



Elite Entertainment

How to select a DJ

1-888-ELITE-DJ
www.elitedj.com

Selecting a DJ for your function is one of the most important decisions you can make to assure the success of the event. Everything else can be perfect, but if the music is not good, the event will fizzle. Selecting the right DJ can be confusing. There are over 15,000 DJ's in America; all promising they will do a great job for you. So how do you pick the right one for you? This article will provide some guidance to help make the decision easier.

The best and easiest way to find a DJ you will like is to hire one you have already seen. If you have been to an event where the DJ was great, find out whom he or she was. If you did not get their card, ask the host or the manager of the function room where the event was held.

If you have not seen a good DJ recently, ask your friends. Your friends probably have the same taste in music as you. Maybe they have been to a function you missed or will be going to a function. Let them know ahead of time you will be looking, and ask them to keep their eyes open.

If the first two suggestions do not work, your job gets tougher. You might have to go to the Yellow Pages. Look under Disk Jockeys, Music, and Entertainment. You may find DJ's listed under any of these categories. Circle the ads in which the DJ mentions the type of event you are planning. For example, if you were planning a wedding, a DJ whose ad says, "WE SPECIALIZE IN WEDDINGS" would be a good one to call. Another area you should look if you want a wedding DJ is in a Wedding planner or magazine published in your area. You will probably find several DJs whose ads look good. How do you tell which one is best? Probably the worst way to choose a DJ is on price. Some DJ's are more expensive than others are. Prices can range from \$100 to \$2,000 for a six-hour event. That's quite a difference, and it would be very tempting to choose the cheapest alternative. If that's all you can afford, than you have no choice.

But consider the law of supply and demand. There is a reason some DJ's charge more than others. They are usually worth it. More expensive DJ's tend to be more experienced DJ's. They can charge more because they have a lot of jobs and clients, and they have a good reputation. Generally, the DJs on the low end of the price scale are new to the business, and are trying to get established. They could do a great job, and might be worth a shot if your party is on the informal side. But there is probably more risk with a less experienced person.

As you speak with the DJs, pay attention to their professionalism over the phone, it tends to spill over into their DJ style. The most important thing to ask is about their experience with your type of event. If you were planning an event like a wedding, school dance, or company party, it would be normal to expect a professional DJ to have performed for at least 20 of these events. A number in the hundreds is actually common for a DJ who is well established. DJ's with less experience might also do a good job. And they will usually cost less. If you talk to one who sounds interesting, ask them for references. Get 5 or 6 names and phone numbers of people who have recently used their services. Call these references and ask about the DJ's performance. Any DJ can easily give you 2 or 3 names. Getting more names is a better test of the quality of their performance. You might also ask the DJ if they have a video to watch, observe how the DJ interacts with the crowd. Are the people having fun? Are the people dancing? Is the DJ dressed appropriately? These are all good clues to the DJ's skills and personality.

Always ask the DJ about their policy on requests. The best DJ's will take requests from the audience and work them into their routine. However, do not expect the DJ to play every request. Many requests are simply inappropriate for the mood of the event. A good DJ is not a jukebox, he will blend requests



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with songs he feels will properly motivate the crowd. The art of DJ'ing is timing, and this takes experience. Forcing a DJ to ignore his or her instincts by making them playing every request will result in an "UNEVEN" (and less fun) event. On the other hand, the DJ should try to play as many of your audience's requests as possible. Try to get a feel for their philosophy of requests as you interview them. It is also appropriate to give a DJ a list of 5 to 10 songs you "must have." Just do not make that list 15 or 20 songs long.

Many DJ's boast about the number of songs they have. While variety is great, the fact is they will only be able to play 60 to 70 songs in a six-hour event. Having the right 60 songs is a lot more important than having 20,000 songs your crowd does not want to hear. After you tell the DJ what type of party you are having and who the audience will be, ask them what type of music they would suggest. You should feel comfortable with most of his or her selections.

Many DJ's also boast about having great equipment. Unless you are familiar with professional audio gear, you probably will not know the difference between which brands are great and which are budget. However, your DJ should at least have professional grade equipment. If they list brands you are familiar with at the local electronics retailer, that is cause for further questioning. Home stereo equipment could fail in the middle of your event! For example, typical professional DJ power amplifiers usually have 200-800 watts per channel, where consumer amplifiers that are considered powerful may have only 100 watts per channel.

Some DJ companies have more than one DJ working for them. In this case, it's important to get references on that particular DJ who will be assigned to your show. Even if the company has been around for 10 years, they might have hired your DJ last

week. He might be a pro himself, or he might be newly trained. Be sure of whom you are getting.

The perfect DJ for you will be affordable, experienced at your type of event, and have great references. There are probably a lot of DJ's out there who fit that description. As you search, remember that above all, you want your event to be fun and memorable.