

FAMILIES

Shirley
Photography
Capturing the nature of you.

your guide to a
stress free
photo session

what to wear
& more





welcome

Family photos are an amazing way to celebrate what makes your family so unique and capture happy memories. But for some parents, the thought of taking family photos can sound more stressful than enjoyable.

Luckily, it doesn't have to be that way! With a skilled, experienced family photographer behind the lens and a bit of thoughtful preparation, it can be a great experience that rewards you gorgeous photos. As your family portrait photographer, I'll provide you with beautiful family portraits that capture all of the friendship, fun, and love in your family unit. (And I'll help your kids have fun while doing it!)

4 steps for a *stress free* photo session with your kids

As any parent knows, making sure your kids cooperate and behave for hours at a time is no easy task! Family photo sessions can seem a bit daunting. But with some preparation and a lot of patience, your family photo session can be an enjoyable experience for the entire family. Here's how you can make sure your photo session is stress-free.

PREP YOUR KIDS IN ADVANCE

Tell your kids about the photoshoot well ahead of time. Tell them what to expect. Let them know how much you're looking forward to it and why your family is doing it. If you're excited, they'll definitely catch your enthusiasm!

LET THEM BE INVOLVED

Include your children in the planning process. Ask them what colors they think the family should wear. Help them pick out an outfit, either from their closet or at the store. When children feel involved, they're much more willing to participate.

BRING BACKUP

Make sure you're well prepared for photoshoot day. Bring along a change of clothes, plenty of snacks, water, diapers, etc. That way, even if the unexpected happens, you'll be ready for it!

MAKE IT FUN!

Make photoshoot day a special occasion! Bring along snacks and toys to keep their energy up. Plan on doing something fun after the session so they look forward to the outing all day.



best times for your *family photo session*

Timing is always important to consider when it comes to photography, especially when children are involved. Timing can be the difference between a frustrating session and an enjoyable, memorable photoshoot. So when is the best time to have your family photo session?!



DURING PLEASANT WEATHER

If you're planning on having an outdoor photoshoot, try to schedule it during pleasant weather. If it's too hot outside, you might all feel sweaty and uncomfortable. If it's too cold, your kids might complain — and their irritation will likely show through in photos. No matter the season, just be sure to plan accordingly. Bring plenty of layers if it's cold outside, and wear breathable fabrics if it's warm.

AFTER A MEAL

Make sure children (and adults!) are well-fed before the photoshoot. If they're hungry, they might start to get a little antsy and cranky. If you're planning on going to dinner after the photoshoot, give your kids a healthy snack before the session and pack along a few extra snacks just in case.

WHENEVER YOUR KIDS ARE WELL-RESTED

Nothing makes kids grouchy and uncooperative like being tired. Be sure that your family photoshoot doesn't interrupt any of your kids' naptime or bedtime routines.

DURING THE 'GOLDEN HOUR'

The best time for natural lighting is either two hours before sunset or two hours after sunrise. However, if neither of those times is ideal for your children, let your photographer know. Experienced photographers can shoot beautiful photos at any time of day.

tips on: *what to wear*



When it comes to family portraits, one of the most common questions we get is, “What should we wear?” It’s a tricky decision! Since these photos will last a lifetime, you want to make sure your entire family looks as good as possible. But at the same time, you also want them to look like themselves — not wearing stuffy clothes that make them feel uncomfortable. We always recommend wearing clothing that makes you feel and look your best, which can be different for every person. Here are a few other wardrobe suggestions that photograph beautifully.

WEAR COORDINATING (NOT MATCHING) OUTFITS

Make sure your outfits coordinate well with one another. Stick to a color palette of one or two colors. Matching outfits can look a little dated — coordinated outfits look harmonious and pretty. To make sure all of your outfits go well together, try laying out everyone's photoshoot outfits together the day before.

LET YOUR KIDS HAVE A SAY

Ask your children what they'd like to wear. Asking their opinions will help to make sure they feel comfortable and involved. (Just make sure they know their picks are subject to your final approval — otherwise, you might have a little Spiderman in your family portraits!)

DRESS WEATHER APPROPRIATE

Keep an eye on the weather forecast and make sure you dress accordingly. Choose colors that are appropriate for the season. And if it'll be chilly during your photoshoot, be sure to bundle up a bit!

A FEW DON'TS:

While what you decide to wear is ultimately up to you and your family, there are a few things that tend not to photograph well.

- Patterns: one or two family members wearing a pattern is okay, but too many patterns tend to clash and draw too much attention.
- White: wearing white tends to wash people out.
- Large logos: graphic tees tend to distract from the most important part of the photo — your beautiful faces!

where to go?

SKY ABOVE AND SAND BELOW

If you're looking for a beach session at sunset for that amazing golden glow and the relaxing sound of the waves then I suggest Marina Beach Park in Edmonds, Junita beach park in Kirkland or Meydenbauer Bay Park in Bellevue. All these parks have a little slice of beautiful beach and they are smaller which means less populated most evenings.

GOLDEN WAVES OF GRASS

Want to get that feeling of open fields and tall grass, then I have a few fun spots for you, but my all time favorite places are Juel Community Park in Redmond or the old Wellington golf course. Both of these places get minimal mowing and I love it!

I WANT A LITTLE BIT OF THIS AND THAT

Can't make up your mind? Then the Fall City Community Park is a great place to go. There's a river, fields, an old rustic building, and a nature trail.

INTO THE FOREST I GO.

Now Ferrel McWherter park is a farm park, but don't let that fool you. This park has the most beautiful trails of ferns and old growth trees around. Some parts really remind me of an Ewok village.

RUSTIC CUTE TOWN

Antiques, old brick, and doors that lead to no where are your thing then the small town of Snohomish is your perfect location. I've been known to pop into a few antique shops for a few snaps.

FLOWERS EVERYWHERE

If you want to make sure there is some color and pop in your photos, then Flower World in Maltby, is the place to go. That park is manicured and in bloom at all seasons.

CLOSE TO HOME

My last two favorite places are Cold Creek Natural Area and Cottage Lake Park. These two parks are where I took my kids to play when they were little and where they hang out now as teenagers. There are trails, fields and a lake. They are located less than a mile from each other and they are both within walking distance to my studio.





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