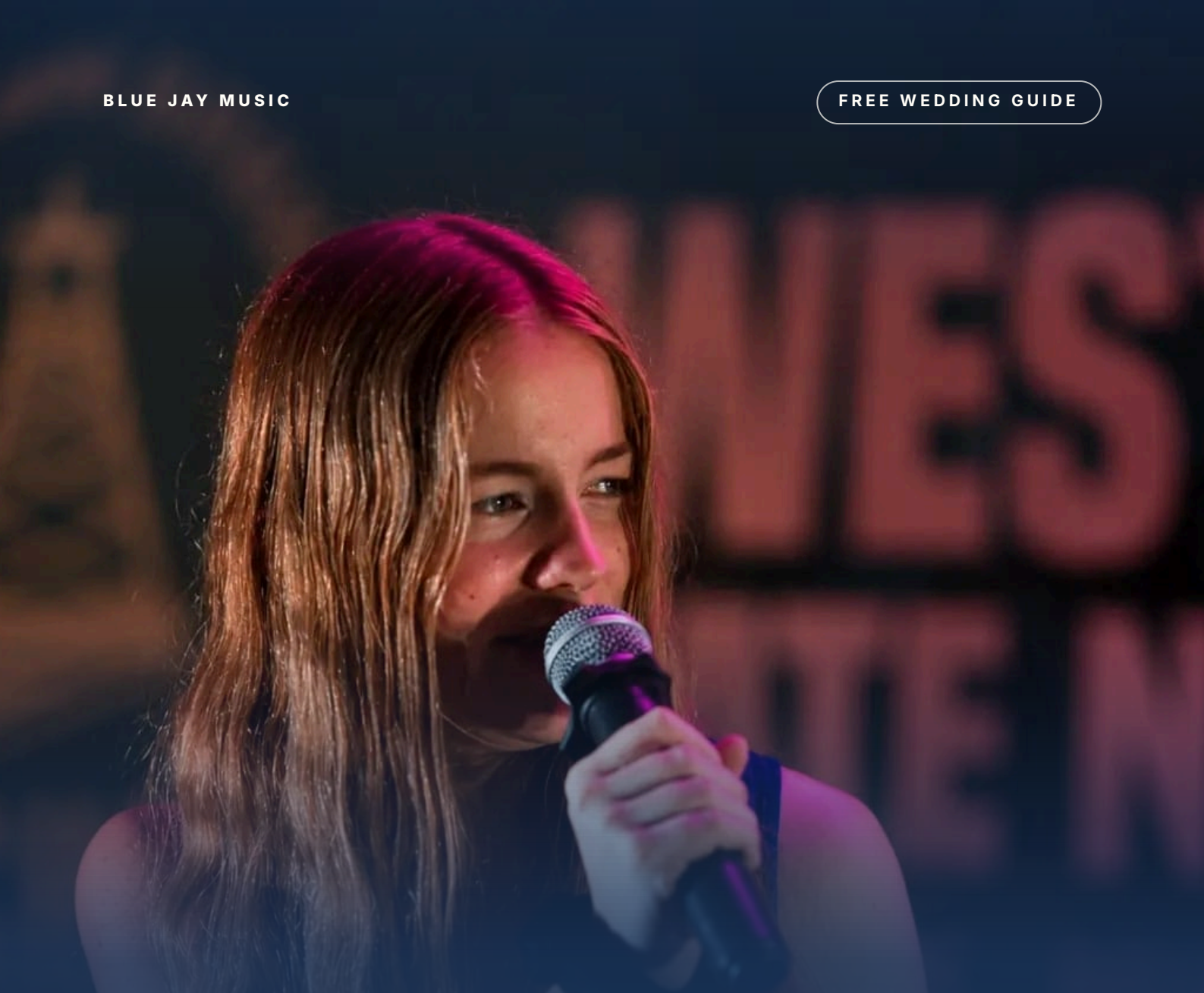
BLUE JAY MUSIC

FREE WEDDING GUIDE



How to make your wedding sound incredible

The ultimate guide to choosing live music for your ceremony, cocktails, reception & dance floor

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BEFORE WE START

Your wedding day will be full of moments you'll remember forever.

- The song you walk down the aisle to.
- The music playing while your guests arrive.
- The first song you hear as newlyweds.
- The moment the dance floor finally fills.
- The songs everyone is still singing on the way home.

Music has a funny way of turning a beautiful moment into your moment.

But choosing wedding music can also feel surprisingly overwhelming. What should you have live? How many musicians do you need? Do you need a DJ as well? What songs work for walking down the aisle? And how do you make sure your reception doesn't end up with an empty dance floor?

This guide will help you figure it all out.

> **Let's create a wedding that sounds as incredible as it feels.**
>
> Jess Martyn · Blue Jay Music

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ALSO INSIDE

A fill-in exercise to find your wedding's feel, a sample music timeline for the whole day, a tick-as-you-go checklist, and three questions to answer together at the end.

01

Your wedding soundtrack

Before you choose individual songs, think about the feeling you want your wedding to have.

DO YOU IMAGINE:

Romantic & intimate

Beautiful vocals, piano, acoustic guitar and songs that make everyone a little emotional.

Elegant & sophisticated

Soulful live music creating atmosphere without taking over the room.

Fun & relaxed

A musician who can interact with your guests, take requests and make the day feel effortless.

Big party

Live music, dancing, singalongs and an entertainer who knows exactly how to get people out of their seats.

There isn't one "correct" way to soundtrack a wedding.

The best wedding music is music that feels like you.

A LITTLE EXERCISE

Choose three words you'd like your wedding to feel like:

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____

Keep those three words in mind whenever you're making music decisions.

If your words are romantic, relaxed and joyful, for example, you probably don't need a huge, high-energy band during your ceremony.

If they're fun, energetic and unforgettable, you might want to think beyond simply having background music.

02

Ceremony music

The ceremony is one of the most beautiful opportunities to use live music.

Your guests are arriving.
Everyone is waiting.
And then suddenly, the music changes.
That's the moment everyone knows:

It's happening.

THE ESSENTIAL CEREMONY MOMENTS

Guest arrival

Music begins before the ceremony officially starts.

This creates atmosphere while people find their seats and gives everyone something beautiful to listen to.

THINK:

- favourite love songs
- acoustic versions of meaningful songs
- instrumental arrangements
- gentle piano
- soulful vocals

The processional

This is the big one.

Your entrance song doesn't have to be a traditional wedding march.

It could be the song you listened to on your first date.
A song from your favourite artist.
A song that reminds you of home.
Or something completely unexpected.

The best choice is the one that makes you feel something.

Signing the register

This is a lovely opportunity for another meaningful song while you take photos, sign the paperwork and enjoy a few quiet moments together.

The recessional

You've just been pronounced married.

This is not the moment for sad music.

Choose something joyful.

Something that makes people want to clap.

Something that feels like:

WE DID IT!

PRO TIP

Don't choose your ceremony songs purely because they're "wedding songs."

Ask yourself:

"What songs tell our story?"

That's where the magic happens.



03

Cocktails & canapés

Once the ceremony finishes, your guests need somewhere to go and something to do.

This is where music becomes part of the atmosphere.

Cocktail-hour music should generally be:

recognisable + **beautiful** + **relaxed.**

YOU WANT PEOPLE THINKING:

"Oh, I love this song!"

RATHER THAN:

"I can't hear the person next to me."

Live music is particularly beautiful here.

A solo vocalist/pianist, acoustic musician or small live setup can create a gorgeous atmosphere without making the cocktail hour feel like a concert.

It's also an opportunity to introduce a little personality.

Imagine your guests arriving at the drinks area and hearing a live version of one of your favourite songs.

That's the sort of detail people remember.

What works well?

THINK ABOUT:

- acoustic pop
- soul
- jazz
- Motown
- romantic classics
- modern love songs
- songs from your favourite artists
- chilled versions of upbeat songs

ONE IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION

Your musician should be able to read the room. If everyone is chatting, the music should support that. If the energy starts building, the music can build with it.

The best wedding musicians aren't simply playing songs. They're helping shape the atmosphere.

04

Reception & dinner

Dinner music has a very different job.

You want atmosphere without competing with speeches, conversations and the food.

This is where having a musician who understands dynamics becomes really important.

A beautiful arrangement played softly can make a room feel incredibly special.

Think about the transitions

Music can help mark the moments between:

1 guests entering the reception	2 the wedding party entrance	3 your entrance as newlyweds
4 dinner beginning	5 speeches	6 cake cutting
7 dessert	8 your first dance	9 opening the dance floor

These transitions are easy to overlook when you're planning a wedding.

But they're exactly where music can make everything feel seamless.

THE GOLDEN RULE

Don't underestimate silence — but don't leave important transitions unplanned either.

A professional musician should be working with your celebrant, MC, venue and other suppliers so everyone knows what happens when.

05

Your first dance

Your first dance doesn't have to be perfect.
It doesn't even have to be choreographed.

It just needs to feel like the two of you.

YOU MIGHT CHOOSE:

"Our song"

A song you've already attached memories to.

"Our new song"

Something you discover together and decide will become your song.

"A song that says what we can't"

Sometimes a lyric can express something you've never quite known how to say.

Live or recorded?

Having your first dance performed live can create an incredibly intimate moment.

But there's another option:

Have your musician perform the song live while incorporating your preferred arrangement.

This can make a familiar song feel completely unique to your wedding.

AND REMEMBER...

Your first dance doesn't have to last five minutes.

If you're nervous about dancing in front of everyone, choose a shorter version or have your musician create a beautiful edit.

Your wedding should feel enjoyable — not like a performance exam.

06

Getting the dance floor moving

Now we get to the fun bit.

You've eaten.

You've cried.

You've made speeches.

You've had the first dance.

Now it's time to PARTY.

The biggest mistake couples make is assuming that putting on a playlist automatically creates a dance floor.

It doesn't.

A great party needs:

energy + **timing** + **song choice** + **someone who can read the room.**

Start with songs people actually want to dance to.

Don't feel pressured to choose songs because they're currently popular.

Your guests are much more likely to respond to songs they know.

THINK:

- absolute classics
- guilty pleasures
- songs everyone can sing
- songs connected to your generation
- songs your friends will lose their minds over
- songs that remind you of your relationship

THE SECRET?

Don't try to please everyone with every song.
Instead, create moments.

- A song that makes your university friends scream.
- A song your parents know every word to.
- A song that gets everyone doing the same dance.
- A song that reminds you of being 21.

Those are the moments people remember.

07

Live music, DJ or both?

This is one of the most common questions couples ask.

And honestly? **There isn't one right answer.**

LIVE MUSIC

Best for:

- ceremony
- cocktails
- dinner
- intimate weddings
- creating atmosphere
- adding personality

A live musician can also adapt in real time to what's happening around them.

DJ

Best for:

- keeping the party moving
- a huge range of music
- late-night dancing
- taking requests
- creating seamless transitions

LIVE MUSIC + DJ

For couples who want the best of both worlds, this can be an amazing combination.

You get the emotional impact and personality of live music, alongside the flexibility and variety of a DJ.

And your entertainment can evolve throughout the day.

FOR EXAMPLE:

CEREMONY	COCKTAILS	DINNER	FIRST DANCE	PARTY
live piano/vocals	live music	live music	live performance	DJ + live musician

This creates a wedding soundtrack that changes with the energy of the day.

08

What does wedding music actually cost?

Wedding entertainment can vary enormously in price.

That's because you're not simply paying for someone to stand up and play songs.

YOU'RE PAYING FOR:

- ✓ professional experience
- ✓ preparation
- ✓ learning requested songs
- ✓ equipment
- ✓ travel
- ✓ setup and pack-down
- ✓ performance time
- ✓ communication with your suppliers
- ✓ backup planning
- ✓ the ability to read a room
- ✓ years spent developing the skill to make everything look effortless

When comparing quotes, make sure you're comparing like with like.

ASK:

- ? How many hours of performance are included?
- ? Does setup/pack-down cost extra?
- ? Is sound equipment included?
- ? Are requested songs included?
- ? Can the musician learn special songs for us?
- ? How much travel is included?
- ? What happens if the musician becomes unavailable?
- ? Can they provide music for multiple parts of the day?

> The cheapest quote isn't necessarily the best value. And the most expensive option isn't automatically the best either.
>
> **You're looking for someone who understands your vision and can deliver it professionally.**

09

Your wedding music timeline

Here's an example of how music might flow throughout your day.

3:30 PM — **Guests arrive** LIVE MUSIC
Beautiful, relaxed songs while guests find their seats.

4:00 PM — **Ceremony begins** LIVE MUSIC
Processional → ceremony → signing → recessional.

4:45 PM — **Newlyweds' photos**
LIVE MUSIC / PLAYLIST
Guests move to cocktails.

5:00 PM — **Cocktails & canapés** LIVE MUSIC
Relaxed, sophisticated and conversational.

6:00 PM — **Reception entrance**
HIGH-ENERGY ENTRANCE SONG
You walk into the room as newlyweds.

6:15 PM — **Dinner**
BACKGROUND LIVE MUSIC / CURATED PLAYLIST
Music creates atmosphere without overpowering conversation.

7:30 PM — **Speeches** MUSIC FADES
Then returns between speakers where appropriate.

8:00 PM — **First dance** YOUR SONG
Live or recorded.

8:10 PM — **Dance floor opens**
DJ / LIVE MUSICIAN / BAND
The party begins.

8:30 PM onwards — **Full party mode**
The music evolves with your guests and the energy of the room.

REMEMBER:

This is a starting point — not a rulebook.

- Your wedding might start at midday.
- You might have a cocktail wedding.
- You might skip the formalities entirely.
- You might want live music all night.

That's the fun of creating a soundtrack that's actually yours.

10

10 questions to ask your wedding musician

Before you book anyone, ask:

01 What parts of the day do you recommend having live music for?

02 Can you learn specific songs for us?

03 Do you provide your own sound equipment?

04 How do you work with the celebrant and venue?

05 What happens if the schedule changes on the day?

06 Can you play requests?

07 Can you provide different styles of music throughout the day?

08 Do you offer DJ or hybrid entertainment options?

09 What's included in your price?

10 Can we hear you perform live?

And here's one more question I'd encourage you to ask:

"What would you recommend for our wedding?"

A great wedding musician shouldn't simply hand you a song list. They should be able to listen to what you're planning and help you create something that works.

11

The ultimate wedding music checklist

CEREMONY

- [ ] Guest arrival music
- [ ] Processional song
- [ ] Signing music
- [ ] Recessional song
- [ ] Any special songs or dedications
- [ ] Microphone / sound requirements confirmed

COCKTAILS

- [ ] Live musician or playlist selected
- [ ] Music style chosen
- [ ] Requested songs discussed
- [ ] Performance area confirmed
- [ ] Power requirements confirmed

RECEPTION

- [ ] Wedding party entrance
- [ ] Newlywed entrance
- [ ] Dinner music
- [ ] Speech cues
- [ ] Cake-cutting music
- [ ] Special moments / announcements

FIRST DANCE

- [ ] Song chosen
- [ ] Live or recorded?
- [ ] Original version or special arrangement?
- [ ] Length decided
- [ ] Dance floor transition planned

PARTY

- [ ] DJ / band / musician booked
- [ ] Must-play songs
- [ ] Do-not-play songs
- [ ] Special requests
- [ ] Last song chosen
- [ ] End-of-night plan confirmed

LOGISTICS

- [ ] Contract signed
- [ ] Deposit paid
- [ ] Venue address confirmed
- [ ] Performance times confirmed
- [ ] Setup/pack-down times confirmed
- [ ] Sound equipment confirmed
- [ ] Power requirements confirmed
- [ ] Parking/access information provided
- [ ] Final timeline shared with musician
- [ ] Venue contact details exchanged

12

Your wedding should sound like you

There are thousands of wedding songs.
Hundreds of playlists.
Countless bands, DJs and musicians.

But there is only one version of your wedding.

The music doesn't need to be trendy.
It doesn't need to be traditional.
It doesn't need to impress anyone.

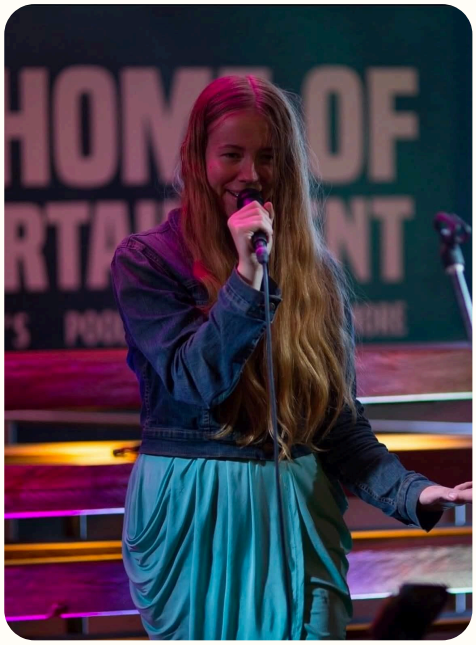
It just needs to make you feel something.

The right musician will help you create those little moments that stay with you:

- **The song that plays as you walk towards the person you love.**
- **The look on your partner's face when they hear your song.**
- **Your mum singing along during cocktails.**
- **Your friends screaming when the first dance-floor anthem starts.**
- **Everyone dancing together at the end of the night.**

Those are the memories you're really paying for.

Ready to create your wedding soundtrack?



If you're planning your wedding and want music that feels personal, beautiful and completely unforgettable, **I'd love to hear what you're dreaming up.**

Whether you need music for your ceremony, cocktails, reception, first dance or full wedding party, we can create an entertainment plan that fits your day.

And if you're not sure what you need yet?

That's completely okay.

Tell me about your wedding, your venue, your favourite music and the atmosphere you want to create.

I'll help you work out the rest.

LET'S TALK ABOUT YOUR WEDDING

Enquire about your date →

or visit **bluejaymusic.com.au/cpq**

WEBSITE
bluejaymusic.com.au

INSTAGRAM
@bluejaymusic__

Your wedding deserves a soundtrack as special as the story you're celebrating.

One last thing...

Before you close this guide, grab your partner and answer these three questions:

1. What is one song that instantly reminds us of each other?

2. What is one song that would make our friends absolutely lose it on the dance floor?

3. When we think back on our wedding in 10 years, what do we want the music to make us remember?

Those answers might just be the beginning of your wedding playlist.

Happy planning — and congratulations.

BLUE JAY MUSIC
not your average songbird

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