

## Trotters Wake™ Tips for Wedding Music and Sound

***Your wedding is one of the most important days of your life, so here are our tips to help...***

So, you want a full blown Irish themed wedding, or maybe you just want to incorporate some Irish / Celtic music to honor your family heritage, or maybe you're doing it to please the parents... great! Do any of these questions/statements sound familiar?

- *I have no idea what traditional instrumental tunes I want for the ceremony.*
- *I want Irish music at the reception, but my friends like to dance.*
- *I am really stressed about renting a sound system and then having something go wrong and no one knowing how to resolve the issue.*

We don't claim to have all of the answers, but we want to provide some options and information based on our experiences.

### ***Strategies for incorporating live Irish music...***

- **Hire a band to play Irish music for 2-3hr at your rehearsal dinner.** As our tag line says, we will bring the pub to your party and get everyone involved in the infectious fun of Irish music.
- **Hire a traditional Irish band to play for your ceremony.** Traditional bands play mainly instrumental tunes (jigs, reels, etc.). Some traditional bands do not regularly use a sound system, so if your ceremony requires one, you'll want to be sure they aren't learning how to use it for the first time.
- **Hire an Irish band for cocktail hour.** Get your (or your parent's) Irish fix, then have a separate DJ or cover band for dancing.
- **Hire a Ceili band and a "Caller" and have dance lessons.** A Ceili is an Irish group dance much like American square dancing, and the Caller leads the dance by calling out the dance moves. A Ceili band plays the traditional instrumental tunes that accompany the dance. You can use pre-recorded music instead, but you'll still want a good sound system.

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### ***Song/Tune selection...***

Ultimately, this is up to your taste, which you may have to develop by listening to a large selection of tunes online. You may also try listening at a pub where a “seisiun” (pronounced *session*) is held. This is a group of musicians who gather to play traditional instrumental tunes (mostly for their own edification). However, here are our recommendations to help guide you:

- **Prelude / Pre-ceremony:** Sung ballads set the tone nicely as guests are arriving. Some ballads, though beautiful, have rather depressing lyrics. In these cases, we perform them instrumentally.
- **Processional / Bride’s Entrance:** The right marches played at a moderate tempo for the family/wedding party arrival and then slowed down for the bride’s entrance provide a regal ambiance.
- **Unity Song:** Airs are well suited for a candle lighting, knot tying, sand, or other unity element of the ceremony.
- **Recessional / Postlude:** Slip jigs (in 9/8 time) are peppy and bouncy, but not overly energetic as everyone departs.
- **Announcement:** Reels are perfect for welcoming the wedding party and bride and groom into the reception. Imagine for a moment.. *the fiddle starts the reel, the announcement is made, the rest of the band joins in the high energy tune, and the newly married couple dances into the reception.* That is the type of production and integration to expect from your band!

### ***Split venues...***

Having the same band and/or sound system, in the same location without moving between the ceremony and reception would be ideal, but it may not be possible. Tearing down and setting up sound equipment and instruments takes time that can interrupt the flow of your wedding and it adds cost. Even if the reception is only 50 feet from the ceremony, you probably won’t find an optimal setup that satisfies both. Even if the band has a second sound system set up and ready to go for the reception, allow about 15-20 minutes to relocate instruments and perform sound checks. Recorded music can be played during this transition.

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### ***Amplification for the ceremony...***

Our experience is that people generally don't like or know how to use microphones. And, people who say, "I'm loud enough that I don't need a microphone.", never are. We set up a mic on a stand for an outdoor wedding in the location discussed with the officiator during the rehearsal. During the ceremony, none of the readers, the couple, or the officiator came within 4ft of it when speaking. Lesson learned... If you do use a microphone, be sure the sound technician or band representative brings the microphone and at least a small guitar amplifier **to the rehearsal**, so the speakers understand how close they need to stand. An omni-directional microphone, such as a choir mic that can be hung overhead may suit your needs better if there is not too much background noise. Which brings us to...

### ***The Rehearsal...***

If the band is playing for the ceremony, ask your contact from the band to attend the rehearsal, so they understand the flow and the cues. This will also help them understand how far the sound has to reach if the wedding party is entering from some distance away, and if a remote speaker will be needed for the wedding party. If possible, have him/her bring an instrument or a recording to play the processional, bride's entrance, and recessional/postlude.

### ***Our solution is to...***

- **Stay true to our strengths:** We are an Irish band that plays a diverse variety of Irish and other Celtic music. We feel it is best for us to focus on that strength, and not try also to be a popular dance band.
- **Provide all of your music/sound needs:** Our goal is to make the music and sound for your Irish / Celtic themed wedding worry free, so you can enjoy yourself. We do this by offering options for pre-ceremony & ceremony music, ceremony amplification, cocktail hour/reception entertainment, and sound system rental, complete with sound man for you to dance to music from your favourite device after the live music. There is no setup or teardown for you to worry about. Our multiple sound systems minimize delays for split venues, and they provide redundancy, so your special day will not be marred by a sound system failure. We will also arrange for a Caller and/or Irish dancers if you want to incorporate those into your wedding.
- **Help you remember the experience:** With the full wedding package, you will receive mementos, such as t-shirts for the bride and groom and CD's.
- **Provide other party entertainment:** If you don't want to include Irish/Celtic music on your wedding day, we can provide the full 7 piece band or a smaller combo for your engagement party, rehearsal dinner, or other special party.