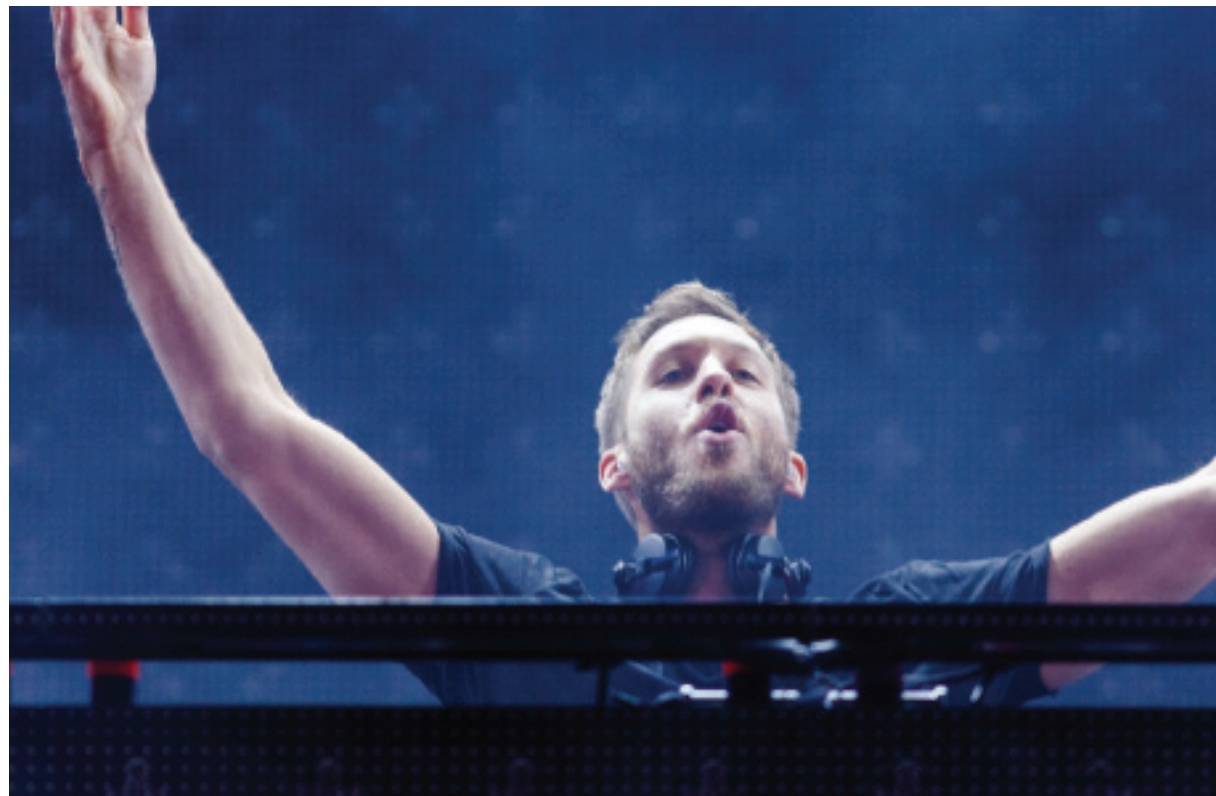


How hard is it



Calvin Harris was the highest paid DJ of last year, making \$66 million. GETTY IMAGES

We reveal what it takes, plus how much you can make working the NYC DJ circuit.



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Tiesto, David Guetta and Calvin Harris make between \$350,000 and \$400,000 per gig. Some say it takes hard work and mastering complicated machinery to reach that level. Others point to photos of celebrities like Joe Jonas

Djing popular clubs and claim all it takes is pressing play on a laptop and fiddling with the volume. So, how hard is it?

"A DJ is someone who plays other people's music, so even making a playlist is Djing," says David Maurice, co-founder of the newly opened DJ school, The Foxgrove. Students there learn things like how to create mashups, speed up and slow down songs, and add drumbeats using a computer and Serato controller.

"There's a myth that you have to be a professional musician to make music for yourself. You absolutely don't. What Instagram has done for photography, [modern equipment] has done for Djing," Maurice says.

While the number of female DJs playing big music festivals is only at 13 percent, according to Vice, more female DJs are in the amateur space.

DJ Krunk Pony, real name Tiffany Pilgrim, who is 31, has been Djing in NYC for 14 years and agrees it's no

longer a boy's game. "At a lot of places I DJ now, I'm the only person who isn't a model first and a DJ second," she says. "I totally respect their game. They still have to be dependable and entertain people." Maurice says women make up most of his current DJ classes, about a 60 to 40 split. "Djing used to be pretty technical, which maybe isn't as appealing to girls as it is guys," he says. "They maybe didn't want to lug heavy equipment and records around."

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to be a DJ?



A look at the newly opened DJ school, The Foxgrove, located at 43 W. 29th St. PROVIDED



DJ Krunk Pony PROVIDED

Investing in the equipment can be pricey. Being a paid DJ typically requires a laptop, software (starting at \$99) and a controller (about \$250). But sticking with it could pay off. For those so in love with getting the party started, there is a career to be made from spinning. "A lot of bars pay DJs 10 percent of what they make and once you break a barrier, say \$3,000, you make 15 percent," says Pony, who actually charges by the hour, between \$50 and \$75. But the

amount can vary and some popular NYC clubs pay between \$500 and \$1,000 a night.

Maurice says the only thing that separates professional DJs that make the big bucks from amateurs is popularity.

"You used to have to be pretty hands-on with vinyl and turntables. Today DJing software does the work for you. You can pretty much figure it out yourself," he says.

You can preprogram a lot of these things that you would have to do on the fly back in the day."

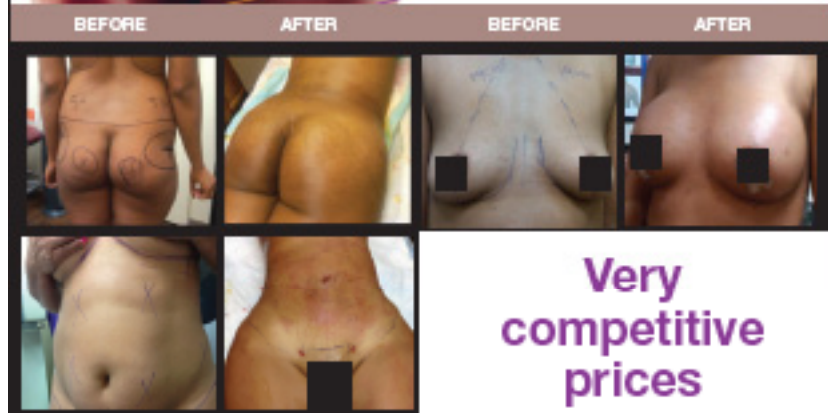
Ultimately, Pony says it all comes down to passion. "If you want to be a DJ, there are a lot of different outlets and you'll find a way... [When I first started], I loved the music and how I felt DJing so much that I knew it was what I wanted and [that feeling] drove me to pursue it."

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