

Preparing for a Personal Portrait Shoot

Whether for a basic portrait or a glamour shoot, the prime piece of advice on how to prepare is the same: *Become as clear as you can as to what you wish your images to do, and everything else will follow.* Below, you will find some recommendations on the details.

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 we advise bringing an alternative as well.
- Consider also what you would like to express and what looks good on you. There is time 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 entire outfits, from shoes to hats and everything in between. Bring as much as you like: better to have it and not need it than to wish you had brought it.
- 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, but your own style always comes first.
- Please bring 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 what these images will express.

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.

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 we advise bringing an alternative as well.
- Consider also what you would like to express and what looks good on you. Don't be afraid to ask for advice from those you trust. Make sure the clothes are fitting well, not too tight or too loose, to give an idea of your body.
- Bring entire outfits, from shoes to hats and everything in between. Bring as much as you like: better to have it and not need it than to wish you had brought it.
- 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 what you hope these images bring out in you.

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.
- 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.

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.

RELATIONSHIPS

General

- A relationship can be a couple, a father and daughter, best friends, a boy and his dog, or any two individuals who wish to create an image of themselves together.
- 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, women, and children as appropriate.
- Anything else you need to know you will find below.

Outfits for Groups

- Colors: No need for you all 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 both to choose colors that go well with each other.
- Style: Consider your style and the look that expresses who you are. 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 what the other is wearing. If in doubt, however, just bring them along, but with some backups as well.
- Style Level: it is usually best that everybody in the image is on the same level of dressed-up or dressed-down. Sometimes there is a good reason to go against this principle, but know why you are going against it if you do. If you are not sure, decide what you can beforehand and, if necessary, we can sort it out when you arrive.
- Bring several outfits, at least three. More is better.
- We will be able to do several different versions and styles. You can change outfits between sessions, mix and match, and have fun.

If a child will be part of the shoot

- As a general principal, we do not advise clothes a child does not feel comfortable in and like.
- Consider who the photos are for and what they would appreciate: grandmother, school, friends, and so on.
- Bring some accessories they like. It can give some color and style to the photo and increase enthusiasm. For young children, a favorite toy might be a good idea.

Makeup and Hair:

- For women and men, see advice above.

- **Girls:** Makeup has a lot to do with age. Better less than too much. If they have their own, bring as much of it as you can, as well as brushes and the things they feel comfortable with using.
- **Boys:** If a teen is already shaving regularly, make sure his skin does not have red spots from a fresh shave. Applying non oily moisturizer lotion in the evening and morning before the session can help.
- **Hair,** unlike skin, can only be improved in a basic way in postproduction. Go with what you know works the best.

Time

- Allow yourselves enough time. Shoots with more than one person 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 all stay relaxed.
- If your children will be part of the shoot, and they generally have a better time of day, for instance mornings, let us know and we will take that into account when scheduling.
- If you arrive hungry or thirsty, we usually have a few drinks and snacks on hand.

Go on to next page for FAMILIES...

FAMILIES

General

- A family can be your actual family, of course, but it can also be any collection of individuals who wish to create an image of themselves together.
- 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, women, and children as appropriate.
- 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 family and the look that expresses who you are. 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: it is usually best that everybody in the image is on the same level of dressed-up or dressed-down. Sometimes there is a good reason to go against this principle, but know why you are going against it if you do. If you are not sure, decide what you can beforehand and, if necessary, we can sort it out when you arrive.
- For longer, more extensive shoots, the same applies. However, we will be able to do several different versions and styles. You can change outfits between sessions. Bring several outfits for everybody. Three to five are good or as many as you like, so we can mix and match and have fun.

Children

- As a general principal, we do not advise clothes a child does not feel comfortable in and like.
- Consider who the photos are for and what they would appreciate: grandmother, school, friends, and so on.
- Bring some accessories they like. It can give some color and style to the photo and increase enthusiasm. For young children, a favorite toy might be a good idea.

Makeup and Hair:

- For women and men, see advice above.
- Girls: Makeup has a lot to do with age. Better less than too much. If they have their own, bring as much of it as you can, as well as brushes and the things they feel comfortable with using.
- Boys: If a teen is already shaving regularly, make sure his skin does not have red spots from a fresh shave. Applying non oily moisturizer lotion in the evening and morning before the session can help.
- Hair, unlike skin, can only be improved in a basic way in postproduction. Go with what you know works the best.

Time

- Allow yourselves enough time. 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 all stay relaxed.
- If your children will be part of the shoot, and they generally have a better time of day, for instance mornings, let us know and we will take that into account when scheduling.
- If you arrive hungry or thirsty, we usually have a few drinks and snacks on hand.

Go on to next page for SENIORS...

SENIORS

- For suggestions of selecting outfits that will look the best in photos, please see the separate preparation guides for women and men.
- Bring the clothes that reflect where you are, but also where you want to go. Timeless fashion, rather than the fads of the moment, will have a longer shelf life.
- Be ready to experiment and have fun. Bring a few things that helps you connect to who you are when you are most happy, confident, and comfortable.
- If you are not completely happy with your wardrobe options, you could borrow some clothing and accessories from a friend. Or, maybe it's time to shop.
- Allow yourself enough time. There is a rhythm in a professional shoot that needs to be established to bring you to your best.
- Not sure how to go about this? Do not worry. Whatever the shoot, we always consult with our clients first by phone, email, or in person. We will exchange ideas and visions for as long as it takes until we are both happy that we have the way forward.

Go on to next page for DATING...

DATING

- For suggestions of selecting outfits that will look the best in photos, please see the separate preparation guides for women and men.
- Having said that, you will want images that show your social and personal side, the aspect that reflects you at your most appealing and genuine.
- Bring clothes you love or feel the most "you" when you wear them. However, if there is a new direction you'd like to try, this is the time.
- In general, a "what you see is what get," approach is best. If you love the outdoors and are looking for someone who shares that enthusiasm, consider dressing for action. On the other hand, if formal dining and the opera are your passion, maybe dressing up as those occasions would require would make sense.
- Be ready to experiment and have a little fun. Bring something you enjoy, like a book, music, a basketball, a guitar. Something that helps you connect to who you are when you are most happy and comfortable.
- Not sure how to go about this? Do not worry. Whatever the shoot, we always consult with our clients first by phone, email, or in person. We will exchange ideas and visions for as long as it takes until we are both happy that we have the way forward.

Go on to next page for GLAMOUR...

GLAMOUR

- For suggestions of selecting outfits that will look the best in photos, please see the separate preparation guides for women and men.
- Bring the clothes you would wear to an event of significance. Imagine yourself on the red carpet, for instance, or on the most important date of your life.
- Be ready to experiment and have fun. Bring a few things that helps you connect to who you are when you are most happy, confident, and comfortable. This is a special kind of shoot, however, so also be open to what you really wish and, perhaps, have never tried.
- If are not completely happy with your wardrobe options, consider borrowing from a friend or even renting. Or, maybe it's time to shop.
- Allow yourself plenty of time. Consider this as like a day at a spa.
- Not sure how to go about this? Do not worry. Whatever the shoot, we always consult with our clients first by phone, email, or in person. We will exchange ideas and visions for as long as it takes until we are both happy that we have the way forward.

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. 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 other good place.

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