

FAMILY AND CHILDREN



BY *Shannon Conrad*
Photography

START WITH THE END IN MIND

Deciding what to wear in portraits can be a daunting task. What styles look best? What colors should we wear? How do we look pulled together without being too matchy-matchy. I've included five of my favorite tips to help you navigate your way through all these questions and take the guesswork out of what to wear.

The first thing to consider when choosing a color scheme is where you plan to hang your portraits. If your walls are neutral, you may choose to use your outfits as a way to add a pop of color to your room. If your room is painted a non-neutral color, you will want to select a color scheme that works well with your wall color. For example if you plan to hang your new portrait on a red accent wall, outfits with a lot of green in them may end up looking a little Christmassy.



COLOR SCHEME

Next, it's time to select your family's color scheme. Think of each of your family's clothing choices as one big outfit. It's best to pick 2-3 colors to work with and then use those colors in various solids, patterns and accessories.

I usually recommend choosing one patterned piece in your color scheme to be a focal item. This may be a floral dress for your daughter or a plaid shirt for your son. Once you have a focal piece selected, pull colors from it for the other outfits.

For example, if your daughter is wearing a floral dress in turquoise, navy, yellow and gray, you may choose to dress dad in a gray button down with dark blue jeans. Mom may wear a turquoise maxi dress. And your son would look great wearing a plaid button down in navy, yellow and gray.



PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

Third, it is helpful to think about how these colors will be distributed. For example, if your colors are navy, rust and tan, it is best to make sure there is variety in how these colors are used across the top and bottom portions of the outfits. If everyone wore navy pants and rust or tan tops, there would be a strong visual line separating the top and bottom half of the picture.

Instead, dad may choose to wear navy dress pants and a tan sweater. Mom may wear a floor length rust maxi dress. The daughter could have a floral skirt in navy, rust and tan paired with a navy top. The son may wear navy pants paired with a rust and tan plaid shirt.

Don't forget to consider the natural pairings in your family. Will you want a picture of just your two children together? A portrait of just mom and dad? You may want to consider how the outfits will look when paired together in a photograph.



STYLE

Now that you have your color choices selected, the next step is deciding what style of clothing you plan to wear.

In general, men look best in well-fitted dress pants or dark colored jeans and closed toed shoes. For a dressier look, pair with a button down and sports coat. Or add a sweater or henley shirt for a casual feel while still looking polished.

For women, a dress, skirt and top or tailored jeans all photograph well. High heels help elongate the legs but are not the most comfortable when walking from location to location. You may want to bring flats to walk in so that your feet will stay comfortable.

It is best to avoid clothing with large graphics or logos or tiny stripes as those tend to not photograph well.



THE DETAILS

Next, it's time to accessorize with some final touches.

Accessories such as necklaces, earrings, headbands, belts, scarves, and hats will help tie each individual's look together into a cohesive group. For example if the daughter is wearing a dress in navy and coral as a focal piece or the son is wearing a navy, coral and white plaid button down, and mom is wearing a coral maxi dress, she could add a navy belt or bold statement necklace in navy to tie her outfit into her children's.

Remember to consider all the little details. I know my daughter loves to have her nails painted bright blue. On a day to day basis, I don't even notice them, but in a photo they would stand out. Take a quick peak at the little details such as finger nails, sock choices or bangs that may need a quick trim.

Lastly, and most importantly, make sure you wear something that you feel amazing in! If you are comfortable and feel confident in what you are wearing, you will have a better experience and more enjoyable time in your session



BLUES

Blues are such a popular color for family pictures because they look great no matter what season you are having your pictures taken. Pale blues and aquas look perfect paired with the pastel flowers and greenery spring has to offer. In the summer light and airy turquoise is a perfect choice for pictures on the beach. And in the fall, deeper jeweled tone blues and navy look striking against the orange and yellow fall foliage.



PINKS

I love the versatility of pink! It is a perfect color for dads and little boys just as much as it is for moms and little girls. And depending how it is used, pink can bring a light and airy feel to your portrait or be bold and dramatic! In the top two outfits, pale pink is paired with darker hues for a bolder look. The deep browns and wine color add contrast and pop when paired with pink. On the other hand, the bottom outfits have a light and airy feel because pink is paired with lighter neutrals such as tan, cream or white.



REDS

Just like blues, reds come in a wide range of hues as well. From true red, to wine and even leaning into the orange spectrum with rust or coral, there are so many options if you love red! The key to pulling off such a bold color is not to go overboard with how much red you use in your outfits and to anchor it with neutrals. Pair bold reds or coral with navy or charcoal gray to bring balance to your outfits. Rusty oranges pair well with browns, tans and creams.



TIPS FOR BETTER MAKEUP IN PHOTOS

1. **PUMP UP THE CHEEK COLOR-** Don't get washed out by the bright lighting either outdoors or in the studio. Cheek color will go SO FAR when it comes to giving your face a 3D look, as well as help you to look healthy and bright.
2. **CHOOSE A LIPSTICK COLOR THAT YOU NORMALLY WEAR... JUST NOT NUDE-** Again, don't let your lips disappear into your skin tone, so pick a color that's a little bolder. BUT if you are a gal that never wears red/pink/berry lipstick, then DON'T wear it for your photos either. It will feel foreign and unlike your true self.
3. **DITCH EYE LINER & FOCUS ON LASHES INSTEAD-** This may be an unpopular opinion, but several of my makeup artist and photographer friends have agreed... eyeliner in far way shots does more harm than good. Our eyes naturally contract when we smile, making them appear smaller. And black eyeliner will only visually close them down further! Instead enhance the lashes with a good curl, lots of mascara or some falsies.
4. **MATTIFY SKIN AND LIPS-** Under the spotlight we tend to get sweaty, so start with a completely matte base and lip. Glowy foundation or highlighter only makes you look oily and shiny from a distance and can create major reflection issue in photos. This is [my go-to powder](#), but [this powder will do as well](#).

Glossy lips cause a major problem if there is any breeze and a strand of hair gets stuck in the stickiness. Gloss also transfers onto teeth more easily, and if there is any kissing involved in your photos, matte will wear much longer with less transfer.
5. **SET YOUR MAKEUP BEFORE, DURING & AFTER APPLICATION-** One thing I know for sure, is that photos always take longer than expected... and usually there is stress or nerves involved. Setting your makeup with a mattifying setting spray prior to foundation, and again after foundation will lock it place. Then do another spray after all your color has been added. I really like [this one](#) by Mary Kay (if you need to borrow it just ask and I will bring it to your session). [This one is great also!](#)



If you would like to view a video about how to apply your makeup for a photo session here are some links for videos that you can watch to create your look.

Tips https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fb9MQWQ_Epc

Application video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9m2dAOwSkd0>

If you would like a more hands-on approach I can come over and do your makeup for you before your session (additional fee applies).

HAIRSTYLE FOR FAMILY PHOTO SESSION

For a family photo session basically, any hairstyle will work great. You just want to decide on the look you are going for. I recommend doing your favorite hairstyle, the one that makes you feel beautiful and well, like you. Maybe that means a quick blow out, a natural wave or even a pretty ponytail. [Here is a link](#) for some different hairstyles and videos on how to do them, but remember you want to be comfortable so if you are going to try a new updo make sure to practice before the day of your photo session.



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.

PERSONALIZED SELECTIONS FOR YOU

Some fabulous natural colors for your family session



Suggestions for

Spring



Suggestions for

Summer



Suggestions for *Fall*



≡ *Family Costume Looks* ≡



Suggestions for *Winter*

