

# JAMIE MASTRIO PHOTOGRAPHY

## *Preparing for your portrait session*

### **Portrait Session lighting**

Portrait sessions may be scheduled with supplemental lighting or natural lighting. Usually supplemental lights are used indoors, but depending on the location, indoor natural lighting is also possible. Although natural lighting from the sun can often be beautiful, it is not dependable. There's no guarantee that the natural lighting will be good when an appointment is scheduled. If you wish to have an outdoor portrait, or indoor portrait with natural light only, you'll need to be flexible as to timing—or, I can supplement the natural light with natural-looking strobe lighting.

I try to schedule location sessions to take advantage of the best times of day. Outdoor light looks best both early and late in the day. Sunrise and sunset are considered 'golden' times for many photographers and artists. The beginning and end of the day have the other advantage of being relatively cooler than the middle of the day in the summer. The golden light changes very quickly around sunrise and sunset, though, so portrait sessions at those times cannot accommodate clothing changes.

### **Getting the most from your Portrait Session**

Here are some suggestions to help you enjoy your portrait session. First, be sure to discuss your ideas and concerns with me well before the session. Our goal is not only to help you create an artistic and unique portrait, but to have fun. You will be more relaxed and confident in the studio if you know that your concerns have been heard.

On the day of your session, try to arrive with your clothing, hair and make-up as you wish them to appear in your portrait. Don't worry if you have a sudden skin problem—blemish retouching is included in your session fee. Clothing should be freshly ironed, with no obvious wrinkles, stains, tears, hanging threads, etc. These things, which may seem minor, become quite obvious when seen by the camera and then captured for posterity!

You are encouraged to bring to your session any special, meaningful or other personal items you'd like to use to help create the mood of your portrait. This may include hats, scarves, a flower, draping fabrics, musical instruments, stuffed animals, etc. Use your imagination! You may also bring any taped or CD music you might wish to hear during your session.

### **Coordinating clothing**

After deciding on the look that you want for your portrait, choose several items of clothing that complement that look. You may bring to your session whatever outfits you want to wear. However, there are some types of clothing that photograph better than others.

Patterns and/or words tend to be distracting. The brighter the patterns, the more distracting they will be. This isn't to say that patterns or words are always a bad idea—if you really like the outfit please bring it in—but solids generally photograph better than bright patterns.

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In general, try to avoid large areas of light pastels or white (this is especially important since the advent of digital cameras), bold stripes or patterns (subtle patterns are fine) or anything that will look too dated a few years from now. Keep in mind that darker, solid colors tend to be slimming, while the arms will photograph wider than they are in real life if wearing short sleeves or sleeveless tops.

It is true that the camera can make people appear heavier than they are. The following suggestions will help you appear slimmer:

- solid, dark colors
- one color (monochromatic) head-to-toe
- avoid shiny or heavy fabrics
- vertical pleats, V-necks and other clothing with simple lines
- pants with a flat front (no drawstrings, pockets, zippers, decorations)
- single-breasted jackets or blazers (not double-breasted)
- clothing that is not too tight or clingy (consider a Lycra body shaper under your clothing) or too baggy

For couples or groups try to dress everyone in a similar color. The colors need not match exactly but should be harmonious and of a similar tone.

For business portraits, keep in mind that you want to appear professional but friendly. A slightly conservative look is best, with a jacket in blue, navy, burgundy, grey or black.

Once you've decided on some outfits, try laying the clothes on your bed to see if there is something that just doesn't belong or is too distracting, including logos or slogans on the clothing. If you are not sure what to choose, you may bring your clothing to your consultation for advice. You may also bring in more than the suggested total number of outfits for your chosen portrait package and I can choose what will look best at the time of your portrait creation.

Remember that the camera records more than our eyes sometimes see. To ensure a great portrait, please check your clothing carefully for stains, tears, loose threads, etc. To prevent wrinkles, iron your clothing just prior to your session. An iron & ironing board will be available for touch-ups, but please do not plan on using your session time for ironing.

## **Skin and hair concerns**

Everyone has heard of a "bad hair" day. To avoid having one on the day of your portrait session, I recommend that you do not try a new hairstyle with a new salon or stylist immediately prior to your session. If you are planning on changing your hairstyle, do it a week or more before your session. Try maintaining your new style at home for a week or more so that you will be comfortable fixing your hair for your session. Even if you do not usually use hairspray, a light use will help keep stray hair off your face during your session. Especially for outdoor sessions, with unpredictable winds, extra hairspray is a must. Skin blemishes & scars are best camouflaged with a bit of make-up. If the make-up doesn't completely hide the flaw, don't worry—retouching of any obvious blemishes is included in your portrait package. Women should apply make-up lightly. The camera will capture more detail than we usually see, so it is not necessary to apply make-up heavily. You will probably want to touch up your lipstick during your session, as well as apply a light, sheer powder to keep shine down, so remember to bring your make-up and application brushes with you to your session.

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Men should shave an hour or so prior to their session, as “five o’clock shadows” tend to photograph darker than they appear to the eye.

## Props

During your *Jamie Mastrio Photography* portrait session, I will draw out your character and your essence, then capture it in a lasting work of art. I encourage you to bring to your session any personal items (props) that reflect your interests or have special meaning for you. In this way, I capture an aspect of your personality that is worth a lifetime’s interest. Props could include sports items like a football or pennant, musical instruments, collections, stuffed animals, a favorite flower or rose petals, books, blankets from your childhood, hats, artwork, school mascots or other activity-related items, or any other personal object that is meaningful or relates to your own personal interests. Your portrait session is only limited by your imagination! Depending on the type of portrait, we may also use a bench, chair, or other large studio prop.

## Special consideration for Children

Children are usually absolutely delightful and bring much joy to our lives. However, they may also be unpredictable in their response to new people and situations. Their attention span may be limited, and studio lights or flash may startle them. For these reasons, I suggest the following: If possible, have the photographer meet your child prior to the portrait session, preferably at the consultation. Schedule your session around your child’s “quiet, alert” time. For most children, this may mean after their nap, not before! Bring healthful snacks or treats for after the session to reward good behavior. A favorite toy, blanket or stuffed animal will also bring familiarity to a new situation. Please bring another responsible person—someone who is not being photographed that day—to your session. That person can help keep the session pleasant and safe for all involved.

## Portrait Session checklist

- If two or more people, coordinated clothing colors
- Clothing clean and ironed
- Hair styled, bring brush/comb, hairspray
- Women: Apply make-up, bring make-up & brushes
- Men: Shave an hour or so before your session
- Bring props and/or music as desired

## What to expect during your Portrait Session

The portrait session itself will be either in the studio or on location. If on location, 30-45 minutes may be needed to set up equipment. Location session time begins when setup is complete. Studio session time begins at your appointment time. If you would like to make final adjustments to hair, makeup, clothing, etc., please arrive 15 minutes or so prior to your appointment time. Please remember that if you are late for your appointment, you will have less time in front of the camera. Please phone if you think you will be more than 15 minutes late.

The portrait session usually lasts 1 to 1½ hours, though more time may be pre-scheduled at additional cost. Whether in the studio or on location, some test shots will be done first, and lighting will be adjusted to complement your face and figure. Because I shoot with a high-end digital camera system, we can review results instantly and share them with you as we work together to create your fine art portrait. Throughout

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the session I will give suggestions to help you look your best for the camera. For your enjoyment you may bring your own CD music to listen to during the session. The key to creating portraits worth a lifetime's interest is to participate in the portrait session by relaxing and having fun!

If you wish to change clothing, there will be a short break for you to do so. You may bring as many outfits as you wish, but please remember that you are using your session time for these changes. It works best to plan your session's clothing changes to use the least amount of time for this. Realistically, if you want to have three or more distinct and separate looks, it may be best to book additional time or plan for additional portrait sessions to ensure the best outcome. This is especially the case for performers and models, who often wish to portray more variety for their portfolios.

## **After your Portrait Session**

After your portrait session I will schedule a time for you to review your images. You will select a number of images based on the package you chose, and will decide on any add-ons or *a la carte* services for those images. Within 2 – 3 weeks your **Jamie Mastrio Photography** portraits will be ready for you to enjoy!