



## *Clothing and accessory suggestions*

A lot of what you do to prepare for your session will have a direct impact on the quality of your photographs. Remember that you want these photographs to be about you; your style, your personality, and *your* face. When thinking about clothing, makeup, jewelry and other accessories, always keep in mind that you want to compliment your features, not dominate them.

Starting with clothing, remember to choose outfits that will allow your face and eyes to be the prominent features of every shot.

Avoid patterns, plaids, checks or bold prints because these will draw attention away from your face. Also, if you would like to wear something with a label or slogan, keep in mind that the resulting photograph will be more about that label or slogan than anything else.

Against a lighter background, medium to dark tones also work well. However, if you like that white on white look, it's OK to choose a shirt or blouse that's a solid white or a very light pastel.

Long-sleeves are always going to look the best. Short sleeves are OK, but a short sleeve shirt with a color that contrasts with your own skin tone can draw attention to your arms. In addition, a photographer will be hesitant to crop any portion of your arms where flesh is visible. This might limit your choices to either an ultra close-up shot where your sleeves are not visible, or a ¾ length or fuller photograph to keep your arms completely visible..

Avoid choosing outfits with bare shoulders or "spaghetti straps." Sometimes people that want to look smaller will choose this option, but it always has the opposite effect. Bare shoulders will always make you look heavier, and again draw attention away from your face. If you want to look smaller, cover your shoulders with something dark.

Also, pay attention to your undergarmets! Make sure you wear a similar color to your shirt, blouse or sweater. A dark undergarmet will be visible under something light, and a light undergarmet will be visible under something dark. This is especially true for bras or sports bras. If you don't have a similar tone, try wearing a bra or sports-bra that matches your skin-tone.

Regarding colors, be sure to choose outfits that compliment your complexion. Colors that may look great for some people will not work for others. Most people in the fashion and makeup industry classify certain complexion and hair types into four different groups; spring, summer, autumn and winter.

If someone says that you have spring coloring, what they usually mean is that you have light skin and pale eyes with golden blonde, strawberry blonde or red hair.

People with spring coloring should wear off-whites, blues, greens, and classic reds. Also, these people will want to avoid blacks and stark whites. Ivory, or anything with some warmth will look much better.

On the other hand, people with summer-like features have pale, pinkish-blue colored skin and very light eyes. This can include people with both blonde and brunette colored hair. If you have summer coloring, avoid bright or bold dark colors and choose pastels; such as lavender, light pink, yellow and blue.

People with fall coloring have a warmer tone in their skin, and have a golden blonde or lighter brown hair. If you are one of these people, you'll also want to avoid the stark blacks and whites, in addition to brighter colors.



## *Clothing and accessory suggestions cont.*

Instead, think of colors that you see in the fall, such as chocolate browns, spicy oranges, and reds. If you really like getting creative, you could also try pumpkin, ginger, plum and cranberry.

Lastly, let's address the colors of winter. The main traits of people with winter colors are dark hair and eyes. This includes most Asians and African Americans, as well as people with lighter, paler complexions.

Winter colored people should avoid dull or earth-tone shades, and instead they should choose power colors and contrasts. These people can wear intense, dark colors, such as black or navy, and accent them with bright whites and icy metallics.

Regardless of your complexion, be careful not to tan excessively before your session. Too much tanning will make your skin look shiny and tough, and can cost you a lot of extra money paying a retouching artist to smooth-out your complexion. A base tan is OK, but avoid getting too much sun or going to a tanning salon 3 to 4 days before your shoot.

Now let's address colors that look great in an outdoor setting: For photographs outside the studio, choose outfits that will blend with Mother Nature. Depending upon what works best with your own complexion, solid earth tones are a great choice, but other primaries, such as black and navy, will also compliment an outdoor setting. If you have a spring or summer complexion, try an in ivory or brighter yellow shade.

Keeping all that in mind, choose outfits that make you feel comfortable. While it's a good idea to bring something that is a little "dressier," you should also bring in outfits that are more casual and express your personality. If you're uncertain about some of your choices, feel free to bring along extra outfits. It's always a good idea to give you and your photographer extra options.

If you wear glasses, it is best to keep them on for the shoot if others are accustomed to seeing you with them on. However, some prescriptions can lead to problems with glare or refraction. Remember that a lot of what makes a photograph look great is the attention paid to your eyes, so a good photographer will try a lot of creative techniques to direct lighting at them. It will allow for the most creativity if you have the lenses removed prior to your session, and any optometrist will usually loan you a pair of empty frames, free of charge. However, some photographers can take a photograph of you without glasses, and then super-impose your eyes on to photographs with excess glare, but this is sure to be an added expense.

Regarding jewelry, remember that you want to compliment your features, so keep it simple. Choose earrings that you like, but not something that will distract from your eyes. Simple studs or hoops are usually best. Necklaces are OK, but avoid large pendants.

Your photo shoot will be about you, and your photographer will always be looking to "accentuate the positive." Paying close attention to these details will help ensure that the images captured will be the part of you, in this time of your life, that you and your family will always cherish.