

**Given that Jonathan of Music Source has worked hundreds upon hundreds of wedding receptions, below are some tips that he has acquired that may serve you well.**

### **Seating**

If seating is 'not' assigned you will most likely have a few tables that are going to be reserved for immediate family, closest to the head table. Please make sure the guests that you want at the reserved tables know they are to sit at those reserved tables. It may also be a good idea to let your MC/Reception Director know who those guests are as well, or your greeters if you have them at your reception

If seating is assigned, do not seat older guests right near the DJ, but instead seat your younger adult guests at that table, as that is the loudest place in the room. If seating is assigned, it is recommended that you have greeters at the door to direct guests to their tables.

Regardless of assigned or not, please do not place tables inbetween the DJ and the dance floor.

### **Bustling the Dress**

It seems like 50% of the time the bride has a hard time getting her dress bustled prior to the formal introduction. There'll be two bridesmaids and mom working on it for 10-15 minutes before they get it correct. Brides, please practice this as it is cutting into your own reception time and causing your guests to wait even longer.

### Formal Introduction

The formal introduction is basically the start of all the formalities at most wedding receptions. Please tell everybody who is going to be introduced when it is to happen so they are not missing in action when the time comes. Whether you select one song for everybody or one song for each couple, make sure that it's appropriate and can be spoken over without too much trouble. So for example, rap songs typically make horrible introduction songs as they are too wordy, there's too much focus on the beat, and they tend to lack the musical instrumentation and necessary rhythm.

To see the 50 most popular wedding party introduction songs in 2016, go to pages 15-16 here > <http://www.djintelligence.com/charts/DJIntelligenceMostRequestedWedding2016.pdf>

Also when setting up the tables and chairs in the venue, please be sure to create a clear path for the wedding party to walk in during the introduction.









### Toasting the Bride & Groom

The wedding party members doing a toast should be predetermined by the bride and groom, and should be no more than 3-4 total, including the Father of the Bride and/or Groom. It is never a good idea to allow anyone to come up and toast for numerous reasons I won't even go into here. Those toasting should have their toast written in advance and they should practice their toast many, many times, as most people are not natural born speakers. Toasts should generally be no more than 2-3 minutes each, so they should time themselves while practicing. While funny stories can be amusing, make sure that they are in good taste and will be found funny by all, especially the bride and groom.

At the end of their comments they should write 'Don't forget to toast the bride & groom.' Sure it seems obvious but sometimes they are so glad they got through it without making a mistake, they simply shut up and sit down, forgetting to actually toast the bride and groom. So don't forget to have the champagne already poured and ready to go.

Here's a good video for those giving the toast to watch, that covers some of the do's and don'ts > <https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=fvwbrel&v=4deue0KdMXM&app=desktop>

### And finally... How To Use A Microphone Correctly

Just because you are using a microphone doesn't mean you shouldn't speak up. The DJ can always turn it down if you're too loud but can only turn you up so much before it will make that awful feedback noise. So please SPEAK UP. Hold the microphone 'very close to your mouth at all times'. Do not 'cup' the head of the microphone with your fingers as this will cause all sorts of problems. Hold the microphone at an angle almost horizontally like you are singing on American Idol.

Holding

it straight up and down, vertically, is far less effective for the types of microphones that professionals use. If you turn your head or look down while speaking, please move the microphone so it continues to be 'directly in front of your mouth at all times.' Otherwise the volume of your voice will drop down considerably, and possibly not heard. And finally... DO NOT DO THE PIPE BOMB MIC DROP unless you want to pay me for a replacement mic. We

use quality Shure microphones so it won't be cheap!

Here's a great short video for those giving the toast to watch, that covers how to hold a microphone > <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9ZaQFCxQr8>

### **Cutting of the Cake**

Cake cutting shouldn't take long, but it can if the knife, cake server, a plate and a napkin are not already on the cake table. Position the cake table in the room away from the dance floor if cutting the cake after dinner or plan on moving it immediately afterwards so as to not hold up your other formalities that will take place on the dance floor. If the cake table is against the wall, make sure there's room to get behind the table to cut so your backs are not to your guests and photographer while cutting. If friends are going to be serving the cake to your guests, make sure they know when to do so and how to do so.

### **Bouquet & Garter Toss**

Be respectful and tasteful but have fun too. Beware of things that hang down from the ceiling. While bouquets have some weight to them and fly through the air easily, garters not so much. Wrapping the garter around a small squishy ball of some sort is one way to control it a little bit better.

ALTERNATIVES to the Bouquet and Garter Toss: LONGEST MARRIED COUPLE - No removing or throwing but giving the bouquet and garter to the longest married couple in attendance and/or winner of the Anniversary Dance, should you choose to have one. FORMAL PRESENTATION - Do a presentation to a an engaged couple that are in your wedding party or



attending your reception. **ROLE REVERSAL** - Another fun choice is to throw the bouquet to the married men attempting to catch it for their wife, and the garter to the married ladies attempting to catch it for their husband.

### **Wedding Party Dance**

If you are planning on having a really fun upbeat wedding party dance, instead of a slow one, it's best to do that at the end of all the formalities as it makes for a great transition into general dancing with your guests. In fact you may even want your guests to join you half way through. Regardless of the song being fast or slow, or when you decide to have it, make sure your wedding party knows there's a wedding party dance and when it is suppose to happen.

### **Father/Daughter & Mother/Son Dances**

If you are unsure about dancing the entire dance alone with your parents, for whatever reason, we can either edit the song down to only 2-3 minutes. Or we can ask other fathers who are their with their daughters, and other mothers who are there with their sons, to join you after your photographer has gotten his necessary photos.

### **Dollar Dance**

In a survey among wedding guests that asked the question: "What is the most boring part of

a wedding reception?" The overwhelming answer was 'The Dollar Dance'. Now I'm not saying you should not do it but let's not allow it to take too much time. The number of guest you have will have some bearing on how long it may take, but what you don't want is it lasting 45 minutes to an hour. Ultimately the bride and groom control the speed of the dollar dance. Dances should last no longer then 30 seconds with most guests. I highly recommend that the bride and groom enlist the assistance of their Best Man and Maid/Matron of Honor. They can help form the lines, collect the money and keep an eye on the clock. If someone is taking too long then they can send the next dancer up, that way they're the bad guy and not the bride or groom.

Plus they know how much money was given so if Uncle Rich gives the Maid of Honor a \$100 bill, well maybe he should get more than 30 seconds of dance time.

ALTERNATIVES to the Dollar Dance: Money Tree, Kiss Bucket, Dash for Cash Challenge, Smash for Cash, Selfie Dance, Auction, Raffle Drawing, Make it Rain & Lip Sync Battle.

### **Drinking**

Or more specifically, drinking too much. Sure it's a party and you want to have fun, but you don't want drink too much and not remember it. Or worse yet embarrass yourself in front of family or get sick or pass out. Moderation is the key and not starting too early in the day. And while we are on the subject of drinking, always have non-alcoholic choices available for your guests, and if possible for free. Water, soda, whatever. Just because dinner is over doesn't mean everybody there will be drinking alcohol all night right up to the very end. Be a responsible host.

### **Ending the Reception**

Unfortunately all parties must eventually end. Personally, I'll stay as long as you want and as long as your venue allows, as packing everything up is not the fun part of the evening.

However, having said that, I would much rather finish a little bit on the early side, with a good strong crowd on the dance floor for a fun upbeat memorable finish versus... pushing the reception to an unnatural finish and hour or two later when there's only a dozen or so people left in the room and nobody is dancing. Maybe they're already cleaning up but the excitement is gone and it's not coming back. Those that are left are tired and they just want to go to bed, they just haven't left yet. Not a fun nor memorable finish.

Plus when the family begins cleaning up prior to the end of dancing, this generally is the kiss of death to your reception, as other family members start to help and pretty soon everyone is cleaning up and nobody is dancing. DON'T DO IT!

## MUSIC

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Top 50 Most Requested Bride & Groom First Dances • Top 50 Most Requested Bride & Father Dances • Top 50 Most Requested Groom & Mother Dances • Top 50 Most Requested

Bridal Party Dances • Top 50 Most Requested Bouquet Toss Songs • Top 50 Most Requested Garter Toss Songs • Top 50 Most Requested Cake Cutting Songs • Top 50 Most Requested Wedding Introduction Songs • Top 50 Most Requested Last Dances • Top 50 Most Requested Money Dance Songs • Top 50 Most Requested Ceremony Processional Songs • Top 50 Most Requested Ceremony Recessional Songs • Top 50 Most Requested Ceremony Songs

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