

Sydney Wedding DJs

Things To Consider When Hiring A Wedding DJ

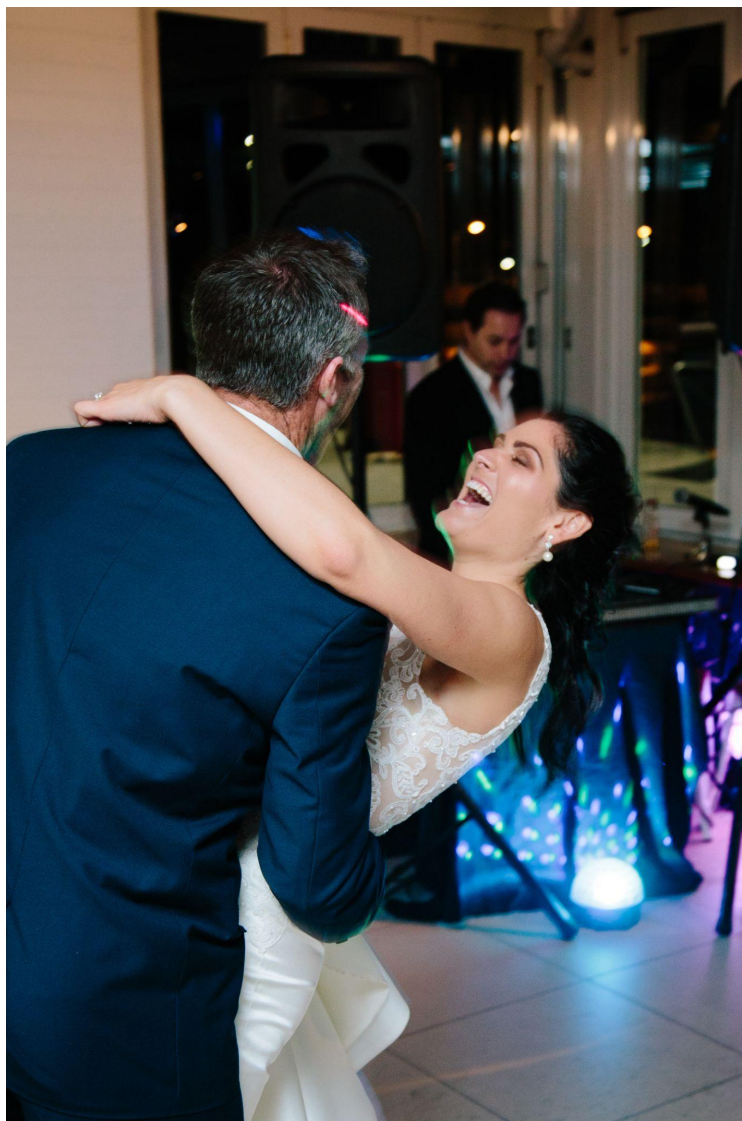


1. Do you offer a written contract? A written, legal contract is a good indicator of whether a DJ is professional and reliable. Furthermore, a contract establishes the DJ's obligation to the client. It outlines what is required for the DJ's success, by outlining his setup requirements and other factors related to his performance.

2. Will you be the DJ at our wedding? - Often, the person you speak with is different from the person who will be your DJ on your wedding day. This is a common practice among large agencies. It is paramount that you have an opportunity to interview the specific DJ that you will be working with and determine whether you feel comfortable with them. You should also expect that the individual DJ's name is specified on your contract – it is the only way you can be guaranteed his or her services at your wedding.

3. May we meet our DJ before we sign a contract? The only way you'll know whether the DJ you'll have at your wedding is to interview them before you sign a contract. Your "gut" feeling is very important in selecting the right disc jockey.

Intimate Wedding ~ Carly & Jason - Cronulla Beach ~ DJ Jules



4. Do you work exclusively for this company? Most large agencies use independent DJ subcontractors to perform their events. Often, these DJs work for several agencies and also accept bookings directly. If you choose a DJ who subcontracts for several agencies and books his events, you need to be clear on what will happen if he is accidentally double-booked for your wedding date.

5. How long have you been a DJ and how many weddings have you done? A wedding is such an important occasion, and you don't want your DJ's first wedding to be your own. The number of years someone has been a DJ will give you some indication of their experience level, but some DJs only perform for a few events (and fewer weddings) each year. A DJ with half as many years in the industry may have many times as many weddings under his belt, so you should also ask how many weddings the DJ has done.

6. How many weddings do you do each year? Just like any other profession, performing for weddings requires one's skills to be in top form. If a DJ performs for only a few weddings per year, they may not be "at the top of their game" by the time your wedding date arrives. Asking how many weddings they do per year will give you an indication of their level of commitment to your type of event.

7. How many other types of events do you do per year? Different DJs focus on different types of events – some consider themselves a “jack of all trades” and claim expertise in all types of events, and others are specialists. The ratio between the number of weddings a DJ performs for and the amount of other, non-wedding events they do will tell you where their focus lies.

8. Do you perform for more than one event in a day? Some DJs will do as many events as they possibly can, and often try to pack their weekends with all types of DJ work. If a DJ has already done an event in the afternoon before your wedding, they will likely be physically exhausted by the latter half of your wedding, which is exactly when they need to be the most alert and active.

9. What makes you different from your competitors? Any professional wedding disc jockey will take pride in their work, and be able to answer this question honestly and communicate the things that make their services unique. Some DJs, however, will take this opportunity to “bash” their competition and say negative things about specific DJs or agencies.

10. Do you act as the "emcee" and make all of the announcements? Normally the MC is considered as a separate duty in addition to the wedding DJ duties so normally there would be some additional fee involved. Most companies will offer a discount if the wedding DJ can also provide wedding MC duties. An alternative is to have a family member or friend MC your wedding, providing that he or she is confident speaking in front of a potentially large crowd, can maintain the guest's attention when required, manage the different aspects of the wedding, and keep things on track, such as meal service times, entrance and announcement of the bridal party, first dance, and speeches. The MC should also coordinate with the event coordinator, the photographer, the videographer, the chef, and of course the bride and groom. A professional MC does a lot more than just make a few announcements, and having an experienced wedding MC can ensure everything runs smoothly on the day and alleviate a lot of unneeded stress for the bride and groom so that they can focus on just enjoying every moment of their special day.

Vibrant Wedding ~ Annabelle and David ~ DJ Jules



11. How would you define your “style” when making announcements? This is an important question to ask because it will tell you whether or not the DJ is the right match for your guests and the atmosphere you’re trying to create. If you are planning an elegant, understated wedding, then utilizing the services of a “party motivator” or “entertainer DJ” may not be what you are looking for.

12. What if something happens to you and you can't make it to the wedding?

Despite meticulous planning and preparation, accidents do happen. If the DJ is injured or otherwise unable to perform on your wedding day, what is the backup plan? Most responsible professionals have some sort of backup strategy should this situation ever arise, but others do not. Often, DJs network with other DJs who could provide backup services for them in the event of an emergency.

13. Can we get in touch again before the wedding? Some DJs will claim that all they need to do is show up at your wedding to be successful, this isn't very realistic. A professional DJ will want to make sure they understand exactly what is supposed to happen and when, and what music you would like to be played, and will want to speak with you at least briefly to go over the main details. If a DJ tells you otherwise, you should probably be concerned.

14. Can we visit you at a performance? Hopefully, the answer to this question is "no." We're sure that you wouldn't appreciate the DJ inviting prospective clients to your wedding to see him/her in action. A professional DJ should be willing to take a stand for his client's privacy and not offer this as a possibility. Professional wedding DJs never allow this. Instead, the DJ may have some videos of him/her performing at a less formal event where the clients have permitted for a video to be used at their discretion.

15. How involved can we be in selecting music for our event? This is an important question to ask, because some DJs prefer to control the majority of the playlist and supplement their choices with a small handful of your specific requests. Other disc jockeys prefer to let the client choose the majority of the music, and then use their expertise to make it all work. The DJ should be accommodating of your music tastes, and you should feel comfortable with the DJ's approach and the amount of involvement you'll be able to have in choosing the music.

16. When do we need to submit our music requests and event details? You should be given ample time to make decisions regarding your music choices and event timeline, but the DJ should also require this information far enough in advance so that he can adequately prepare for your event. A DJ who doesn't ask for your requests at least a couple of weeks before your wedding may not be able to fulfill them. In addition, the DJ should be willing to accommodate any later changes or additions whenever possible, rather than locking you into a first dance song that you later regret or refusing to alter the order of your toasts.

17. Do you take requests from our guests? Most DJs are happy to do so, but you should also feel reasonably assured that any request they choose to play would not be something you didn't like.

18. Can we submit a "Do Not Play" list? Any professional DJ should be willing to honor your requests, including your request for certain songs and genres to not be used. Submitting a "Do Not Play" list will give a DJ a clear idea of your limits and your expectations for their song selection at your wedding.

19. When do you arrive to set up for our wedding? When dealing with sub-standard DJs, there are often issues with them being punctual and set up well in advance of your guests' arrival. Professional DJs will always arrive at least a full hour before their scheduled start time to have adequate time to set up and get organized before the start of the wedding.

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

Almost every DJ will require some sort of deposit or retainer to secure your date. This is for their protection and yours. The industry standard for deposits is 50%. Some DJs require less, just make sure to stipulate a specific guarantee of services and clearly outline a cancellation policy, which the DJ may be legally be responsible for.

21. What is included in the hiring of a wedding DJ?

DJs use vastly different systems when pricing their services. Most DJs price their services a la carte, charging an hourly rate and adding charges for any additional equipment needed. Others choose to use a flat-rate pricing system and make their packages all-inclusive. You need to be clear about what a DJ is offering for the price they've quoted you, so you can compare their package to those of the other DJs you are interviewing.

22. How much would you charge for overtime? Hopefully, your DJ will do such a wonderful job at your wedding that you'd like to keep dancing! Be sure that the DJ's contract outlines a specific rate for additional time at the end of the night, whether it is a set price or a pro-rated amount based on the original price.

23. What do you require from us? Every DJ will require a few things that you'll need to provide them in order to be successful. The most common are adequate shelter, electricity, and a table for their equipment. Make sure that you understand exactly what the DJ needs from you so you can communicate those needs to your reception site and caterer.

24. Do you require a meal? It is pretty standard that DJs require a meal at the wedding as it would normally run over a meal time and the DJ is unable to leave the venue to have a meal. An unfed DJ can lead to an unhappy DJ that is focussed on how hungry they are rather than focussing on providing the absolute best service they can for their client's wedding. Be sure you know what the DJ's requirements are so you can plan accordingly. Most DJs are happy to be provided with any type of meal.

25 Are you insured? Any DJ you consider must carry a full liability insurance policy. They are fairly inexpensive (less than \$250 per year in some cases), so being uninsured is inexcusable. Some reception sites have even taken the step of requiring all vendors working at their facility to provide proof of insurance before the wedding. Liability insurance protects you and the reception site in the unlikely event that your DJ injures one of your guests or burns your reception site to the ground.

26. What kind of equipment do you use? Any DJ you consider should be proud of his/her sound system and should be using professional-grade equipment. Most DJs understand that you are very unlikely to have a working knowledge of professional DJ equipment, but he/she should be able to describe his/her sound system to you. You should not hear very many "home audio" brands in the description – the top brands for DJ equipment are Pioneer, Denon, PCDJ, Traktor, Serato, Electro-Voice (EV), JBL, Bose, Mackie, RANE, QSC, and Shure.

27. Do you have a wireless microphone? Every professional wedding DJ should offer a wireless microphone to be used for your guests' toasts, blessing, and any other speeches that need to be made. The industry standard for wireless microphones is Shure, and most professional DJs use Shure wireless technology.

28. Do you have a "light show"? Some DJs also offer "party lights," either as part of their package or as an additional service they can provide. You should find out whether the DJ plans on setting up lights for the dance floor, and whether this matches your preferences.

DJ Jules



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Sydney Wedding DJs

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