

Having your picture taken? Tips for getting the best images of yourself or family

As photographers we are used to being behind the camera, not in front of it. So when it comes to having your own pictures taken, we can overlook the things that will help us to end up with the best possible images.

Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

1: Group/Family-

If you are having your family portrait taken you will end up with more pleasing results if you plan out everyone's outfits ahead of time and decide on what color or theme you will stick to.

With Group/Family images, if you are not wearing coordinating outfits, the image can look cluttered.

People make the mistake of thinking that you need to all wear "matching" outfits for your family picture; this isn't the case. There are several different ways that you can make a more uniformed un-cluttered image that don't involve all wearing the same thing!

You can choose to stick to one color scheme for everyone's outfits such as: Blues. In this case everyone would wear some shade of blue. Now when I talk about everyone wearing a certain color, I am referring to what is worn on the top (unless its a dress), for the bottom you would coordinate everyone with either jean or khaki etc.

When choosing a color scheme to use, try and match this up to the location(s) that you are having your images done at.

Popular color schemes right now would be one's such as white, cream, browns... These are usually colors that everyone has in their closet, so it makes it easier for everyone to find something to wear.

Another option besides choosing one specific color, is to choose a theme or "tone" to stick to. Such as: "Earth tones" ,this would have everyone in a corresponding color that would be considered an earth tone (example: burgundy, cream/off-white, browns, earthy greens, etc.). This can give everyone in the image a little more options when choosing their outfits, while still giving the image a nice unified look.

2: High-School Senior-

If you are having your high-school senior images taken, outfit choices are important and well as props that the photographer can incorporate into your images.

Girls: Choose several different outfits showing the different sides of your personality. One could be a cutesy dress while the other is a more spunky outfit.

The more diversity you have in your outfits the more unique they will be as well as giving you a lot more image options to choose from.

Here is a quick tip: While we are on the subject of dresses, if you are wearing a shorter dress, put on a pair of spandex shorts underneath (you won't see them under the dress or in the pictures).

This way you wont be uncomfortable trying to remain modest while sitting on the ground or any of the other poses that the photographer will have you in...Trust me, you don't want to spend your whole photo session uncomfortably trying to keep you dress down!

Guys: You should also choose several different outfits. I know guys don't usually care about what they are wearing, but it can really help you to get some cool shots. For instance you could have a dressy outfit with a dress shirt, then you could also have a really casual outfit. Other options would be wearing your sports uniform or just the jersey with jeans.

Props can add a lot to your senior images. Props can make an ordinary "Smile!" picture, into a unique image showing another piece of who you are!

Accessory Props would be things like: A brightly colored scarf or tie, sunglasses, your favorite pair of shoes or heels, hats, etc...

Other props you can incorporate as well things that show your hobbies or what you love. Examples would be: Musical Instrument, Sports Equipment, Art Supplies, car, bike, etc...

Anything that is distinctly "You" or that you LOVE, bring it with you to put into your images!

3: Women:

I figure Women need a whole section of their own when it comes to pictures, since we are SO picky about how we look in them!

Make-up: This is a big one! If as a photographer you take a lot of portraits of women, you should already know this...Cameras magically make makeup disappear!

For some reason, which I still don't know, you will always look like you have about 50% LESS makeup on than you do!

This is why I ALWAYS tell the women, that I am going to photograph, to put their makeup on a lot heavier and darker than they normally do. Especially around the eyes (eyeliner and lashes), and your base/concealer.

You will know you have enough on and it's dark enough if when you look into the mirror you resemble a makeup sales woman! Trust me you won't regret doing this one small step, it will make such a difference in your finished images!

*One other thing you could do to really make your eyes "pop" in the image (if you are brave enough!), put on fake eyelashes! They look great in images, and really add drama to your eyes.

Hair:

Your hair probably won't want to cooperate the day of your pictures, but when you finally do get it how you want it...Hairspray, Lots!! BUT ONLY if you do not want to change hairstyles halfway through your session. If you do plan on doing two different hair styles (such as: up for one, and down for the other), avoid using too much hairspray for the first style; you don't want your hair to look greasy after you switch to the other hairstyle.

Clothes:

Dress to flatter...if your favorite shirt and pants is also the one outfit that shows all those little chubby areas that you hate, don't wear it! Everything shows up in pictures, including those lovely little rolls that we all have! Choose an outfit that helps to conceal all of the flaws that you don't want to show up in pictures for everyone to see.

Keep the neckline of your shirt/dress in mind. While it may look fantastic when you are standing straight up, how does it look when you are leaning forward? Some poses that you may be asked to do could have you leaning forward onto your arms or lounging on the ground...make sure the top you choose to wear has a neckline that will work for all these things.

Lastly, don't forget to dress your fingers and your toes! These will often show up in the close-up shots, so be sure not to forget about them!

The MOST important tip of all: RELAX!!! Don't be tense and nervous, it's just a picture! If you're relaxed and having a good time, your images will be 50 times better!