

“What Will Our Guests Dance To?”

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The dance floor was packed, everyone was having a great time, the bride and groom were living out their dream wedding, until... the alarm clock went off. The wedding dream is now a wedding reality, and with only a few months until the big day, a busy couple sits down at their computer to compile a list of music requests to give to their disc jockey. The couple wonders if they even need to make a sheet of requests, after all, isn't that why they chose a professional DJ? “What will our guests dance to?” the groom-to-be asks his fiancée.

The couples I meet with on a weekly basis, explain that they want a packed dance floor, nothing “cheesy”, and a good mix of music for their guests of various ages. Sometimes these couples choose to take their reception into their own hands and request 2-3 hours of “must play” songs that they loved in college, or music they like to listen to a home or in the car. When I get these lists, I can instantly get a sense of how their guests will react to them. With a decade of experience, there are some types of music that work well at wedding, and many types that do not work at all.

One hurdle that couples have a hard time overcoming in their planning is the plain fact that their guests won't necessarily like the same music that they do. To their detriment, these couples will give me lists of 50 or more songs that they consider “must-play songs” which puts a skilled disc jockey between a “rock and a hard place”. On the one hand, the client (the couple) comes first, but I know if I do play these songs the dance floor will instantly clear. Because it is the couple's special day and not my own, I defer to playing the must-play songs as requested.

When the bride or groom realizes that their songs don't appeal to the majority of their guests, they then tell me to play “whatever will get people dancing”. After that, the reception continues with the dream scenario that they have imagined for a year or more leading up to their wedding day.

The best way to avoid a request list “nightmare” is to select songs that everyone will enjoy. Choose songs that appeal to all age groups and span multiple decades. You can add your personal touch to your reception by including your favorite songs that may not be ideal for dancing into your cocktail or dinner music selections. If you don't know what your guests might like, ask your disc jockey (don't just guess or take only one or two opinions from family members).

More than anything, communication with your disc jockey will lead to your ultimate satisfaction and also result in a great time for your guests as well. Let your DJ know what songs you are planning to request and get a candid opinion of your selections before your wedding day. Tell your disc jockey the songs that you definitely do and don't want to hear, but leave the DJ some freedom to “read” your guests and mix in songs that will appeal to the majority of your dancing crowd.