

Advice Prior to Portrait Sitting

Important Information To Help In Preparing For Your Sitting

We understand that many people are a little concerned with different aspects of a sitting, such as clothing, makeup and spectacles etc., and therefore we would like to offer some advice at this stage, to help with your preparations. We know that careful planning will help us to create portrait of immense value to you.

Clothing

Colours to avoid, Lime, Cerise or other irradiant colours. All subtle colours and greys are good. Black can be effective and white can also look good, but care should be taken that it does not appear to be translucent, unless this is the object of the exercise.

Please remember, if in any doubt as to what you should wear, bring extra clothes with you and we will help you decide.

Gentlemen

Suits and jackets with long sleeved shirts and ties always look good if the portrait is to be formal. However informal is more popular and casual shirts and jeans can look good. Men should ideally shave within the hour before attending.

Ladies

Wear something that you know you like yourself in. Preferable long sleeved (unless it is a strapless evening dress). Shirts which are semi-translucent, do show the bra through and it is preferable that this is avoided.

Wear evening style of make up (heavier than daytime), as the softening in our portraits tends to diminish fine detail of features. Avoid very pale lipstick which tends to photograph almost white. Most important, wear a translucent loose powder over your make up, this will 'set' it and avoid any shine.

Under no circumstances should the 'ultraglow' type of make-up be used as the sparkle effect it generates gives the impression of 'white' or 'perspiration' on the photograph.

Hands do appear in some of our portraits so please make sure your nails are in good order.

Your hairstyle should be your own. It is a mistake to have a 'new' style specifically for the portrait. Anything new should 'tried out' before the day of the sitting.

Groups

Colours which co-ordinate well with each other are fairly important in a group portrait. This ensures that no one person dominates the picture because of a clashing colour.

Try to avoid clothing with large worded motifs on the front, as these sometimes tend to attract the eye more than the subject does.

Babies

Choose a time for your baby's sitting when he or she will not be hungry or tired. Heavy knitted outfits tend to look too bulky in a portrait; therefore more delicate clothes should be considered.



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Children

Please, on no account should you 'warn' your children to behave themselves, either before or especially during the sitting. This puts children under more pressure and precludes us from capturing their true personality.

With many years experience in portraying children you may rest assured that we have seen and heard everything from small children!

We are expert in encouraging children to enjoy themselves, therefore warnings and reprimands from parents are not required.

Teenagers

Most teenagers go through the same phases as their contemporaries and few, if any of these attitudes, are new to an experienced portraitist.

We suggest that teenagers be allowed to bring clothes of their own choice, in addition to those, which the parent's prefer them to wear.

Again 'warnings' from parents are not helpful.

Spectacles

Some spectacles create more 'reflective' problems than others. Non-reflecting lenses are a good answer and it would be worthwhile speaking to your optician.

Removal of lenses or a loan of identical empty frames for your optician is another option.

Normal photographic expertise will also help reduce the flare or reflection in lenses.

Pets

Always walk your dog before the sitting and please bring with you any favourite toys, blankets or treats.

General

Anything which you may consider to be a characteristic activity or aspect of the family, you may like to bring for inclusion.

Should anyone in your family be particularly worried about any aspect of the sitting or have a particular problem, please let us know, preferably before the sitting. There are many techniques we can use to ease, or indeed eliminate various problems.

Lastly, most people arrive nervous for the sitting, but we pride ourselves that most leave saying how much they have actually enjoyed themselves.

We look forward to seeing you on the day.

Neil Gordon
(LMPA, LSWPP)



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