

# 8 Tips for a Successful Session



1

## **Plan ahead.**

This is a good blanket tip, and it's probably the first one to consider. But before the day of the shoot, get everything in order. Set the outfits you'll be wearing aside so nothing accidentally ends up in the washing machine. Pack some snacks the day before so you can grab and go without having to scramble at the last minute.

2

## **Wear comfortable clothes and shoes.**

This goes for every member of the family. If an outfit looks great, but it's not comfortable during the first five minutes you're wearing it, leave it at home. We'll probably be walking around a bit, maybe some running, different poses, rolling around on the ground... In other words, we'll be spending a lot of time on our feet, so keeping a wardrobe as all-purpose as possible makes everyone a whole lot happier.

3

### **Bring a reward.**

If you have younger children bring along a reward — a harmless little bribe can go a long way toward getting them to sit still and cooperate with the camera. A lot of the pictures we're going to take will be in-the-moment shots of your family enjoying a lovely day, but for those posed portraits? A favorite snack or the promise of a new toy does the trick every time (and who doesn't love ice cream?).

4

### **Dress for the weather.**

The weather can be a little unpredictable during certain times of year, so check the forecast and come prepared anyway (if it's raining, we'll just reschedule). If there's even the slightest chance of cold, pack an extra sweater, some socks, a hairbrush (absolutely bring one of these!), and some jackets and scarves. In the summer, make sure to come packing a tube of sunscreen and some bug repellent. Keep everything in the car so you have them, just in case.

5

### **Focus on the experience.**

The best pictures come with movement, a true sense of togetherness, and genuine emotion. It's not easy to do all of that when you have to think of a million little things — so don't!

The very first thing I tell every client is, simply, to have a good time and leave the details to me. The more you immerse yourself into the spirit of "family fun time," the less you'll even notice that the camera is there. I'll be around to give you some small directions here and there, but otherwise, your job is to enjoy yourselves.

6

### **Kids will be kids.**

As a family photographer, I've seen some some meltdowns in my time. But you know what? It's all part of the process! Instead of getting the wind knocked out of our sails by a tantrum, we keep it positive, have a little fun with it, and keep right on shooting. Actually, you'd be pleasantly surprised how often moments like this result in some of the best shots, so just be you!

If you want to up your chances of having a smooth session, make sure your child eats a nice, healthy meal right before. Something substantial will keep them focused, and you won't have to worry about any rumbling tummies.



7

### **It's about the love.**

We all want that image that looks like it came with the picture frame — that carefree moment where everyone in your brood is at their very best, and where their personalities are shining through. Those pictures come from real love.

I always recommend that a family start their shoot day together. Rising early, having a big breakfast around the table, then a trip to the playground to burn off some excess energy (but not too much!). All the things you love doing together. In other words, focus on yourselves. By the time we're ready to shoot, this will be just another exciting part of a memorable day.



8

### **Don't try to fit too many things in**

This goes back to Tip No. 4 a little, but again, focus on the experience. We've booked a block of time together, so you absolutely want to get all the shots out of it that you can. And as the photographer, I couldn't agree more!

However, it's easy to put together a list of different shirts, skirts, dresses, shoes, etc. that you want to have represented (“We need get some pictures of him in the outfit your mom got him.”). Similarly, you might have some amazing ideas about locations, or a few different Pinterest-inspired “looks” you want to try.

In all of this, try not to spread yourself too thin. Sticking with a minimal amount of looks maximizes our time together and results in a much wider selection of images than if half the time is spent changing things up. When in doubt, ask me what I think is realistic and let me know what your priorities are, and I'll be able to guide you in the best direction.

There's really not much more to it than that! A little planning and a willingness to goof around are all that's required to have a fun afternoon, and of course, pictures that will last a lifetime.