
TEN TIPS FOR HIRING A CELTIC MUSIC BAND

- 1. REVIEWS** – You use reviews to help you choose a restaurant or a movie. Make sure the band you select has lots of recent, raving reviews on their website.
- 2. ACTIVELY PERFORMING** – You want to make sure you’re hiring a band that performs frequently, so you know they’re sharp, in practice, and in demand. Check the band’s website for their schedule to make sure they’re performing live Irish music in public regularly, and recently at pubs, festivals, wineries and private events throughout the DC/Maryland/Virginia area -- with lots of future events scheduled as well. Check their Facebook page for lots of recent posts, likes and at least 100 followers.
- 3. SOUND EQUIPMENT** – There’s been a lot of advancement in sound equipment in the past 5, 10 and 20 years. Look around your house. Are you using any electronics that are that old? Sadly, some bands use outdated equipment or cheap amplification from Costco or Radio Shack. Make sure your band is using only high quality, up-to-date sound equipment that’s designed for the size of your audience.
- 4. MUSIC MIX** – Are you looking for all instrumental trad jigs and reels? Pub songs? Ballads? Upbeat Irish songs? Or some combination of each? How about some cover songs? Make sure your band has the versatility and flexibility to provide you with just the right mix of Irish music that’s appropriate for your event.
- 5. MUSICAL DIVERSITY** – In addition to the mix of music genres, does the band offer a variety of musical instruments and vocals in their repertoire? Some bands provide only fiddlers, or a single guitarist, or no wind instruments, providing a narrow range of sound. Look for bands that provide both male and female vocals, plus a variety of instruments such as flute, whistle, mandolin, banjo and more.
- 6. LIVE SAMPLE RECORDINGS** – Make sure you listen to sample recordings of the band you’re considering, and make sure they’re recorded at a live performance – not altered or modified with professional studio enhancements. You’re hiring a live band, so you need to know what they sound like in a live performance.
- 7. UNREPEATED MATERIAL** – Some Celtic bands simply can’t fill a three hour set without repeating the same material. Make sure your band has enough unique material that they can play for your entire event without playing the same songs or tunes over and over again.
- 8. INSURANCE** – You wouldn’t hire a contractor to work on your house unless the person carried insurance. Your band should be no different – make sure they are insured so that they have adequate coverage in the event something goes wrong.
- 9. BACKUP** – What is the band’s plan if one of the members is suddenly unable to perform for your event? Does the band have alternate musicians *at-the-ready* in the event one can’t make it on your event date?
- 10. PRICE** – You get what you pay for. You probably wouldn’t hire the cheapest caterer, use the cheapest invitations, purchase the cheapest flowers, and use the cheapest decorations at your event. Your music should follow the same standards. There are plenty of “guys with a guitar” out there who will practically “sing for their supper.” To host a truly memorable event for your guests, make sure your music meets the standards of quality you want for your event. With Celtic music, that means a full, rich sound with the diversity and talent your guests deserve.

