

Grapevine's Questions to Ask a Wedding DJ

These are 40 of the most important questions to ask any professional disc jockey you are considering for your wedding, and will help you accurately gauge the professionalism of any wedding DJ you are considering. My answers are provided. This list of questions will certainly help you once you reach the DJ interview process, but doing some research beforehand will help you determine whether certain wedding DJs are even worth interviewing. Good luck in your search!

1. Do you offer a written contract?

Yes. I do NOT work without one.

2. Will you be the DJ at our wedding?

Yes it will be me (Mark Beecher) you will be doing the planning with and I will be the DJ at your wedding.

3. May we meet our DJ before we sign a contract?

Absolutely, I highly suggest we meet.

4. How long will you hold our date for us?

I will put a soft hold for one week. If I receive an inquiry within that time, I will contact you to see if you would like to book the date with me.

5. Do you work exclusively for this company?

Yes Grapevine DJs and entertainment is owned by me and I do not work for any other company.

6. How long have you been a DJ and how many weddings have you done?

I have been a full time DJ for 20 years and was part time for a number of years before that. I have done more than 1200 weddings.

7. How many weddings do you do each year?

I average 40 weddings a year.

8. How many other types of events do you do per year?

Weddings are my main focus but I will also do several corporate events, private parties and formal college events.

9. Do you perform for more than one event in a day?

Never.

10. What makes you different from your competitors?

I describe my service as formal but fun. I am very creative and have come up with many ways to keep the traditions, but can also work with the bride and groom to include a few surprises for the guests.

11. Have you played at our reception site before?

Most likely – You will have to ask me this question yourself.

12. Do you act as the “emcee” and make all of the announcements?

Yes, I will act as the master of ceremonies making important announcements and focusing the guests attention to all the special moments. I am not a “chatty” DJ and I don't do long drawn out announcements.

13. How would you define your “style” when making announcements?

Formal but with a smile. I do not want to sound like a over the top DJ or a wrestle mania announcer :)

14. What do you do to motivate the crowd if nobody is dancing?

Some crowds take a little time to warm up to dancing, that is perfectly normal. If guests are not dancing I may pass out request cards to the tables. I may ask the bride and groom to gather some of their friends and dance or just hang out on the dance floor. I do have some unique and fun ice breakers in my back pocket, but I rarely have to use them. If everything flows smoothy, guests are at ease, the music is good and the bride and groom are enjoying themselves, the dance floor will start to fill up.

15. What if something happens to you and you can’t make it to the wedding?

This has never happened but I do have an associate DJ named Ty Jones as a back up. If he is not available we have a list of 17 DJs and DJ companies that would be happy to cover an emergency, and I would do the same for them if at all possible. This list is available on my web site under the Q&A page.

16. Will we meet again before the wedding?

Yes we would meet in person (if possible) 2-3 weeks before the wedding to create your time-line, go through the pairing and names of your wedding party for the introductions, discuss the music and cover all the details of your wedding ceremony and reception

17. Can we visit you at a performance?

I value my my clients privacy and do not offer this as a possibility. I will be happy to show you videos if you want to get a feel for my performance and emcee style.

18. May we speak to your references?

I would be happy to give you a list of recent couples I have worked for as well as photographer's and wedding planners who refer me.

19. How do you keep your music collection up-to-date?

I subscribe to a digital music company called Promo Only www.promoonly.com. They provide me weekly radio edit (clean) versions of all the newest music in Pop, Rock, R&B, Hip Hop, Country etc.

20. How involved can we be in selecting music for our event?

You can select as much or as little of the music as you like. This includes music for the cocktail hour and dinner. I do recommend you leave some room for guest requests. Your client suite has a place where you can select and categorize your favorite music for dancing – Including a Must Play and Do Not Play list. Our database of music is VERY comprehensive.

21. What happens if we can't find one of our favorite songs in your database?

Your client suite has a place for you to create your music lists. There is a tab that says “Add Your Own”. Simply fill in the song title and artist and I will download a legal version of the song from Amazon or I-tunes and add it to my hard-drive before your wedding.

I do NOT stream music from YouTube, Spotify or any other streaming service – You should ask if the DJ you are interviewing does. If the answer is yes, then there is a chance they do not even have a music library on a hard drive. **Warning:** This practice is becoming too common.

22. When do we need to submit our music requests and event details?

We usually meet 2-3 weeks before the wedding to do our final planning meeting and go thorough your music selections and create your itinerary that will help make your reception flow smoothly and keep everything on track.

23. Do you take requests from our guests?

I love taking requests and try to play as many as I can. Requests are screened. Songs that are inappropriate, too obscure or fall into your Do Not Play list are “lost”.

24. Can we submit a “Do Not Play” list?

Yes!

25. When do you arrive to set up for our wedding?

I usually arrive 90 minutes to 2 hours before the scheduled start time. This gives me plenty of time to set up the equipment, change into my suit or tux and talk to the venue manager about the schedule and any last minute changes. Tear down usually takes me 30-45 minutes.

26. What will you wear to our wedding?

I wear a basic black suit and tie or tuxedo, your choice.

27. What will you wear when you set up and break down your equipment?

I wear black pants and a black polo shirt. Never shorts and a tee shirt.

28. How much of a deposit is required to secure our date?

Generally, a \$500.00 deposit is required to lock in your date. The deposit paid is applied to your balance.

29. What is included in the cost of my event?

All packages include

- A personal interview before hiring me - Let's make sure I am a good fit.
- Coordination with your other vendors to keep your event running smooth!
- Access to our online planning portal and music picker with your own personalized log-in. This will make the planning process easy and help me get to know you and your vision for the night.
- In-person planning meeting closer to the wedding date along with creation of a detailed timeline for your event.
- Custom selection of music based on your musical tastes and personality...no pre-set playlists from someone else's wedding!
- Custom edits or shorter versions of special dance music if needed (first dance, parents dances, etc.).
- Up-front pricing with no setup, tear-down, or hidden fees.
- Professional looking DJ attire (Suit and tie or black tuxedo).
- Bose or E.V. line array sleek DJ set up - No signs or banners.
- Wireless microphones for toasts and speeches
- Travel within 60 miles of Indianapolis
- \$1 million liability insurance

30. How much would you charge for overtime?

All my packages except one are for **unlimited time, no overtime charges**. My **basic** 4 hour package requires \$200 for each additional hour after 4 hours.

31. What do you require from us?

I require access to power within 30' of an electrical outlet (although I do have a generator if power is not available), a rough draft of the room set up including the dance floor area and where my set up will be, if this is an outdoor event I will need shelter from the sun and rain.

32. Do you require a meal?

If I am involved with with wedding ceremony, a meal would be appreciated. If I am only involved with the reception, then I **do not** require a meal. I bring my own water (bubbly sparkling water) and a sandwich if I get hungry.

33. Are you insured?

Yes. Liability insurance is through R.V. Nuccio & Associates, Inc. and you and/or your venue are welcome to a copy. I can also add your venue to my policy as an additional insured.

34. Do you take any breaks?

Outside of using the restroom and possibly eating a meal quickly in another room, no. There will be no break in the music at any point during the reception.

35. What is your policy on alcohol or smoking during the wedding?

I do not smoke. I never drink alcohol while I am working.

36. What kind of equipment do you use?

I have invested heavily in pro-audio gear that is reliable and offers the best sound quality available.

Bose and Electra-Voice speakers, Audio-Technica microphones, Rane mixer and Numark media player are some of the brands I use.

37. Do you bring backup equipment with you to the wedding?

I bring backup hard drives and a backup sound system to every event.

38. Do you have a wireless microphone?

Yes, I have two wireless microphones available to for the welcome speech, toasts etc.

39. Do you have a “light show”?

I bring dance floor wash lighting that changes with the music, providing a level of energy to your party. Photographers love this lighting because it provides a way to illuminate the guests and adds more color and excitement to their photos. I do not bring lasers, lights that spin, create dots or patterns, “blindens” or strobe lights.

40. Do you set up a sign or banner with your equipment?

I never bring any sort of advertising, sign or banner to weddings. I don't mention my company name and I don't display business cards. If a guests asks for one, I'll be happy to hand them a card or they can ask you where they found me.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me any time!

Mark Beecher

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