

## Managing live music at your event – an explanatory guide.

Before your event	Why?
1 Book your band early.	To get your choice of band. Some are booked over a year ahead.
2 Do ask bands to quote.	It's not always per-person-per-hour. It costs nothing to ask, and you might be pleasantly surprised! But do remember to ask about travel costs, if applicable.
3 Consider where the sound reinforcement is coming from.	Some bands bring their own, some have only a small amount, some have none. Ask, so you are fully informed.
4 Book the hall with the band's sound check and meal needs in mind.	Bands do NOT want to be checking out their settings as your dancers arrive: it looks and sounds unprofessional. Negotiate with the band how much time they need for their sound check and possibly a meal, and book the hall accordingly.
5 Run the proposed programme past the band leader before you publish it.	Negotiating around any tricky tunes that are hard on not-quite-warmed-up fingers will result in a more settled band right from the start. Another pair of eyes may also identify any slips in programming (eg a "jig" that's really a reel). A short break for a comfort stop in a long programme is always appreciated.
6 Ask the band what they need on stage	Eg: chairs without arms; water and glasses... a comfortable band plays better.
7 Name the Band in all your publicity.	Boosts band morale. Also, live music usually brings dancers, and we have groupies who would like to come to your dance!
<b>On the Day – for the MC</b>	
1 Establish with the band whether they are to play "rousers" (the dance's introductory music), and when.	There are many ways to manage rousers. The band will follow your lead. <i>Do</i> listen to the rouser in case you need to ask for any speed adjustment.
2 Direct requests for changes in speed/volume etc to the right person.	For quicker results. Most bands have one musician setting the pace – identify her/him before you start. Also, find out who is managing the sound equipment, and ask for adjustments as they arise, not after the event.
3 Introduce the Band	Early in the programme, so your dancers feel they know them. You don't need to call for individual applause, just list their names and instruments.
4 When thanking the band, remember to also thank the sound technician.	To acknowledge their work. Often almost invisible, but they perform a really important role in controlling volume, balancing instruments and managing tone quality.
5 After the event, keep your tidy-up crew away from the stage area until the band is packed up.	Some of our gear is <i>really</i> expensive and delicate, and hard to replace. Damage would be embarrassing.