



## Family Photos Session Tips

**Time...***During the GOLDEN HOUR*

**Summer/Spring**

Before 10am

After 6pm

**Fall/Winter**

After 2pm

before sunset

**Plan ahead...**Make sure you have given yourself enough time to think about all of the details of your session. Plan ahead so that #1 you can truly think about your photos and everything you want out of the session, #2 you aren't rushing and stressing out right before your session, and #3 if you have decided to go for a new look for your session or someone gets a bad haircut, you still have time to fix things if you need to.

**Style...**casual dressy...bring your own style!

**What not to wear...**Jeans and white shirts, or everyone the same thing. **NO** Crazy patterns or thin stripes

**Coordinate outfits...**Now this doesn't mean everyone has to 100% match with khaki pants or jeans and a white shirt! You want to complement each other's outfits by choosing colors that work well together. I find that if everyone is wearing the same clothing, people will all tend to blend in together and there won't be too much pop and life to the images. **Dress for the season & location...**Obviously you want your images to make sense. Dress the part and be aware of your location. You will want to make sure that everyone is on the same page and coordinates in both colors AND styles. **Coordinate VS.**

**Matching...**

**Use colors & patterns...**Colors are everywhere around us and bring things to life... why not bring your images to life as well! Again, be sure the colors you use coordinate with each other and you don't just end up looking like one big rainbow family! When picking patterns, choose smaller ones that won't distract attention away from the main subject/s. Use patterns sparingly.... if one person is wearing a print, try to avoid putting someone else in a competing pattern.

When thinking about texture, choose different ones that will give photos some interest such as lace, corduroy, denim, etc. Avoid large logo's, emblems and graphics like "GAP" and "Old Navy" because again, these will typically distract attention away from the subject. We want your faces and emotion to show, not promote the clothing company you purchased from!

**Be timeless...**Pick outfits that aren't considered too trendy, but will be able to be enjoyed and displayed for many years to come. One example of something that is timeless is jeans... classic look and style yet you can still incorporate your own flair into the outfit with your tops and accessories. Still be YOU, never forget that!

**Let your personalities SHINE...** The purpose of these photos is to hopefully capture each individual as they truly are, to capture the family, the

relationships, and people in the photos just as **THEY** are. Forcing children to wear outfits that are uncomfortable and unfamiliar to them may cause some anxiety and stress to them which in turn will inhibit really capturing their personalities during the session. Same goes for adults. Wear clothing that **YOU** feel good in and the pictures will emanate those feelings. If your child wears a pair of rain boots everywhere he goes, it makes the most sense to have him wear them for pictures as well. Remember, you want to capture everyone as they are **NOW**. Capture these moments as they are!

**Layering...**In the summer months, this may be more difficult to pull off but during all of the other seasons, definitely layer your outfits. Not only will it provide more visual interest in each photo but it will also allow a lot more variety in your shots and poses. Have a ton of images of yourself in just your dress or cute top and jeans? Throw on a little sweater or jacket and a hat and you have entirely different look.

**Personalize It...**These are **YOUR** images and of course you want them to speak volumes about you and your family. Discuss things your family enjoys doing together and bring “props” and accessories that will help compliment who you are. If your family enjoys playing music together, bring your instruments to your session. If your family enjoys boating, suggest doing your session on a boat or at the very least near the water. Bring along items that will represent who each individual is **AND** who your family is collectively. I also recommend bringing your favorite blanket/quit and some toys for your children.

**Make-up...**Keep make up natural, but still have some on. **You** will want to avoid using very heavy makeup, but a bit of color on your lips, eyes, and cheeks will help bring you to life in photos. Be sure to bring some **lip gloss** with you as well.

**Outfit changes...**If time allows it, bring another set of outfits. Again, you will get a lot more variety in your shots so why not capitalize on the opportunity and get the most **bang** for your buck!

**Ladies & their shoes...** If you plan on wearing heels, be sure to bring a pair of flats or flip flops that can help you get from point A to point B without any pain. You can just swap them out as you need to.

**If I were building outfits for my family this is how I would do it:**

1. Keeping your location and season in mind, start with one person. Don't try and think of everyone at the same time. I find that mom or a little girl makes the most sense since they would typically be the ones wearing a print. So mom will be wearing a floral print dress (small pretty pattern that is).
2. Now move on to the next person. You will be pulling colors from mom's dress so begin to think about who in the family would look good in what colors. Dad doesn't look so good in XYZ since it tends to drown out the tone in his skin. Let's pick ABC for him instead. And so on.
3. Then start to come up with ideas to personalize the session. A little boy may have a security blanket or teddy bear he never parts with.... be sure to bring that with you. The little girl may like crafting so have her make a cute matching headband or clip for her hair. Mom loves tulips... on your way to the session pick some up. Make thoughtful choices and be sure to discuss the ideas with your photographer! Believe me, most are full of ideas however, it's always nice when the family helps and truly ensures a “custom” session.