

Nina Ferentinos Photography

5 Tips for a successful Family Photo Session

The Do's and Don'ts of a Family photo session

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Tip #1:

DON'T tell the kids to smile or be good!

You want your family to feel like they had the best time ever, and the way that happens is by making the focus be on playing and having fun together.

So don't say things like: "Make sure you smile at the camera," "Be good" or "We're going to put on our best-listening ears."

Because if you say those things, the smiles are fake and the kids don't feel positive about the day. That sounds like they're going to school to me, lol.

You don't want your kids to "behave", you want them to be themselves.

I just want you to enjoy each other and not worry about smiling at the camera.

That is when the magic will happen.

So tell the kids that a fun friend is going to take photos of you while you play and go on an adventure. Or tell them that they get to use potty words only during the session (I had a family do that and the little boy was giggling the entire time talking about poop and toilets!)

Tip #2:

DON'T discipline the kids during the session!

What is the goal of your photo session?

To get lots of photos of your family looking happy and sweet.

What is the fastest way to turn a happy kid into a sad one?

Yelling at them, telling them no, getting them in trouble, threatening them with the loss of electronic time, etc.

Do you see where I'm going with this?

And I know it's hard, I've been there!

But just for this one day, let everything go and just enjoy your family.

Everything your kid does is the cutest thing ever! I will help redirect if needed, but unless it's a safety issue, try to let it go.

Their happiness is what matters on this day! :)





Tip #3:

DON'T bring items you don't want in the photos

If you don't want your child to be holding a bag of chips or a bright red stuffed animal the entire session, don't give it to them right before the session.

If there is a certain item that you do want photos with, hide it well and don't bring it out until the end.

Same with snacks, only bring them out if absolutely necessary (unless you're planning a cute picnic during your session, of course).

I had a family give their kids suckers on the drive to the session and they didn't want to give them up. But the parents definitely didn't want suckers in all of the photos!

So just be sure that the kids eat ahead of time so they hopefully won't need food until after.

Tip #4: Wear the right outfits!

Your clothing makes a huge difference, and can really have an impact on the overall look of your session. Wearing tons of blue or black will really dull your images. Especially with my editing, tons of blue will just not look great and black sucks out all of the color.

If your session happens to be on a cloudy day, choosing all very cool and neutral colors can make your photos a bit lifeless, but having some pops of color and warmth will help liven them up.

There is a lot to think about when it comes to clothing, which is why I am here to help with all of that!

We will talk a lot about clothing, I have a [blogpost](#) about it and I want you to send me pictures of your ideas so I can give you more feedback.

Together we will pull it all together!





Tip #5: **DON'T** bribe your kids!

Try not to bribe or incentivize kids to do a good job during family photos because it's not needed.

You're about to have a fun family day where the kids get all of your attention and you get to play games and explore together!

Don't say things like, "If you're good, we're going to go get ice cream after this." Instead, surprise them with it at the end to create a good experience and an awesome memory of your day.

But if you tell them that you're going to go get ice cream afterward ahead of time, the entire shoot they might be focusing on the ice cream. "When can we go get ice cream, can we go get ice cream now?" Instead of focusing on having fun during the session.

And they WILL have fun during the session if you allow them to. If you go with the flow and enjoy your time together.

If the kids have had a more posed photo session in the past, you might need to explain that this isn't like that. But once you show them that it's all about fun, they will hopefully be excited and ready to play!



I hope this guide gets you excited about your next family photo session and helps you feel more confident about how to make it enjoyable for everyone!

If you are a fun and cuddly family who wants a great experience and gorgeous scenery during your next family photos, I'd love to be your photographer!



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