

The top 50 questions you should ask your DJ company.

Answered by DJ4U Founder & Director of Operations, Jason Parkinson.

1. Do you offer a professionally written contract?

Yes we do require an entertainment agreement for each of our events. This ensures that we have both agreed to set terms and protects you as well as us from cancellation problems. Once you decide to book us, we'll send you a copy of the agreement and give you 3 weeks to review it. We hate it when companies hide things in the fine print, so we give you plenty of time to review everything.

2. Who will be our DJ?

Unlike most DJ companies, we wait to assign your DJ until after you've completed most of your planning information through our website. We have a great staff of DJs (who exclusively work for DJ4U and are employees, not contractors) that I have personally hand picked to work for us and personally trained to ensure they know how to create a great party for you and your guests. By waiting to assign your DJ, it does several things.

- 1) Allows us to match one of our DJ's personalities with the type of reception you want to have. For example: If you want a lot of interaction from your DJ and really like classic rock music, we would assign a DJ from our staff that best fits your party. The reason we've never had an unsatisfied client is because of our method for matching the perfect DJ to the perfect party.
- 2) The entertainment business has historically had a high turn-over rate. While we've been very fortunate to have the majority of our staff working for us for 5 – 10 years, we don't feel comfortable making any promises that we cannot keep. Since most weddings are booked out a year or more in advance, the possibility exists that one of our DJs is available for your wedding today, may actually not be available a year from now. We want to be completely transparent with our clients about our process for selecting a DJ. Once your DJ is locked in, they will indeed be the one who is entertaining at your event.
- 3) While most companies rely on the individual DJ to assist in the planning of the events, we do not. We have a team of professionals and reception planners who are here to assist you with all of the details of your reception entertainment leading up to the big day. We help you organize your event through our website and then we meet one-on-one with the DJ once we assign them to review everything. Your DJ will also call you on the Monday before your wedding to review any last minute planning information they need to before arriving at your wedding.

3. May we meet with you in person before we sign a contract?

Sure. You can meet with us at anytime, but most couples find it unnecessary after seeing our extensive planning website and learning how we can keep in touch with you during the planning process. In fact, the large majority of our clients only work with us via email and phone. We're always available to meet if you want to discuss details face-to-face, but we don't require it.

4. Will we talk in person before the wedding?

Yes! On the Monday before your wedding, your assigned DJ will call you to review all of your planning information on the phone. This call usually takes about 15 – 20 minutes and is merely a review of the information we've been planning with you along with pronunciations of names in your wedding party and any last minute details that may need discussed. We want to make sure we have all the correct information and that it's fresh in our DJs minds the week of the wedding.

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

Our dates are assigned on a first come, first served basis. It's the only way to be fair to the large number of wedding clients that are interested in booking our services. Once you decide you'd like to book us, we will mail you a welcome kit along with your contract and planning password for our website. At that point, we hold your date for 3 weeks so you have time to review the contract and mail it back to us with a \$250 deposit to lock in the date.

6. Do your DJs work exclusively for this company? If not, who else do they work for?

Yes. Our DJ staff only performs for DJ4U. They have a contract with us that prevent them from DJing for other companies or working for themselves at clubs, etc.

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

DJ4U was founded in 1999 and over the years we have entertained for more than 1000 wedding receptions.

8. How many weddings do you do each year?

We average right around 70 wedding receptions each year. Some years we do a few more and some years we do a few less. The wedding industry is our primary business and we focus thousands of hours on our wedding clients each year.

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

On average, we perform at 150 events per year. These events are comprised mainly of Wedding Receptions, but also include Corporate Parties for companies like Maui Jim Sunglasses and Southside Bank, large school dances and a few private parties and events. We are a company with a long history and we're not going anywhere anytime soon.

10. Do you perform for more than one event in a day? If so, what's your limit?

We currently have 10 DJs on our staff and enough equipment to do 4 weddings in one day. 4 events is currently our limit although we have the staff to do many more.

11. What makes you different from your competitors? How do you differentiate yourself from everyone else?

We know that it's not our party. It's yours. Every wedding reception we do is different and every bride & groom we entertain for are the focus of the night. We won't ever force you to do anything and we'll always answer any questions you have to help you make it the perfect night. Our slogan says it all. It's Your Night, Your Party and Our Specialty. The other thing that sets us apart is our communication with our clients and our planning assistance through our website.

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

This is up to you. We always send 2 entertainers to each reception. This allows one of our entertainers to act as the Master of Ceremonies and make announcements, while the other entertainer is playing the music. Because of this, we never have to take a break, we always provide a backup entertainer in the event that one DJ would be sick, or have an emergency come up, and it makes it easier to interact with your guests.

15. How would you define your "style" when making announcements?

Again, this is up to you. We match a DJ that best fits the type of reception you'd like to have. We have very high energy DJs and we have laid back DJs. The choice is yours.

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

We are able to teach interactive dances in the event we need to get people to the dance floor, we also have some other "ice breaker" type things that work well to bring more people to the floor. The truth is, we rarely have an empty dance floor because of the way we structure our playlist. We can talk more about that in person if you're interested.

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

We always send teams of 2 to each reception. In the event one person can't make the wedding, there is already another person scheduled to be there. We've never had a problem in the past, but on the off chance one of your scheduled DJs is sick, we have a plan already in place by always providing 2 entertainers.

18. May we visit you at a performance?

We get asked this question a lot and our answer is always no. Our clients book us to provide a service for them and only them. We respect our client's private events and on that same note, we will respect your event. You'll never have to worry about us bringing an uninvited guest to your Wedding.

19. Can you provide us with references?

Yes! We can get you in touch with clients who have used us in the past so you can ask them firsthand what it was like working with us.

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

We subscribe to a service that provides us with close to 400 new songs every month. In addition, we follow the music charts for Top 40, Rhythmic, Country and Adult Contemporary (Hot AC) to ensure our DJs are familiar with all new music that is becoming popular, before it's popular. If there is a song you want that's not in our library, we can purchase the track from iTunes. With the technology available today... it's very easy to keep our music library up to date.

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

It's up to you. Some of our clients pick out every song they want played, while others pick out a few songs they absolutely want to hear and then let us pick songs that keep the crowd dancing. Often times, we've found that couples who let us pick most of the music will have a more packed dance floor than those who pick every song themselves. Since we entertain at around 70 weddings every year, we have a great handle on what music will keep people dancing. But again, it's completely up to you. It's your night and we want it go exactly as you want.

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

You can start working on your music selections and planning form as soon as you book us. Every time you save the forms on our website, we get notified that you've made an update and we can plan along with you. The final planning details are due the week of your wedding, but don't worry, we'll keep in touch via email and remind you to work on it. Since everything is done through our website, even if you don't submit your final details, we always have access to the information you do have planned and can work with you via phone or in person to finish it up.

23. Would you take requests from our guests?

It's up to you. We'll never tell a guest NO, but we are careful with how we chose our words with a guest. If a guest comes up and requests a song that's on your do not play list... we simply tell them that we'll try to find the song for them. (Of course we won't play anything that you don't want us to, or any song that is inappropriate or will kill the dancers on the dance floor)

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

Absolutely. In fact, a do not play list is built into our planning system for you.

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

We arrive about 2 hours before your first guests will arrive. This allows us to make sure all equipment is working and be ready to start music before anyone even enters the room.

26. What will you wear to our reception?

Typically our staff will dress in a full suit with dress shirt and tie. However, we’ve done specialty weddings that request we dress differently. It’s all up to you. We’ve worn Halloween Costumes to a Halloween wedding (the Bride’s request) and we’ve worn Hawaiian shirts to a Hawaiian themed wedding (again the Bride’s request). The bottom line is that we’ll always be dressed appropriately for your event.

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

Our staff will arrive in a black DJ4U company polo and Jeans or Shorts unless you request something different from us. Professionalism is important to us even while setting up. We’ll always be changed into appropriate attire for your wedding long before your guests arrive.

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

If you just book our DJ services, only \$250 is required as a deposit to hold the date for you. If you decided to book room lighting or other services for your event, there may be an additional deposit required. It will be outlined in the contract.

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

This is based on the package you choose. We have many different packages and options for wedding receptions. Please inquire with us to see if your date is available and we can email you all of the details in a digital brochure.

30. How much would you charge for overtime?

Most of our packages include unlimited playing time, so nothing.

31. What do you require from us, if anything?

Just your planning information and feedback to let us know if we need to change anything about how your reception is running. You’re the boss and we’re here to make sure you have the perfect night.

32. Do you require a meal?

Meals are not required, but definitely appreciated. Since we’ll arrive at your reception to set up around 2 or 3p.m. and not be heading home until after midnight, most couples provide our staff with a meal. In the event it is cost prohibitive to do so, let us know and we’ll make arrangements with the catering staff to purchase our own meal.

33. Are you insured? If so, do you carry liability insurance? Please list who you are insured by and for how much.

We are fully insured for up to 2 million dollars in liability coverage from Town & Country Insurance (An agent for Cincinnati Insurance). We carry this high level of coverage because many of the high end venues we entertain in require it. (Peoria Civic Center & I Wireless Center for example) We’ve never had a claim on our policy, but the protection is there in the event something unforeseen happens.

34. Do you take any breaks?

No. Having 2 staff members allows us to keep the party going all night.

35. What is your policy on alcohol or smoking during the wedding? Do you, or any of your DJs that may work our reception, smoke?

We only hire non-smokers to work for us and we have a no smoking and no alcohol policy for our employees. You are more than likely not allowed to drink at your place of work and the same is true for all of our employees.

36. What kind of equipment do you use?

We use professional equipment at every event. Our equipment includes JBL & QSC speakers, American DJ audio mixers, Apple Mac Laptops, American DJ & Martin Lighting equipment, etc. The important thing is that our equipment is designed for mobile entertainment. We can assure you it isn't being used in some teenager's basement before it comes to your wedding reception.

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

Yes. Backup equipment is always on site although our detailed maintenance program always keeps our primary equipment working at every event.

38. Do you have a wireless microphone?

Yes. We only use Shure SM58 Wireless handheld microphones. We also have a backup corded microphone on-site in the event that the wireless microphone is getting some interference. We use Shure wireless mics because of the high level of quality they have and rarely do we have any problems with them. With that being said, we're always prepared in the event we do.

39. Do you have a "light show"?

Yes. We offer a standard dance floor lighting show with all of our packages and we have additional room lighting packages available as well. Our dance floor lighting consists of LED flashing par can lights and computer controlled "intelligent" lighting. Our dance floor lighting system stays off during dinner and only gets turned on when the dancing starts to add fun and excitement to the party. Our elegant room lighting is different. It's designed to transform the look of your wedding reception. Just ask us for more details on room lighting. It can be added on to any DJ package.

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

Absolutely not. While signs and banners may be appropriate at school dances, they are incredibly inappropriate at wedding receptions. We'll ensure that nothing we do takes the focus off of you and the amazing reception that you've spent months planning and preparing.

41. Do you belong to any professional associations (local Chamber of Commerce, etc.) or trade groups? If so, please list them.

Better Business Bureau (A+ rating)

Peoria Chamber of Commerce

Young Professionals Organization of Greater Peoria

DJ Advisory Network for Content Evaluation (D.A.N.C.E.)

42. Please tell us about the BEST wedding reception you DJd for. Why was it the best?

We've done so many great receptions it's hard to pick just one. At the end of the night, it's never about our talents, or the music we played or our lighting... it's all about the bride and groom. If our client and their guests leave feeling like it's the best wedding reception they've ever attended, then we know we've done our job.

One that I remember specifically is when we provided elegant room lighting for a bride and groom at the Peoria Civic Center. Every guest that walked into the room gasped in awe of how amazing everything looked. The bride and groom couldn't stop smiling and pointing at the lighting in the room. It was a great moment to see them so excited.

43. Please tell us about the WORST wedding reception you DJed for. Why was it the worst?

Perhaps the worst reception we've had the privilege of entertaining at took place in a barn on a dirt floor in the middle of the hottest summer in Central Illinois. While the guests still had a great time and the bride and groom had tons of compliments for us, our DJs sweat through their entire suit and our equipment was covered in dirt after we left. Our clients never knew that it was the worst... we really worked to make it the best for them and we received many great comments from their guests.

44. When we contact you (email, call, text, etc.) when can we expect you to get back to us? Do you have a policy regarding when your clients are guaranteed to hear back from you? If so, what is your policy?

You'll usually hear back from us within one business day. (often times much sooner) If you don't, please call me directly at 1-800-592-DJ4U ex. 709 and I'll make sure you get taken care of right away. We'll always try to email you back unless you specifically ask that we call you. On Holidays and weekends our offices are closed.

45. Please rank, in order, how you would like us to communicate with you:

- 1 – Email
- 2 – Message Form in Planning Section
- 3 – Phone Call to our office.

46. What is your cancellation policy?

This is outlined on our contract which you can review before booking us. Because we have to turn away so many potential wedding clients each year due to us being completely booked, we require a non-refundable deposit of \$250 to secure the date for your wedding. In the event you have to cancel within 30 days of your wedding reception, we have to bill you for the entire amount due because we could have freed up the date for another client. We rarely have this happen.

47. What equipment (tables, chairs, extension cords, etc.) will you need from us to help with your setup?

None – We bring everything with us including our own 6ft table and skirting.

48. If you haven't mentioned this already, what games/events do you like to play?

We can be very interactive or pretty laid back at your reception. It's up to you. Once you book us we will send you a list of interactive activities we offer to help spark your creativity.

49. Do you have any "surprise" games that you don't share with the bride and groom.

No. Nothing is a surprise from our clients. Again – It's your night.

50. May we ask you to play some games that we will request?

Certainly. We can accommodate most requests from you.