

How To Maximize Your Party Time !

By DJ Reece – www.ProSoundChattanooga.com

Having plenty of time to dance is one of the things that my couples want but don't always get because they want too many things in a short amount of time. Here are some of my favorite tips to move things along so you can have more party time!

- **Schedule Plenty of Time** – 5 hours is about the right amount of time for a wedding if you want plenty of dance time. 4 hours or less isn't going to get you much dancing unless you rearrange or eliminate some formalities. Especially if you don't do a first look or if you have a lot of people to feed.
- **Do a First Look** – It will save you so much time after the ceremony. Plus, it will ease the pre-wedding jitters. It will also give you time to do other first looks with your parent(s) and even your wedding party. Photographers love it too! Have parents and grandparents come early for even more time savings! If you don't want to do a first look just make sure you start early enough so you have the time for pictures.
- **Make Sure Your Cocktail and Dinner Time Moves Along** – Do you want to spend the entire cocktail hour taking pictures? If not, then maybe opt for that first look. Also, a two-sided buffet is faster than a one-sided buffet. Sometimes couples skip having cocktail hour all together and open the food lines while they are outside taking pictures. This can allow you more time to party as well.
- **Keep Toasts To A Minimum** – 1 or 2 toasts from your BM and MOH should be plenty. Make sure they read my toasting tips so they can prepare a nice wonderful toast. For maximum time savings or for all those other people that want to say something, you may choose to do some of those speeches and toasts at your rehearsal dinner.
- **Cut Cake Early** – Don't stop the party to cut cake, cut it during or briefly after dinner before we open the dance floor. Have other dessert options available to ease the workload and cost of a large wedding cake.

- **Sunset Photos** – If you are planning on doing sunset photos you need to have ALL your other formalities done so the DJ can get the party going with or without you. Also, if you did not do a first look then you are going to spend a lot of your reception just taking pictures. Spread the photo time out and have a plan to limit the sunset photos to around 30 minutes or so. Discuss these things with your planner and photographer in advance so you can maximize your reception.
- **Skip Bouquet and Garter** – Only do these if you're sure you will get your people to participate. If not, it'll be awkward and honestly IMO the garter toss is pretty much old news. The groomsmen almost never want to do it and you have to force them out there.
- **Fake Send-Offs** – If there's one thing that will kill your party is a fake send-off. Do it far enough in advance so people will understand the party isn't over or just don't do it at all. If it's close to closing time (less than an hour) the guests will automatically assume it's over.
- **DJ Placement** – Make sure your DJ is in a good spot on one edge, side, or corner of the dance floor. This will guarantee maximum engagement from the DJ plus it will sound better. Do Not stick your DJ in the corner behind tables. Not only does it disengage them from the dance floor whoever is sitting there in front of the DJ (9 times out of 10 it's Grandma) is going to have a terrible experience. You want your room to sound as good as it looks.
- **Let Guests Eat After The Ceremony** – We covered this briefly above but you could let the guests go straight to dinner. This is not traditional but again, we are trying to get the most out of our party time especially with 4 hours or less to work with. Some couples are opening up the buffet early for the guests and the money you save on appetizers could go towards the honeymoon fund! It is a little more casual though. It has pros and cons so discuss it with your planner for what works best for you. Speaking of planners:
- **Hire A Professional Planner or Coordinator** – They will understand the big picture and will assist you in making the right choices for the most amazing wedding! See me for a list of my faves!
- **Best Of Luck and Happy Planning! DJ Reece**