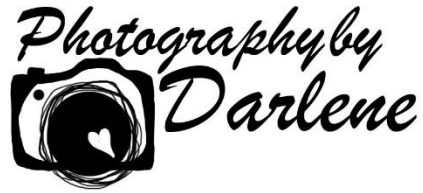


# How to Prepare for Family Photography



Preparing for your portrait....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 looking your best.

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

- Get plenty of rest the night before your session. If you are exhausted, you will look exhausted. Go to bed at a reasonable time so you wake up refreshed and ready.
- Drink lots of water! Good hydration will make skin glow and look fabulous.
- Avoid alcohol the night before. Alcohol dehydrates us and lends itself to red skin, tiny wrinkles and those puffy black circles that form under our eyes.
- If you are going to wear foundation make sure it matches your skin - all of it. You want to make sure your face and neck are the same color.
- Keep makeup simple and elegant and take it easy on the bronzer.

## Clothing - Highlighting and Flattering

Clothing plays a huge part in creating a successful portrait. It may be tempting to throw on your favorite Hawaiian shirt or your most flattering leopard print dress but keep in mind, the portrait is about the whole group.

- Solid colors are an absolute must! Prints and patterns distract the eye and draw attention away from everything else in the image.
- Matching colors are best. You don't necessarily all need to have matching outfits, but tops and bottoms should all be of the same tones/colors.
- Jeans are great. They are dark in color and almost everyone owns a pair that look great on them. Maybe stay clear of the old favorites with the rips and holes, but jeans are a perfectly acceptable option. If you are looking for something a little bit more formal, try dark pants, skirts or even khakis. Just remember that lighter colors draw more focus.
- 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.

- If you decide to go lighter just make sure the colors are the same or similar.
- People love to dress in white for family portraits. This is fine as long as EVERYONE is in white. Otherwise the one guy who is wearing a red polo shirt will be the only thing viewers ever see.

**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!

- Dress for the weather.

**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.