



“Even the most versatile and talented band on earth could never provide the range of songs and performers that a disc jockey can.” Martha Stewart

“While you're working out the details of your reception, you'll need to think about the other aspects of your wedding as well. In general, you can expect to spend about 15 percent of your budget on each of the other major categories -- attire, flowers, music, photography, and miscellaneous costs, such as invitations, favors, transportation, and any unexpected expenses that might arise. Adjust these percentages as you go; when you spend more on certain items, make up the difference by spending less somewhere else.” Martha Stewart Weddings

“Nothing stirs the heart like music. Shakespeare wrote, "If music be the food of love, play on," and nowhere is that sentiment better realized than at a wedding. From the moment the first guest takes her seat until the last person leaves the dance floor, music fills the day. When chosen thoughtfully, it can set the rhythm for the event, enhancing emotion during the ceremony and inspiring jubilant celebration at the reception.” Martha Stewart Weddings

BAND OR DJ/MC FOR YOUR WEDDING

Having the right entertainment at your reception is essential to setting the mood, and making sure people have fun. But how do you know whether to hire a wedding band or DJ/MC/Entertainment Director? Here are some things to consider when choosing what you want for your wedding.

BANDS: A specific type of band can truly complete a wedding theme. (For example, a 1930s-themed wedding and a swing band, an Irish wedding and a Celtic band, or fairytale wedding with a full orchestra) Good musicians can change the tempo of songs so as to accommodate some fancy dance moves or a tired fiancé or for a special family member. However, for many, the cost of hiring a good wedding band or orchestra is prohibitive. At a cost from \$2000 to \$15,000 or more, you'll want to know that you've found the most ideal group for your wedding. Some wedding bands can really only play one sound, and have a hard time switching genres or styles. You might find yourself with one that is too classical, too jazzy, or just cheesy. Most bands only have one volume, loud and they take breaks. Generally bands are not able to provide music for the ceremony or to assist with the direction of the reception. **IMPORTANT:** Very few bands have a trained and qualified Master of Ceremonies to make important announcements and to be the host of this important day.

DJ/ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR: Your first dance song and special dance songs can be sung by the artist that made you fall in love, rather than a pale imitation. Songs can quickly segue from great dance numbers to the perfect "cutting the cake song" or background music as someone makes a toast and an excellent master of ceremonies will make those announcements so that everyone has an opportunity to participate. A DJ that is a trained entertainment director will guide your entire reception to make every part special and trouble free. DJ's don't take breaks and have thousands of songs to satisfy every guest's requests and musical taste. When choosing a DJ, beware of club DJ's (Unless you want a Club "feel") or those that DJ as a part time hobby as they are not qualified or trained to perform at weddings. Weddings are a unique party that requires a lot of preparation and meetings with the couple prior to the event. Your wedding is one of the most important days of your life, and it should be customized exactly as you want it to be. A quality DJ/Entertainment Director will cost from \$1200 to \$5000 depending on what date, location, size of event and options you choose. DJ's can provide a separate audio system for ceremony music, professional wireless microphones for the officiant and bridal party, assist with the direction of the ceremony and more. Remember, all DJ's are not Entertainment Directors and all DJs are not qualified to do weddings!

OVERALL: Avoid choosing your band or DJ primarily on the basis of price. Neither type of entertainment can be judged on price alone, when making your choice, check references, meet with the person or group you are considering, ask about professional memberships and training. Consider their experience level, professionalism and appearance. Always get a written contract, ask about backup equipment and what happens if something breaks down. Make sure that the band or DJ is a licensed business, with liability insurance to protect you and your guests. Ask them what they would do if there was a power failure during your reception or if their equipment fails.

No matter how much is spent on anything else, the entire function will be damaged if the entertainment is severely inadequate and the guests leave early. Remember that 80% of the success of your event is based on the entertainment, prioritize your expenditures and think about the memories you and your guests will take away from the party. Who will help you guarantee those memories?