

Preparing for a Business Photo Shoot

How to prepare for a basic headshot? How to prepare for extensive branding sessions? The prime piece of advice on how to prepare for both is the same: Become as clear as you can as to what you wish your images to do, and everything else will follow. If you are not sure, we can help you with that process.

WOMEN

Outfits

- Please bring several outfits to choose from. Open looks, like v-neck or shirts that can be unbuttoned, usually work best. Generally it is better to avoid stark white shirts: off-white is better if you want a light color. Avoid turtle necks, especially ones with dark colors as they optically cut off the head. If you have a lot, we can help you bring them in.
- Choose colors that flatter your skin tone. Solid colors usually bring the most attention to the face. Black jackets often look too serious and heavy, so it's advised to bring an alternative.
- Consider also what you would like to express and what would look good on your website. It's good to have variations in style and feeling: from casual to elegant. Think: from first date in a coffee shop to sophisticated dinner in upscale restaurant.
- Make sure the clothes are fitting well, not too tight or too loose. You want to give an idea of your body without overemphasizing it.
- Bring at least one pair of matching pants or skirt. Even when we are photographing headshots, an edge of the lower body might be included in the image. It also gives you a different feeling if you are "complete" in your outfit and don't have to hide anything.
- Most important: choose clothes that make you breathe and move freely, that make you feel good for yourself as well as in front of others.
- Make sure you wear a good fitting bra that does not show through fabric, especially if you don't wear a jacket. Skin tone and smooth material is a good idea.
- Please bring a couple of accessories you like. They can give some color and style to the photo. Pearls often lighten up the skin tone. Whatever style you present should fit with your message, of course.

Makeup and Hair

- Some make up is good, mainly to accentuate the eyes and the lips and to even out the skin tone. Avoid eyeliner or black under the eyes as it easily gets too heavy. Please come prepared, so we can make best use of your time, but bring your makeup for adjustments.

- If you have the opportunity before the shoot, the makeup counter at Nordstrom or Macy's does a good makeup job.
- We can provide a professional makeup artist who can also do essential hair styling: ask us about rates.
- Hair is one of the hardest items to retouch in postproduction. If your hair is at its best the day of the shoot, the images will reflect this. Doing whatever you need to get your hair the way you like it best is worth it.

Time

- Allow yourself enough time. We will spend some time warming up, playing around and going with the flow. It's best if you do not schedule anything for immediately after your shoot, so you can stay relaxed.
- If you arrive hungry or thirsty, we usually have a few drinks and snacks on hand.

If this shoot is for a company, be sure to read the advice for Companies below as well.

Go on to next page for MEN...

MEN

Outfits

- Please bring several outfits to choose from.
- For casual, open looks like v-neck or shirts that can be unbuttoned, usually work best. Make sure the collar of the shirt is not too wide and not too tight, especially if are wearing a tie. Generally it is better to avoid stark white shirts: off-white is better if you want a light color. Avoid turtle necks, especially ones with dark colors as they optically cut off the head.
- Choose colors that flatter your skin tone. Solid colors bring the most attention to the face. Black jackets often look too serious and heavy, so it's good to bring an alternative.
- Consider also what you would like to express and what would look good on your website. Make sure the clothes are fitting well, not too tight or too loose, to give an idea of your body.
- Bring one pair of matching pants. Even if we are photographing mostly headshots, an edge of the lower body might be included in the image. It also gives you a different feeling if you are "complete" in your outfit and don't have to hide anything.
- Most important, choose clothes that make you breathe and move freely, that make you feel good for yourself as well as in front of others.
- If you have and usually wear a watch, rings, bracelets, things around the neck including ties, please bring them. It can add some color and style to the photo. Whatever style you present should fit with your message, of course.

Skin and Hair

- Avoid dry and reddish skin on the day of the shoot. Applying non oily moisturizer lotion in the evening and morning before the session can help.
- If you shave regularly, make sure your skin does not have red spots from the fresh shave.
- Also, avoid the "5 o'clock shadow" unless you want it. The camera shows more of it than we perceive with our eyes.
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COMPANIES

- For suggestions on selecting outfits that will look the best in photos, please see the separate preparation guides for women and men at the top of this page.
- Consider what will complement the mission of your company, and what would look good on the website of your company. If this is your decision, become as clear as you can before the shoot in regards to dress, mood, and so on, and make sure everyone else knows what you are going for. If it is not your decision, be sure you have the recommendations from your company at least as to what to wear.
- Usually, it is best to align the degree of “dressed up” or “dressed down” for the whole group that is being photographed. The exception is when there is a reason not to, such as a CEO's "trademark" style, team uniform differentiation, and so on.
- Bear in mind that style choices such as wearing a jacket or not might reflect on the person's status in the company. Best not to leave this to chance. Again, let people know well ahead of time what they should wear.

See also the information on Group Shots below if that will be part of the shoot.

GROUP SHOTS

General

- A group shot can be a for an entire company, a team, leadership, or any collection of individuals where an image of them together is needed.
- For suggestions of selecting outfits that will look the best in photos, please see the separate preparation guides at the top of this page for men and women.
- Anything else you need to know you will find below.

Outfits for Groups

- Colors: No need for everyone to dress in the same colors unless you have a special reason, such as team uniforms. Show your individuality and choose outfits that look flattering and make you feel good. For a pleasing look of the final image, however, it is good for everyone to choose colors that go well with each other.
- Style: Consider the style of your group and the look that expresses who you are and what you do. Dress-down casual, urban, rustic, stylish, edgy or even tux and gowns: it's up to you. For an elegant sophisticated look, black and off-whites with shades of gray look great. Browns, yellows, and reds will give a warmer look. Big patterns and logos on t-shirts are tricky and best avoided unless they go

perfectly with all the other outfits. If in doubt, however, just bring them along, but with some backups as well.

- **Style Level:** For relatively short group shoots, it is important that everybody in the image is on the same level of dressed-up or dressed-down unless there is a reason not to be, such as a CEO's "trademark" style, uniform differentiation, and so on. This needs to be decided beforehand, and everyone needs to know.
- For longer, more extensive shoots, the same applies. If you wish to do several different versions and styles, a longer shoot is necessary and possible.
- It is a good idea to bring at least one extra outfit in case what you begin with is not working. Bringing even more is not a bad idea.

Time

- Allow enough time if you are the one scheduling. Shoots with multiple people are more complex, and we want everybody to look good. We will spend some time warming up, playing around and going with the flow. It's best if you do not schedule anything for immediately after your shoot, so you can stay relaxed.
- If it takes place at our studio, and you arrive hungry or thirsty, we usually have a few drinks and snacks on hand.

STILL NOT SURE?

Ask us.

Again, when you become as clear as you can as to what you wish your images to do, everything else will start to fall into place. We can help you with that process.

Your needs are unique and not everything can be covered in the general recommendations here. Always feel free to **call or email** us. We are also happy to meet with you in person at our studio, where you work, or any place that works for us both.

More Questions? Check our **FAQs** or **Business Portrait Packages**.