

Chicago Music & Entertainment III

Reception Timeline

Skilled bandleaders and MCs are great at perfectly timing the night's events. **Peter Hennes** of the Peter Hennes Orchestra (847-947-1835, peterhennes.com) gives us a play-by-play of how he thinks a traditional reception should flow.

- **8:00 p.m.**
Doors open with the band playing upbeat dance music.
- **8:15 p.m.**
The bridal party is introduced, and as the bride and groom enter the room, they proceed to the dance floor for their first dance, followed by a short dance set.
- **8:30 p.m.**
A welcome speech is given by the hosts, followed by a blessing, and then the first course is served.
- **8:45 p.m.**
As guests dine, toasts are given by the parents, best man, and/or maid-of-honor.
- **9:00 p.m.**
The band performs another short dance set, during which the main course is served.
- **9:30 p.m.**
As dinner winds down, the bride and groom speak, cut the cake, and proceed to the dance floor for the father-daughter and mother-son dances. They're often combined, so guests don't have to sit through two songs, which can be boring.
- **9:45 p.m.**
A long dance set—continuous music played with no breaks.
- **11:55 p.m.**
The last dance is played.
- **12:00 a.m.**
The party comes to a close.

My Favorite Dance-Floor Moment



"My little cousin Suzie, who is dancing in this picture with my bridesmaid Liz, was the hit of our wedding reception. Suzie is just so cute and she spent the night out on the dance floor with all of our cousins dancing, especially when our DJ played Polish music—my family is of Polish decent."
—Violet McGuane, 30, nurse, Chicago ▼



Riverbend Studio



"Originally, I asked my mother to join me for the traditional father-daughter dance, as my father was ill and wouldn't be able to. But in the middle of Lee Ann Womack's 'I Hope You Dance,' he stood up, asked if he could cut in, and finished the song with me. It was so touching."
—Gretchen Kotleba, 28, attorney, Chicago ▼



Andrew Collings Photography