

Howard Widdison

Portrait Photographer

WHAT TO WEAR

Planning

Firstly, please do think ahead....don't leave it to an hour before the shoot before deciding what to wear, getting stressed about clothing before the shoot will mean it will take longer for you to relax and enjoy the experience. Getting the look right for the day will avoid the need to ask for major retouching of the images which will occur additional expense and in some cases just cannot be sorted.

Comfort and Feeling Good

The main thing is to be comfortable. A family photo shoot should be a relaxed and happy event. Wearing clothes that make you feel comfortable will help you to ease into the shoot. Ever heard the expression "Power dressing", well if that is what you feel most comfortable in and relaxed then that is what you should wear although also consider the surroundings of the shoot. Wear something that brings out the best in you but avoid anything too casual like jogging bottoms and tracksuits.

Consider the location

It's not so much about what to avoid, but what works best for you and your surroundings.

If you are having a garden or woodland shoot, surrounded by lots of leafy green foliage, muted greens, browns and oranges will only aid in camouflaging you. If it's a dreary, overcast day, you might want to re-consider wearing whites and greys and going for a pop of colour or contrast instead. Contrast is your friend. Make sure you set yourself apart from your background. EG. If the images are to be taken at sunset in a field of yellow flowers, you could look amazing wearing a palette of violet, blues and cyans as they are the colours opposite yellow/orange on the colour wheel. The yellow of the field and the warm (orange) tone to the light will be set off beautifully by their opposing colours.

Do some colours just not work?

Next, look to your skin tone. If you are about to pop on your favourite red winter knit, have a look in a mirror (in natural light if possible) and look for any colour reflections underneath your chin. Does the colour of your top give your skin an altered appearance? Does it make your normally rosy complexion more ruddy. Does that grey top make you look washed out, or does that rusted colour give your skin a sallow appearance? Use colour & contrast to bring out the best in your features and skin tone. In Autumn, knitwear adds a feeling of warmth and cosyness to the portrait.

Co-ordination

The other consideration on a family shoot is co-ordination, it is best to wear colours of a similar tone. You don't need matching outfits but ideally you need to have all of you wearing light or dark clothing. Equally all of you in bright colours or all of you in pastel shades. If 3 of you are wearing light coloured clothing and one wears dark, that person will stand out like a sore thumb. And likewise, a black pair of trousers and a white shirt is just too much of a contrast, so stick on a pair of dark blue trousers and light blue shirt instead.

Any definite no's

In terms of what to avoid, the main thing I suggest people avoid wearing are any clothing with large logos or motifs/characters. These graphics, particularly logos and well known characters can really detract from the focal point – your lovely faces. People's eyes will naturally be drawn to those in the first instance.

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P o r t r a i t P h o t o g r a p h e r

All this besides, If you wish to style your shoot a certain way, you should feel comfortable in doing so. These photos are going on your wall in the end! As your photographer I will respect your ideas and styling as I want to reflect your personality in the images. The only colours I would suggest avoiding is neon and overly saturated colours as these can be difficult to replicate in the photos and can end up looking too pink or the wrong shade of orange.

Types of clothing and other things to consider.

In terms of the types of clothing, shirts with collars are fantastic for framing the face.

Scarves are great for adding colour and interest, as are statement necklaces or other pieces of jewellery.

Hats and caps are fine, but I really need to see your eyes so be sure to keep the hat high on your head and your head up to ensure I can see them especially when doing close ups and headshots.

People often forget shoes! Make sure your shoes are neat and go with your outfit. They don't have to be top shelf, but ensure that they are clean and in good appearance.

If you are wearing a button up shirt, be sure that the buttons don't pucker.

If you are wearing a sheer top, think about your clothing underneath.

Think about clothing that might slip or sit off the shoulder.

If you wear foundation, ensure that the coverage is even and there are no lines around your neck. If you go for the spray tan, that's absolutely fine, but just don't overdo it or you could appear too orange or muddy looking.

If you are a hair up person, make sure you choose a style suitable for the day – you don't want to constantly be fighting the wind blowing stray hairs over your face.

If you have any questions or concerns, do give me a call.