

How to Prepare for Newborn Photography



Preparing for your in home session....Make it the best day possible.

Your big day is about to arrive, and while it is up to the photographer to create a beautiful image, you can help by being prepared and preparing your space. Darlene likes to do a combination of posed and lifestyle photography.

Here are a few tips to help you get the most out of your newborn session...

- Schedule when baby is 5-14 days old. We want to catch that sleepy baby. Pick the time of day your newborn sleeps most as well as a time when you have good lighting in your home.
- Try not to put too much pressure on yourself. Embrace the emotions of the day, and the natural way your baby is.
- Feed your baby 20-30 minutes before your session.
- Keep makeup simple and elegant and take it easy on the bronzer.
- Keep your house slightly warmer, around 72 degrees. Since baby will be naked or mostly naked this helps keep them in slumber.
- Try keeping your baby awake 30 minutes or maybe even full hour just before the session time. Another suggestion to keep babies awake is to give them a nice long sponge bath an hour before the session, so that they are ready for a long nap!
- Newborn sessions can last anywhere from 2 to 4 hours. The key to getting good images is to be patient. Relax and try to enjoy the session.
- Darlene has some selection of props, hats, headbands, bowties, blankets, baskets and backdrops to choose from. The parents should discuss their desires before the session and let Darlene know of any special items of their own that you would like them to use.
- If the baby is using the pacifier, have it nearby as well. It often helps soothe babies into the poses and facilitates getting them to sleep.

Clothing/ naked

- Loosen diaper 30 minutes before session to prevent diaper lines.

- Matching colors are best. Family members should wear solid colors (patterns are distracting). You don't necessarily all need to have matching outfits, but tops and bottoms should all be of the same tones/colors.
- If your newborn has hair, keep a brush nearby.
- Have any pre-picked outfits ready.
- Dark colors are not only flattering, they also keep the viewers eye moving toward the lightest part of the image (which should be your face). If you are doing an outdoor portrait, earth tones work really well. Blues, greens, browns are all great options.

Families with children: The littlest members of the family often bring the most charm to the family portrait. We want to make sure they are happy and cooperative on portrait day.

- Consider nap times when booking your portrait session. Little guys usually have a window when they are in a good mood after a nap. If your little ones have a regular nap schedule, try to schedule your session when you know your child is typically in a happy, cooperative mood.
- Get them excited! A strange photographer with a big camera and gear can be a little bit intimidating. I will do my best to make your child feel comfortable but it helps if you prep them before the session. Tell them something fun and exciting is going to happen. Show them other pictures you have of them or the family and tell them that is what they get to do. Give them an incentive - a favorite story or snack when they are finished.
- Please choose one parent that will assist the photographer in getting your child's attention. I request you stand behind me when trying to get their attention (especially for babies/toddlers). We want them looking and laughing at the camera not off to the side.
- Bring snacks and things that make your child happy. If we need to take a break for carrots and goldfish, no problem. Anything to keep the youngest members of the family happy.
- Feel free to bring an extra outfit for the little guys. If they have a favorite outfit or something adorable that doesn't go with what the rest of the family is wearing, bring it along. If we have time at the end of the family session we can do a quick change and a photo of just the kids.
- Be happy and excited! This day is about you and your family. Don't stress. Relax and have fun! A little bit of goofiness and giggling can make for a great image. Children can sense stress and anxiety. If you relax and roll with the punches it will be much easier for them to enjoy the day.

- Get everything ready the day before. This will ensure that portrait day will go smoothly. Pack the snacks and a change of clothes if you will be bringing one, lay out the outfits and get excited!

Babies/Toddlers Revise your expectations. Toddlers and babies rarely pose for photos, and waiting for that perfect pose usually causes stress and wears the baby/toddler out.

- Often we have a good 15 minute window of attention with babies/toddlers to do photos. So consider this them doing the flow of your session. Do the toddler shots first, then other shots. Do all family shots including toddlers/babies first, then toddlers alone, and other family members last.
- So why not embrace the essence of that age instead? Follow the movement. Don't be obsessed by eye contact. This is an age where energy and personality are what you want to capture.
- Bring their favorite toys. Especially ones that make noise! This will help get their attention.
- Stand behind the camera to help get the baby/toddler's attention. Keep your use of their name minimal that way when the photography calls their name they look.
- Make sure to have their milk/juice/water on hand, we can always take breaks to refresh.
- You can show them a picture of the photographer beforehand and tell them how they are going to go play games. Inform the photographer of their favorite games, peek-a-boo, tickles, ect.
- Make sure they eat right before the photoshoot.