

Professional Portraits – Preparation Guide

Portraits are best when the viewer's eye is drawn to your face. Attention must be given to all details of your entire outfit even if you think they won't show in the final portrait.

Close-Up Portraits

Unless otherwise discussed, your business portrait will be taken in a seated position and will include primarily the head and shoulders with perhaps some images from the waist up. The selection of proper clothing is critical.

Clothing Color and Style

Your outfit should describe your personality and profession, and be flattering for your body shape and size. Attention must be given to all details of your entire outfit, even if you think it won't show in the final portrait. Choose clothing with solid colors and/or very small patterns. Burgundy, blue, brown, rust, and green work well. Think about how your clothing colors complement or detract from your coloring. Darker colors bring out skin tones better than lighter colors.

For women: It is best to wear slacks rather than a skirt so you will be comfortable when photographed in a seated position. Blouses should be medium to dark-toned; however a light-colored blouse can work if it is an accent underneath a jacket that closes. If you are wearing a suit jacket, then it should fit comfortably when buttoned while seated.

For men: Short sleeves under suit jackets are to be avoided. Your shirt cuffs should be slightly visible from your suit jacket when you are photographed. No white collars or shirts, please. A small subtle pattern to your jacket is fine as long as it does not command too much attention. Suit jackets should fit comfortably when buttoned while seated.

Accessories & Details

For women: Nail polish color and jewelry should be kept to a minimum and classic in style.

For men: Fingernails should be neatly trimmed and any jewelry should be classic in style. A handkerchief of an appropriate color may be present in the breast pocket of your suit jacket. Ties should be in rich hues, vibrant but not light or overly bright. A small pattern is fine. Please bring several ties (and an extra suit jacket if you like) to the photo session.

Hair & Makeup

For your portraits, you want your hair to look its best. We recommend that you don't try a new hairstyle just before your session, but do plan to have it cut two weeks beforehand. This gives it a chance to grow out and look natural.

For women: Makeup and hair should be fairly similar to the way you appear in your professional setting. Foundation should be gently blended below the jaw line, so there is no demarcation between the face and neck. Eye makeup should be soft and blended.

Please bring your brush, comb, makeup, hair products as well as several additional lipstick shades so minor touch-ups can take place before and throughout the photo session. If you don't generally wear makeup, it is still advised you wear some for your portrait in order to enhance certain facial features.

Facial Hair

A fresh shave is a must! If you have a beard or mustache, make sure it is trimmed before your session.

Glasses

Light reflected from a flash in eyeglass lenses can create white spots and glare, leading to extra retouching charges. And tinted lenses cannot be lightened. To reduce this occurrence, you can check to see if your lenses have a glare resistant coating. Ask your optometrist for a set of loaner frames similar to the ones you usually wear.