

Michael Fotheringham Portraits

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Preparing for your family portraits

The following suggestions are not strict rules, but simply provide some ideas to consider for your portraits.

Family and Personal Portraits

Colour coordinating your family always looks good in photographs. You don't need to match entirely, but try to avoid clashing patterns or colours. This works best if you all choose clothes from a single colour range.

For pants and skirts, darker works better than lighter ones, which distract from your face. Longer skirts work better than short ones for the same reason. Wearing long sleeves can be more flattering — bare arms can distract attention away from your face. Try to avoid shirts with logos or brand names (unless your portrait is for advertising the brand). Excessive jewellery can be distracting — choose accessories that bring out the colour in your eyes or complement your clothing.

It's usually a good idea to wear dark colours against light backgrounds, and light colours against dark backgrounds. Bright, rich colours give the impression of youth, while dark muted colours give the impression of maturity. Solid colours or plain or subtle patterns work better than decorative prints and patterns, and go out of style less quickly. Avoid bright reds and orange (they'll battle with your face for attention). Depending on your skin tone, colours like white, yellow, and pink can be over-powering and can make you look pale. In general, the best colours are medium shades of blue, green, burgundy, and rust.

If you have a group of family portrait, everyone should wear complementary colours. The outfits don't have to be identical or all the same colour to look good; however, you don't want everyone in light blue and one person in bright red.

What to bring:

- Wardrobe choices
- A brush or comb
- Any significant possessions that might help tell a personal or family story.
- Some toys or favourite possessions for children

Consider your hairstyling and cosmetics needs. Women, and sometimes even men, can enhance their portrait with the proper application of makeup, but don't use too much and only where it is deemed necessary.