

Questions to Ask Reception Bands & DJs

- What's the band's signature sound? Are they a jazz band, rock band, "wedding band"? Find out what type of music they consider their forte.
- Does the DJ specialize in a certain type of music—Top 40, swing, jazz, country—or does he or she offer a variety of genres? Can you see a playlist?
- Is the band or DJ willing to mix it up a bit (play some standards in addition to their typical rock fare, for example)? Will they perform or play ethnic standards, such as the hora or tarantella, if requested?
- If there's a song you want played and the band isn't familiar with it, are they willing to learn it in time for your wedding? Will you need to supply the sheet music? If a DJ, can you lend your own CDs, or is he or she willing to buy what you'd like played?
- How do they feel about a request list? (Answer should be along the lines of "We'll try to honor your requests, but we also need to measure the crowd.")
- How many band members are available? If you're interviewing a DJ, does he or she work with a partner, assistant, or dancers?
- Does the band or DJ bring equipment (amps, mikes, and so on), or would you and/or your reception site need to supply it?
- How much room will the band or DJ need? Will a DJ need a table to set up on?
- How much time before the reception would the band or DJ need to set up?
- Is there a minimum amount of time the band or DJ will play?
- How many breaks does the band or DJ typically take? Will they break in rotation, so someone is always playing? Or will they play taped music during breaks?
- What will the band or DJ wear?
- How much does the band or DJ charge for a four- or five-hour reception? If there is a range, what accounts for the difference between the high and low prices?
- What is the overtime policy? Is the charge per hour or half hour?
- Ask yourself: Does the band or DJ seem flexible and willing to play the music you want? (You'll want to give them some freedom, but if you sense that they are resistant to your desires, reconsider.)