

FROM BEGINNING TO END

Q When planning our wedding day, how can my fiancé and I personalise our ceremony music?

A *Catherine says:* Whether you've chosen to tie the knot in a church or have a civil ceremony, both have the same opportunities for music: the processional (entry of the bride), signing of the register and the recessional (exit of the bride and groom). In addition a church service will have hymns and possibly additional pieces for times such as the blessing. You might want to have music playing while your guests are arriving and leaving too. If you're having a civil ceremony only non-religious music is allowed and you should always check your choices with the person carrying out your ceremony.

Your music should reflect your personalities but also be familiar to your guests. You could have a solo singer accompanied by piano, harp or organ (if the ceremony is in a church), or a string quartet, classical guitar, wind trio or even a brass ensemble – there's nothing quite like a brass fanfare for the bride's entrance! Most musicians will be happy to give you advice on repertoire but here are a few classical and contemporary options:

Processional: Bridal Chorus by Wagner, Hornpipe by Handel, Trumpet Voluntary by Clarke, Canon in D by Pachelbel, Chasing Cars by Snow Patrol, Reign of Love by Coldplay and Judy Garland's Somewhere Over The Rainbow.

Signing of the register: Ave Maria by Schubert, Pie Jesu by Faure, If Music Be The Food Of Love by Purcell, One Hand One Heart by Bernstein, We've Only Just Begun by The Carpenters and Salut D'Amour by Elgar

Recessional: Trumpet Tune by Purcell, Toccata from Symphony No.5 by Widor, Hallelujah Chorus by Handel, Exsultate jubilate by Mozart, The Wedding March by Mendelssohn, All You Need Is Love by The Beatles and Walking On Sunshine by Katrina and The Waves.



LOOKING FOR LIVE MUSIC

Q Live music brought my husband-to-be and I together and we want to celebrate this on our special day with a live band. How can we find a professional, talented band with a good reputation?

A *Catherine says:* Always listen to a recording of the musician(s) you're thinking of hiring. Even if they're recommended by a friend or family member it's best to try and hear them before booking. Most musicians have a website where you should be able to find audio tracks or, even better, a video.

You can find musicians by searching online, looking through wedding magazines, at wedding fairs or through a music agency.

When you've found a musician you like, make sure you read their testimonials. You could even ask to speak with one of their past customers.

Most musicians will ask for a deposit to secure the booking. When doing this check what their policy is on cancellation and what happens if the musician, for whatever reason, is unable to perform on the day.

Perfect soundtracks

Q We want to play contemporary dance and R&B during our evening entertainment but we're concerned some older guests may not appreciate it. What should we do?

A *Chanelle says:* You should include whatever music you like, it's your day. Saying that, you want your guests to enjoy themselves too, after all you don't

want to be the only ones on the dancefloor. Once you've made your suggestions, a professional will be able to get the balance right to include your favourite tunes, while being sympathetic to other guests' tastes. They should be tuned in to your movements and the reactions of your guests and be able to adjust the music accordingly. This could mean playing some classic songs, then when you're ready to dance, spinning your favourite songs as you hit the dancefloor.

I personally make it my mission to get everyone on the dancefloor at one time or another during the evening. When a song gets people up I'll normally follow it with a similar style to encourage everyone to continue dancing for at least two to three songs – generally people are ready for a sit down after this – but a DJ or performer will adjust the music to appeal to the next itchy-footed guests, eager to dance.



Contact our experts...

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