

Great photographs don't just happen. They are carefully planned creations. Together we will create the perfect mood and set the stage for one of those creations.



Preparing For Your Photo Shoot at Christopher David Photography

When you book your photo session at **Christopher David Photography** you can rest assured our primary goal is to assist you in putting your best face forward. Behind the scenes, long before you take your first photograph, we will be putting things in place to ensure a successful, stress free shoot. To assist us in helping you look and feel your very best, there are a couple of things you can do prior to and during your shoot. These pieces once brought together will guarantee an experience of a lifetime.

1. Get Plenty of Rest

Believe it or not sleep is a major, major **MUST** do. Be sure the nights leading up to your photo shoot you get at least eight hours

of sleep, drink lots and lots of water and avoid stress and caffeine. Proper rest and hydration will help you look more relaxed and ease bags and/or dark circles that convene under your eyes.

2. Groom, Groom and Groom Some More!

The last thing you want to do the moment you get your photos back is wish you had trimmed, plucked or waxed that one little area that somehow seemed to show up in every single photograph.

If you can, have your eyebrows professionally shaped, and if necessary pluck the strays as needed until the day of the shoot.

Trim your nose hair and clip your fingernails and your toenails (depending on the season and the photo direction). Be sure your nails are of equal length and are evenly polished.

Avoid dry, cracked lips by applying lip balm consistently on your lips the days leading up to the shoot but particularly the night before, and the morning of your shoot.

If you have facial hair it should be neatly and evenly groomed. Pay close attention to the line above your lips and the corners of your mouth. Believe it or not these are sometimes trouble areas that show up in photos, particularly uneven mustache lines.



Once you've selected your outfits, lay them out on your bed to see if there is anything that just doesn't belong, or, is too distracting. Use that time to remove what doesn't work. However, if you still have trouble deciding, bring in what you have and we'll be happy to offer our suggestions.



If you have facial hair and you are a woman, you may choose to wax these areas prior to the shoot, but ultimately this choice is yours. Just know peach fuzz does show up on your skin, and often looks more pronounced in photos than it does in person.

3. Coordinate Your Clothing

The purpose of your shoot will determine the appropriate clothing needed in your shoot. However, if you find yourself pressured about what to wear remember comfortable and classic clothing photograph the best. Solid colors, denim, khakis, blacks, greys and earth tones almost always looks good. On

the contrary, stripes and patterns create visual noise and can become very distracting in photographs and pull attention away from you.

Keep in mind dark colors slim you down, while lighter colors add a bit of weight.

Avoid clothing that restrict and limit your positioning. Inspiration often hits suddenly, and if we channel our muse, its only fair we follow it.

If it looks a "little" wrinkle in person, it will look "very" wrinkled on camera. Wrinkles cast shadows which show up

unfavorably on camera. So be sure to press your garments before the shoot. Unless of course untidy is the look you're attempting to achieve. In that vein, please check your clothing carefully for stains, tears, loose threads and other noticeable and not so noticeable defects.

For family portraits or group shots, coordinate your outfits, don't match them. Matching ensembles date themselves quickly, while competing styles create visual confusion. A well coordinated shot, with similar tones and styles will achieve the strong unified look you're probably after.

Finally, unless a particular designer is paying you to model their gear, avoid clothing with logos and slogans. Why? Because five years from now when the designer or the style is no longer in trend you will feel embarrassed and a bit silly every time you see your photo.

4. Use Make-Up Sparingly

Of course if the shoot is to promote a make-up line this might not be relevant. But even then most make-up artists will be conscious and thoughtful when applying their product to guarantee a natural albeit glamorous look. When applying your make-up pay close attention to the foundation lines. Your neck and your face should be the same color with no obvious transition lines.

During the shoot you might want to touch up your lipstick, or apply a powder to keep down shine, so please do bring what is necessary to keep you looking fresh.

5. Accessories & Props Are a Good and Necessary Thing

You are encouraged to bring with you to the session any special,



If you're posing with your partner don't be shy about letting your love and attraction for each other shine through.



meaningful or other personal items you'd like to use to create the mood of your photo shoot. This may include hats, scarves, a flower, musical instruments, stuffed animals for children or any other item that will bring life to your shoot. Accessories like bracelets, necklaces, rings, earrings and more can add that finishing touch to your photograph and help seal the look you're after. So bring what you have and we'll edit as needed.

6. Practice Before You Get There

Photo shoots can and do intimidate many people. Some folks are complete naturals, and are able to pose and configure their faces into the perfect expression in every frame, but, most people are not. No matter which category you fall into before you arrive to your shoot be sure to find some time to practice. "What? Practice?" You say, yes practice.

Try giving expressions and movements like those from your favorite music video. In your mirror imitate the lead singer except, don't mouth the words, use your face instead. You'll be surprised how well you learn to change your facial expressions and express various moods non-verbally.

In the comfort of your home, in front of a mirror practice your smiles and expressions to find out which one's you like. Make expressions that illustrate various moods, like:

- Sexy
- Smug
- Cocky
- Romantic
- Bad Ass
- Inviting
- Approachable
- Seductive
- Peaceful
- Innocent
- Mysterious
- Happiness
- Contemplative
- Confident

Learn what these expressions look like in the mirror but more importantly how they *feel* on your face. When you find an expression you like make note of it and when the time comes in the shoot to bring that look to life you'll know exactly what to do. The point to remember here is the more you practice, the more comfortable you will be in front of the camera.



Have fun with your poses. Don't be afraid to laugh, or smile, or act silly. Our goal is to capture the whole of your personality. To capture the you your friends know and love, the you your family can't wait to see.



The same goes for posing. If you're not a professional model, or training to be one, posing for photos may come a bit unnatural to you. If this is the case, don't work yourself up the days leading to the shoot trying to figure out what you're going to do. The easiest way to snag a few solid ideas is to locate some magazines that reflect the look you're trying to achieve. Notice the individual's stance, the angle of their head, and the overall way they conduct themselves in the photograph and then practice the pose yourself adding your own unique twist. After all you want

your shoot to reflect your individual style and mood, and not some else's.

Also, don't come to your session believing you have to use a different pose every time the camera snaps. There is such a thing as *pose overload*. Often simple changes to an effective pose can radically shift the mood and render a completely different photo. So relax and remember you got this...

7. Prepare your Kids

Please stick to their normal nap and feeding times. It is also good to feed them and take care of any

bathroom or diaper concerns right before the session.

8. Bring Only the Principals

To ensure a well timed, well executed shoot, bring only those folks necessary to make the shoot happen, hairstylist, make up artist, clothing stylist, etc., and/or those directly involved in the shoot. If you *must* bring others, be sure to keep the number to 2 individuals. Additional people crowd the studio, distract the client and limit the photographer's shooting range.