizing and emceeing key events as well as participation dances.

HAVE A GREAT TIME: On your special day, now is the time to enjoy yourself. It is in your best interest to trust all the professionals you have hired. Your DJ is there to coordinate between all vendor services, both in person and on the microphone. We hope this information has been helpful to you. It has been compiled to help educate you so that you may have the wedding you have always dreamed of. We hope this information has been helpful to you.

For a listing of qualified DJ's in your area, contact the American Disc Jockey Association, at their website at which is www.adja.org, or at (888) 723-5776. A. D. J. A. Members usually carry \$1 million liability insurance and have backup equipment. Remember when shopping around for DJ services always ask if they are members of the American Disc Jockey Association. An association you can count on.

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