

# Designing the Music

Imagine a wedding without music. Imagine a party without musical entertainment. Pretty dull picture, isn't it? Mankind has used music to set the emotional tone of important occasions for thousands of years. Today, we have two ways to provide that much-loved and much-needed music - recordings and live performances.

Recordings are wonderful. You can pick and choose whatever you desire, turn the volume up or down, and switch to something different at a whim. Anyone can buy CDs and everyone can play them. For our important events, however, we choose LIVE music. A live musician, making music right here and now, brings a host of special benefits that no recording can provide. Weddings, funerals, special events, fund raisers, parties, holiday celebrations, all of these go so much better with live music and real musicians.

You have a number of choices to make when you hire musicians. It's the purpose of this essay and the others at this site to help you make these choices so that your special occasion has exactly the musical context you imagined.

The first step in designing your music is to work backwards - that is, picture exactly the result you are looking for at your occasion. Do you want your attendees to experience the joy and hopefulness of a wedding? The lighthearted playfulness of a party? The feeling of togetherness at holiday time? The sharing and community of a dinner party? See it clearly in your mind, taking into account how you would like the people you are inviting to react the musical presentation.

Now decide on the following:

1. Length of musical presentation,
2. Volume of that music,
3. Style of that music,
4. Order of presentation of that music, and
5. Any other special musical circumstances.

Although you now have a much better idea at this point of what you want, you are still probably a bit vague. After all, you are NOT a professional musician yourself, and thus you are unsure if all your needs can be filled, and, if they can, exactly how. Please continue your planning by reading the next essay, "One Man Band."