THE RIDER · No.16

CAREER · BACK TO BASICS

THE BASE.

THE BASICS STILL MATTER. EVERYTHING STACKS ON THEM.

These days, when I ask a DJ to send me their profile, I usually get an Instagram handle. Instagram is a great stage. But it isn't a profile, and it isn't the base. The basics never stopped mattering: a proper profile, a clear reply, being on time, backups, paperwork, a library you can trust. Skill, trust and reputation all stand on them. This edition goes back to the base.

WHAT'S IN THIS EDITION

01	**THE STACK**	Why everything you build stands on the basics
02	**WHAT BOOKERS SAY**	And why Instagram is a stage, not a profile
03	**YOUR ONE-PAGE PROFILE**	Fill it in once, send it in 60 seconds
04	**THE BIO + THE SEND**	Bio formula and the message that goes with it
05	**THE BASICS CHECKLIST**	Gig, wedding, corporate, library, ears
06	**LIMITS · GO DEEPER**	What this doesn't mean, and the sources

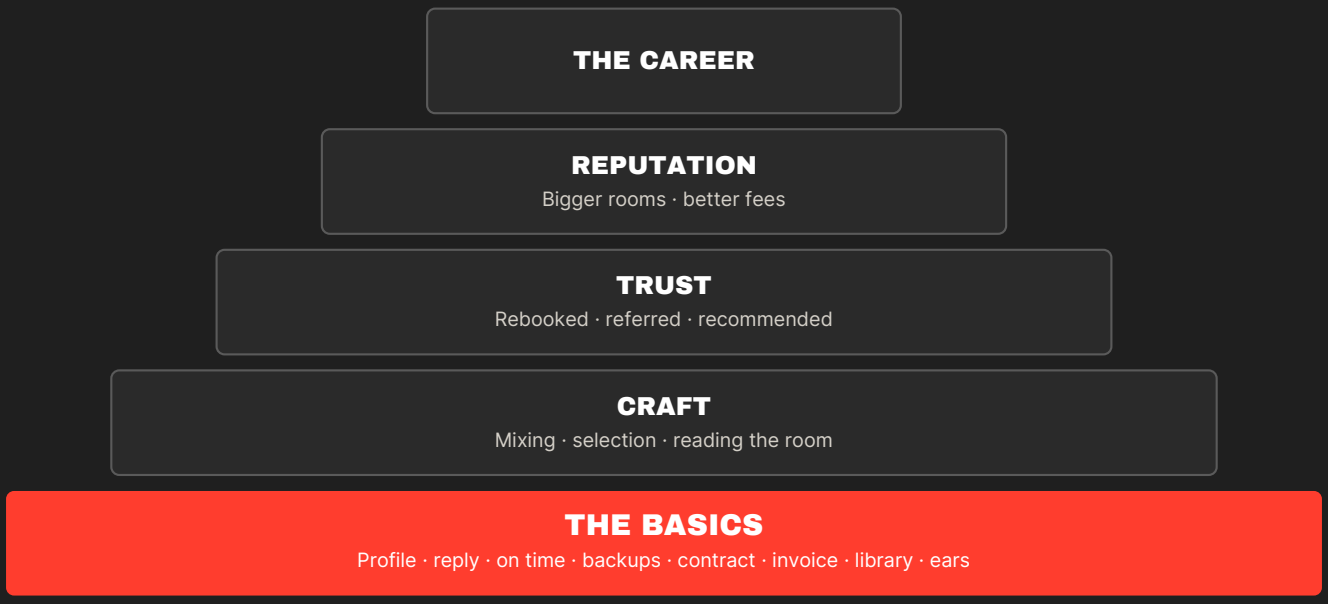
> Booker quotes, platform facts and rules are cited to their sources. The stack, the template and the checklists are craft from the booth, not research. Not legal advice: local rules and permissions vary.

Compiled by Vic Naik · The Vic Fix · 19 years, 18+ countries.

01 · THE STACK

EVERYTHING STACKS ON THE BASE.

Nobody books you for your basics. But every booking, rebooking and referral stands on them. When the base is solid, your skill gets seen. When it isn't, nothing above it holds.



Skip the base and everything above it wobbles. Our model, not research.

01 **The basics.**
A profile you can send in a minute. Replies that are clear and quick. On time, every time. Backups for your music and your gear. A contract, an advance, an invoice. A library you can trust. Ears you protect. None of it is glamorous. All of it is visible.

02 **Craft.**
Mixing, selection, reading the room. This is what you love, and it's what gets judged. But a booker only hears it if the basics got you through the door.

03 **Trust.**
The planner rebooks you because you were easy: on time, clear, no surprises. Trust is basics, repeated.

04 **Reputation, then the career.**
Bigger rooms and better fees come from people talking about you. They talk about the set, and about whether you were a pleasure to work with.

02 · WHAT BOOKERS SAY

A STAGE IS NOT A PROFILE.

Club bookers interviewed by Pioneer DJ, in their own words:

“The most important two things I'm looking for are their mixing skills and track selection.”
Téa Abashidze, BASEMENT, New York

“People's social media profiles are important, but numbers aren't.”
Nic Baird, Transmissions, London

Follower count means “absolutely nothing” to him.
Martin Smyth, District 8, Dublin

“The success of such DMs and emails often hinges on how well they are presented.”
Samantha Togni, Boudica, London

Pioneer DJ, “How to get DJ gigs” (blog, c. 2023).

Festival forms ask for the kit too: a mix or live video, a short bio (often with a character limit), two or more hi-res photos, contacts, sometimes a tech rider. None take a handle on its own.

WHY INSTAGRAM ISN'T YOUR PROFILE

Not everyone is logged in. On the web, Instagram asks visitors to log in after a few views. A corporate client or planner on a work laptop may not see you at all.

It's built for scrolling, not skimming. In an eye-tracking study, recruiters made a first call on a CV in about 6 seconds, and pictures and ads on online profiles distracted them and hurt decisions. Bookers skim too. (TheLadders, 2012; a jobs study, used here as a comparison.)

It isn't yours. In 2025, Instagram and Facebook users, small businesses among them, reported losing accounts to bans they said were wrong. Vine shut down in 2017 and Microsoft's Mixer in 2020, and their creators had to start again. Your profile, your email and your website are yours.

TechCrunch, Jul 2025; CTV, Aug 2025 · Digiday, 2016 · Windows Central, 2020.

Keep the Instagram. It's your stage. Just send the profile first, and put the handle on it.

03 · YOUR ONE-PAGE PROFILE

FILL IT IN ONCE.
SEND IT FOREVER.

One page, saved as a PDF, with the same thing on a link. Name the file **YourName-DJ-Profile-2026.pdf**, not profile_final2.pdf.

DJ name + one-line sound:

e.g. DJ ___ · Bollywood, house and retro for weddings and clubs

City / travels to:

Photo:

One hi-res landscape + one portrait. Booth or crowd, well lit, no text on it.

Bio (50 words):

Formula on the next page.

3 highlights:

Venues, residencies, festivals, brands, notable weddings (with permission).

Events I play:

Club · wedding / sangeet · corporate · private · festival

Listen (1 mix):

Recent, under a year old, with a tracklist.

Watch (1 live clip):

30–60 seconds of you and a crowd.

Tech / rider note:

What you need, and what the venue usually provides.

Contact:

A professional email + phone/WhatsApp. Instagram handle last.

Rates:

“On request”, or “from ₹___”. Keep exact quotes for the reply.

> Update it every three months: newest highlight, newest mix, newest photo. An out-of-date profile is a basic gone wrong.

04 · THE BIO + THE SEND

SAY IT SHORT.
SEND IT RIGHT.

THE 50-WORD BIO

[Name] is a **[city]**-based DJ who plays **[sound]** for **[kinds of events]**. **[One proof: years, residency or standout gig]**. Known for **[the one thing people say about your sets]**. **[One line on where you've played or who you've played for]**.

THE 150-WORD BIO

The 50 words, plus: how you started (one line), two or three highlights with names, what a night with you feels like, and what you're working on now. Third person. No childhood story, no hype words (“legendary”, “best in the city”).

THE 60-SECOND SEND

- ☐ Reply the same day, even if it's “Got it, sending details tonight.”
- ☐ Subject or first line: **DJ profile – [Your name] – [their date / event]**
- ☐ Three lines: who you are, why you fit their event, what you've attached.
- ☐ Attach the PDF **and** paste the link. Some people can't open one or the other.
- ☐ One mix link. Not five.
- ☐ Sign off with your name, number and email. Handle last.
- ☐ No reply in 5 days? One polite follow-up. Then let it go.

> **WHATSAPP VERSION (FOR PLANNERS AND CLIENTS)**
>
> “Hi [name], this is [your name], DJ. Thanks for reaching out about [event] on [date]. My profile is attached (PDF), with a 20-minute mix and a live clip inside. Happy to share a quote once I know the venue, timings and functions. – [Name], [number]”

05 · THE BASICS CHECKLIST

THE BASE, LINE BY LINE.

Tick what you already do. The gaps are this month's work.

THE GIG

- ☐ Arrive early enough for setup and a sound check
- ☐ Two USBs, or USB + laptop, with the same library
- ☐ Spare cables and adapters
- ☐ Know the venue's cut-off. Loudspeakers need permission and can't run 10pm–6am outdoors without a state exemption
- ☐ Hearing protection in your pocket (Rider No.05)

THE INDIAN WEDDING

- ☐ Functions, timings and setup windows in writing
- ☐ Advance received; balance due date agreed
- ☐ Overtime rate agreed before the night, not during it
- ☐ Sangeet performance tracks collected early, edited, backed up
- ☐ Baraat and entry songs confirmed with the family
- ☐ Who provides sound and lights is agreed
- ☐ Who handles music licences: venue or planner (don't promise “none needed”)

THE CORPORATE CLIENT

- ☐ Vendor pack ready: PAN, bank details, GST certificate if registered
- ☐ Invoice template with your details and their PO (Rider No.02)
- ☐ Know how TDS works on your fee (Rider No.03)
- ☐ Contract or confirmation email for every gig (Rider No.04)

THE REPLY

- ☐ Professional email address
- ☐ Same-day replies, even short ones
- ☐ Profile PDF + link ready to send

THE LIBRARY

- ☐ Tagged: genre, energy, language, era
- ☐ Backed up in three places, one off-site
- ☐ Sets and mixes saved with tracklists

06 · WHAT THIS DOESN'T MEAN

- **Basics don't replace talent.** They let your talent get heard. The bookers above still judge the mix first.
- **Quit Instagram? No.** It's your stage and often how people find you. It just shouldn't be your only profile.
- **This isn't legal advice.** Noise permissions vary by state and venue. Wedding music licensing in India is contested: DPIIT's 2023 notice exempting weddings was put in abeyance in 2024 pending a court appeal. Ask the venue or planner, and a lawyer if it's on you.
- **The CV study is a comparison.** It's about recruiters and CVs (TheLadders, 2012), not bookers and DJs.
- **No promise of fees.** We found no data that a press kit raises bookings or fees. It removes reasons to say no.

GO DEEPER

How to get DJ gigs
Pioneer DJ blog · c. 2023 · blog.pioneerdj.com
Five club bookers on what they want from DJs.

Eye Tracking Online Metacognition
TheLadders · 2012
The 6-second CV study, and why visual clutter hurts a skim.

Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000
Ministry of Environment · with Supreme Court, In Re: Noise Pollution (2005)
The 10pm–6am loudspeaker rule and the limited exemptions.

DPIIT public notice on music at weddings
copyright.gov.in · Jul 2023, held in abeyance 2024 · SpicyIP coverage
Why wedding music licensing is still contested.

Riders No.02 RATE · No.03 TDS · No.04 CONTRACT · No.05 EARS
The Vic Fix · djvicofficial.com/therider
The basics we've already covered, in depth.

THE CLOSE

BUILD THE BASE. EVERYTHING STACKS ON IT.

Next time someone asks for your profile, send a profile.
Then let the music do the rest.

THE REST OF THE SERIES

No.01 INSURE · Health insurance for working DJs
No.02 RATE · Pricing your work
No.03 TDS · Tax setup for Indian DJs
No.04 CONTRACT · The performance contract
No.05 EARS · Hearing protection
No.06 BRAIN · The neuroscience of DJing
No.07 MOMENTS · Music as memory
No.08 MACHINE · AI-proofing your craft
No.09 2030 · The global DJ economy
No.10 BODY · DJing longevity
No.11 ONE · The first three tracks
No.12 PROPOSAL · The DJ who makes it easy
No.13 TASTE · Your crowd is on autoplay
No.14 CLOCK · You set the clock
No.15 CRATE · Best time to be a DJ
No.16 BASE · The basics still matter (this one)

All editions at djvicofficial.com/therider

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A note on the evidence. Quotes, platform facts and rules are cited to their sources. The stack, the profile template and the checklists are our craft view for working DJs: not a finding, not legal advice, and not a promise of income.