

## Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Portrait Photography

### What should I wear?

In most cases, you should dress in a manner most familiar to those that will receive the photos. As an example, for a business image a suit may be appropriate. For adults in a family photo, slacks or jeans and a sweater are common. For senior portraits, worn-out blue jeans and casual shirts are very popular.

Avoid shirts with a phrase or a picture. The viewer's eye will immediately move down to read the shirt rather than to the subject's face. If appropriate for the season, long sleeves may also help reduce distractions.

Some seniors bring a few outfits but I recommend no more than two or three. Extra earrings, necklaces, bracelets, a fun hat and other accessories are great because they can quickly be mixed with multiple outfits. A school jacket, sports item, or band instrument can also produce some really unique photos.

### What colors work best?

In general, solid colors (or very subtle patterns) usually work best. Large bold or high contrast patterns tend to pull the attention towards the outfit and away from the face. Jewel tones (emerald, purple, ruby red, sapphire blue, turquoise, etc.) or earthy colors (brown, green, rust, wine, etc.) work well for portraits. Dark colors make you look thinner. White can work well if you have a dark complexion but if you don't white can make you look excessively pale.

For family pictures, a common theme with similar colors can work well. This keeps the picture from looking "busy" and allows the faces to stand out. Even if you cannot get exact matching colors for the entire group, try to stay with a common level of brightness rather than having a few people in white and a few others in black. For extended families, having each family with a unique color sometimes helps the eye group families together.

### What is the best time of day for my portraits?

Indoor studio portraits can be taken any time of the day but the best time to take an outdoor portrait is in the hours just before sunset. The sun is low, thus creating rich details and providing a soft red tint that enhances skin tones. Just after sunrise is also a great time to take an outdoor portrait but generally early mornings may be inconvenient and most people don't look their best just after they've woken up.

The worst time for an outdoor portrait is in the hours before and after noon (10 to 3, depending on the time of year) because the sun is too high and its' light is too harsh. The result is an image that is too bright, too dark, or both. It is very difficult to properly balance highlights and shadows when the sun is so high. The harsh mid-day sun makes natural smiles difficult plus the temperatures and humidity will quickly wilt your hair and your patience. Shade or an overcast day can be wonderful for outdoor pictures.

### What is the best location for outdoor portraits?

The choice is yours. The Bradley studio is located on a heavily wooded lot with a nearby lake that provides a wide variety of natural outdoor settings. We could also shoot at Shawnee Mission Park, the Plaza, the Overland Park Arboretum, downtown, or many other locations around the KC area.

If you prefer we will come to your location. Areas with large rocks, groups of large trees, old fences, tall gardens, old buildings, metal stairways, alleys, sites overlooking a lake, etc. are great locations. We generally recommend avoiding locations where you will see distractions in the background such as residential homes, roads, cars, signs, toys, other people, etc.

If you want us to come to your location it's important that we avoid the harsh sun. Picking a location with large areas of shade and/or scheduling your session late in the day to avoid harsh shadows is important. Frequently we may want to visit your location in advance to plan our session.

### What about indoor pictures?

We have a complete indoor studio or we can come to your home. Depending on the situation, sometimes it's necessary to bring a few portable lights into your home to achieve a balanced color and adequately light large areas. This is especially true when shooting large families in open spaces.

### How can I get GREAT portraits?

One of the most important factors in getting great pictures is your attitude. If you're excited, happy, and have a positive attitude it shows up on every shot. In contrast, it's nearly impossible to get a great shot of a bored and uninterested subject SO GET FIRED UP! We strive to make these session fun and low stress.

The photographer will make posing suggestions but don't be afraid to try something different. The photographer doesn't expect you to be a statue. After you take a few shots in one position move your head to different angle, change your sitting positions, hook your thumb on your pockets, fold your arms, shift your body, etc. Make yourself comfortable and remember that it's **OK to move around and have fun**. We want this to be a positive experience for you. Also, not every pose needs to be a huge smile looking directly at the camera. Let some of your pictures reflect your serious side.

Since this is digital photography, it costs the same to shoot 25 images as it does to shoot 250 images. So put your inhibitions aside and have fun with this opportunity.

### What else should I bring?

- Bring make-up, comb, and a mirror. When shooting outside, it's not uncommon for wind to blow your hair or wilt your make-up a bit.
- Anything special that tells the world who you really are:
  - Car / Motorcycle
  - Band instrument
  - Sports jacket or sports equipment
  - Hobby related prop (Camera, bike, skateboard, etc.)
- Pets can be included in your portrait but make sure the photographer is aware of this in advance.
- Many people bring a friend to the photo shoot. It helps you relax and can bring out additional smiles.

### **What about retouching?**

All acceptable images are cropped and given a high level retouching before they are placed on the website or thumb drive. All images that you purchase for reprint will be retouched in detail to remove blemishes and minor background distractions at no charge. Major image manipulation, such as body sculpting, head transplants or background replacements, is also available for an additional fee.

### **Do I get to keep the digital images?**

The photographer retains copyrights to the images. If the package you purchase includes a reproduction release, however, the images will be provided to you on a thumb drive or website download. The reproduction release grants you the right to reproduce and utilize these images for marketing materials, informational publications, websites, public display, and personal use for an unlimited amount of time without copyright infringement. The reproduction release is specific to an individual or family. Those not listed on the reproduction release should contact the photographer for reprints and all other uses.

### **What should I expect?**

The first thing we will do is sit down and talk for a few minutes. We'll explain the process, we'll discuss possible locations, and we'll get a better understanding of your needs and preferences. You'll have an opportunity to explain the things that are most important to you and together we'll plan your session.

The session will take one or two hours depending the number of outfits, the number of locations, and the number of people involved. The actual number of images will vary but 200 or more shots would not be uncommon. After the session, the photographer will reduce that to a more manageable number of the "best" shots.

During the session, the photographer will show you to raw images to confirm we're capturing what you want. Final images will be ready in approximately 5 – 7 days after your session.

### **When do I pay and what forms of payment do you accept?**

We accept credit cards, checks, or cash. Payment is required at the end of your session. If prints are ordered, payment is due when the order is placed.

### **What if I don't like any of the images?**

This would be a very rare occurrence (in fact, it's never happened before) but your satisfaction is important to us. If, after reviewing the digital images during your session, you decide you don't like any of them you have absolutely no obligation to buy any prints and there will be no sitting fee. You have absolutely no risk.

### **What's next?**

Contact Tom Bradley, 913-248-8632, [Tom@BradleyPhotog.com](mailto:Tom@BradleyPhotog.com) to schedule an appointment or to discuss any questions you may have.