

10 Easy Tips and Tricks for Looking Better in Photographs

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Before running out for Botox or for a fancy photographer, here are 10 quick and easy things you can do to improve how you look in photos:

Have a lot of shots taken of you, and only keep the best. Focus on flattering posture and angles. Know facial expressions that work for you. Make sure your eyes are facing the light. Pay attention to what you are wearing, your grooming, the lighting and background.

#1: Shoot a lot, only keep a few. Pros keep only between 1-10% of photos they take – seriously! Models don't just walk on to set, take one photo, and leave. Change your angles and what you are doing. The more selection, the better. To improve your odds, use the following tips:

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#2: Posture and angles. Elongate your neck, and tilt your chin just a bit. Do not slouch. Keep your shoulders back. If you are standing – turn slightly and rest your weight on your back leg. Don't keep your legs together and shoulders straight. Lean slightly toward the camera and angle your face and/or body. Ensure the lens is above you, if the photographer is shorter than you, move to an area where they can stand on something or you can get below the lens. Head shots can also be more pleasing if only one ear is showing.



#3: Facial expressions. Laugh and smile. Keep your tongue behind your teeth. Look slightly *above* the lens. Try looking away from the camera and a few facial expressions. Candid shots are engaging and more interesting than the traditional “say-cheese” forced smile, which can create a forced look and squinty eyes.

#4: Eyes. Your eyes are the key. Holding a pose and keeping your eyes engaged is difficult. So close your eyes and then open them. Look away, then look back to the camera. Do something unexpected. Talk to the photographer. Face your eyes towards the light source: catchlights create sparkle and immediately add life to your eyes. If you are outdoors, stand in the shade, and face the light. If you are indoors, face a window at an angle.



#5: What you are wearing. Wear a color that flatters you. Don't wear clothes that have crazy patterns, it will distract from your photo. Stay away from striped/checkered shirts. Also make sure your clothes aren't wrinkled or bunching up, it can add weight if clothes are too baggy.

#6: Grooming. Make sure your hair is brushed, you don't want a stray hair distracting. If you have a blemish, cover it. If your eyes look red, use eye drops. Brush your teeth, use a teeth whitener.

#7: Lighting. Don't take photos in direct sunlight or with a direct flash. This is unflattering and will cause harsh shadows. Move into the shade, or make sure the flash is bouncing off the wall. Soft light smooths wrinkles.

#8: Background. You don't want your background to distract. Take a look at what is behind you. You don't want a tree growing out of your head. Aim for a clean and simple background that contrasts with you. If you have black hair, stay away from a dark black

background. If you are wearing all white, you may not want to stand directly in front of an all white background. This shot was made by the red paint.



#9: Move around and dance. Try not to appear too tense and rigid. Dance around a little and shake out your body.

#10: Take advantage of props. Do something with your hands and use props. Below is a recent maternity photo of me, with a prop. I was getting tired and pictures were falling flat. Once I grabbed a prop, the shots got better.



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