

For most brides and grooms, this will be their only wedding so OF COURSE you aren't supposed to know how to structure your reception. We have compiled the below guide based on what we have seen work at hundreds of receptions. Please use this as a resource to help you plan the flow and order of events for your special day.

If your Celebrity DJ package includes ceremony, read on...if your booking is for reception only, please skip down to Part 2

PART 1

-In the 30 minutes prior to start of ceremony, musical selections of your choice should be played as guests are arriving, finding their seats, etc. Typically, an upbeat blend of classical music works well here.

-once all the guests have arrived and everyone is lined up and ready to go, we can begin with a special song for the seating of the grandparents, mother's etc.

-once they have been seated, a different song should be selected for the entrance of the bridesmaids

-obviously once all the bridesmaids are in place, we will then change the music up for the entrance of the bride (and it can be ANYTHING you want...don't feel that you HAVE to do the typical "Here Comes The Bride" song.)

-during the course of the ceremony, if you plan on doing a unity candle lighting or sand ceremony, you'll want to select a song that can be played while you guys are doing that (otherwise, it's just an odd, awkward silence while you guys are performing the task)

-once you two are pronounced husband and wife, you'll want to select a song to be played for your recessional as you two and then members of the wedding party walk down the aisle. This doesn't have to be the typical song you see in movies too. It can be ANYTHING upbeat and fun to celebrate the joyous occasion that has just taken place. Some folks have used "**Beautiful Day**" by U2, "**Walking on Sunshine**" by Katrina and the Waves. 2 couples whose weddings ceremonies we performed had some fun with it by playing "**Let's Get it On**" by Marvin Gaye and another couple used the **Hallelujah Chorus**. The possibilities are endless.

-We will play whatever song it is you chose to use for your recessional through 'til the end. If your cocktail hour/reception is in the same location as the ceremony, we can begin playing your cocktail hour music mix immediately. However, should your cocktail hour/reception be in a different location than the ceremony, at the conclusion of the recessional song, we will begin tearing down equipment and get headed over to the reception so when guests arrive, we are all set.

PART 2

-During the cocktail hour, no doubt, you two and members of the wedding party, family, etc will be off getting pictures done, etc. As the pictures are slowly but surely winding down, we will begin coordinating getting your guests into the main banquet room and seated. Once they are all in and you guys are all set with pics, we will look to get as many or as few people lined up outside the entrance to the banquet room as you would like for the official introductions.

- Some folks introduce both sets, of parents, the ring bearer and flower girl, bridesmaids and groomsmen, and the newlyweds.

-Some folks cut out the parents and start with the RB and FG, followed by BM and GM's, then the newlyweds. ***please note: if the RB and FG are super young (less than 5 years old) you may want to make whether or not they are officially introduced a game time decision as you just never know when it comes to kiddos.

-Some folks cut out everyone entirely and just get introduced themselves. There really is no right or wrong answer...it's just a matter of what you guys would like to see happen.

-For the introduction, you will want to select something light, fun, and upbeat that will help set the tone for the evening. There are a myriad of different songs you can do. Please see the "song suggestions" document for ideas.

-From this point forward, there are 1 of 3 different ways we can progress and it really is up to the itinerary you set in place with your coordinator at your venue.

Option 1:

-Capitalize on the momentum of everyone up on their feet and applauding you as you enter to take the captive audience and direct their attention to the dance floor so you guys can share your first dance. The nice thing about this is ALL eyes are on you and you can get it out of the way before the meal. After your dance, if you chose, a meal blessing can be delivered and then you and your guests are free to eat.

Option 2:

-Similar to option 1 but after the couples first dance, you follow it up with the Father/Daughter dance and then the Mother/Son dance. ****The only time I recommend this is if the salads have not yet been plated and/or the meal is still a bit away from being ready that way it fills up a bit of the time.****

Option 3:

-Enter the banquet room, give everyone a smile and a wave, I pass the mic off to whomever is delivering the meal blessing, and then the meal begins. This, at times, seems a bit anti-climatic but again, it is completely up to you.

The most common option is #1...

-You guys will be the first served, therefore the first finished. Feel free to use that idle time once you're through to circulate table to table, thank your guests for coming, etc.

-Once the meal has concluded and the banquet staff has not only cleared the tables, but served the champagne as well, it will be time for you guys (as well as all the other guests) to return to their seats so we can get the toasting underway.

-typically, the best man will toast first followed by the maid of honor. There is one thing we have been doing a lot recently that couples seem to really enjoy. Once the MOH and BM toasts have wrapped up, we go to what's known as "open-toasting" where anyone who wishes to say a few words for the newlyweds can do so. This give a father of the bride or groom, elderly relative who has traveled from afar, family friend, etc a chance to be involved. This, of course, is completely up to you...

-the great thing about the point in the night where we reach the toasts is that we can move fairly rapid fire through the remaining events to maximize the amount of dancing and "fun" for the latter portion of the evening.

-Once the toasts have wrapped, I will invite you guys to the cake table for the ceremonial cutting of the 1st piece of cake. Much like with the unity candle or sand ceremony, this is a point in the evening where you will want to have a song chosen to avoid any sort of awkward silence while you guys are cutting the cake. Cake is dessert, dessert is sweet, therefore, folks usually tap into the "sweet" theme for the song they select. Please see the "song suggestions" document for ideas.

-at the conclusion of the cake cutting, depending on what you are yet to do (based on what option you chose above) we will either move onto the couples 1st dance or the father/daughter dance, followed by the mother/son.

-once those dances have wrapped up, if you so chose, we can move onto what's known as the Honeymoon Dance. Some know this as the "dollar dance" but calling it the

"honeymoon dance" sounds more classy. What happens is the best man and maid of honor stand on either side of you two on the dance floor with baskets and any guy that wishes to share a dance with the bride stands in line and, once he contributes money towards the MOH's basket, he can share 45-60 seconds of a dance with her. The same happens for the groom and the best man. It is the responsibility of the MOH and BM to keep people moving through the line so we can wrap this up in anywhere from 2-3 slow songs. This just gives people a way to give you guys a nice send-off as you begin your married lives together. Some people like to do this...some people feel really uncomfortable with it...whichever you guys chose is fine by us.

-we can then move onto the garter retrieval/toss and bouquet toss festivities. Please see the "song suggestions" document for ideas.

-at the end of the garter/bouquet festivities, there is one more "event" that we like to do and this is a GREAT way to get people involved in the open dancing portion of the night. You have probably been to a few weddings where you have seen the anniversary dance done and the point of this is to honor the couple who has been married the longest. Well...every DJ company in America EXCEPT Celebrity DJ does this wrong because they all start out by asking ALL the married couples to come to the dance floor and then, one-by-one, based on how long they have been married, they are asked to leave. Rule #1 in DJ School....NEVER ask people to leave the dance floor!

-Here's how we do it. We'll start by asking anyone married for 50 years or more to come to the floor to share in a special dance. If no one is there/able to do so, we move down to 40 years, then 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 2, 1, etc. so more and more folks are coming to the dance floor. Towards the end, we ask for people engaged to be married, folks who are in love with the person they came with, etc. to come out. Lastly, we will ask that if you have been married for 1 hour or more (that's you two!) to come to the dance floor. Once we get you out there, we congratulate everyone and tell you two to take a look around you and see that these are the folks that know what it takes to make a lifetime of love and happiness work. Then there's the proverbial "record scratch" and we kill the music. Everyone stops and stares at us as we tell them that they just fell for the oldest DJ trick in the book...we've got a packed dance floor and we are NOT slow dancing all night. We then fire up "Shout" by the Isley Brothers (or any other song you guys want) and 99.7% of the people who came out to dance, STAY out to dance and we kick start the party.

-From that point on, we employ our musical approach to ensure the guests are all having a great time. We "cycle" through the decades so we'll start in the 60's and play 2-3 songs from that decade, followed by the fun, disco/funk of the 70's then the upbeat pop of the 80's, the fun "stupid rap" of the 90's (as I like to call it-songs like "Busta Move" by Young MC, etc.) followed by the new pop and dance music of today. We can then throw in some country (should you so chose) slow it down with a ballad or two so folks can go and refresh their drink, catch their breath, or simply allow the folks who will ONLY slow dance, an opportunity to get out on the floor. We then cycle right back to the 60's and repeat the pattern.

-As the night progresses and some of the older crowd begins to leave, maybe we don't cycle as far back to the 60's...maybe just back to the 70's/80's and spend some more time on the newer pop/dance that the younger demographic enjoys.

-Again, ALL the music as well as our approach is completely customizable. For instance, if you absolutely DESPISE country, we can pull off a very successful reception without ever once playing country. We will put together a "Songs to Play" list (loaded with your requests) and a "Songs NOT to Play" list.

Please note that there is no right or wrong answer to how you map out your day. It is JUST that...YOUR day and you need to customize it the way YOU want it to go. Everything we have outlined above are merely suggestions based on what we have seen work at hundreds of receptions.

Good luck, happy planning, and feel free to call Celebrity DJ at (719) 649-6121 with any other questions you may have