

Lesson 6: People Pictures

In General:

- Avoid putting heads in the middle of the picture.
- Try not to cut off feet.
- Fill the frame** with your subject. Put heads near the top of the picture.
- Use different shapes: arcs, circles, triangles.
- Use props to tell a story.
- Use people in a setting that helps to tell a story.
- Show the whole group and then zoom in on individuals.
- Avoid the static shot. Show action if possible. Have subjects walking instead of standing.
- Try shooting from different angles.
 - Many subjects can be shot from a variety of angles and using different lenses.
 - From ground level (children, pets)
 - From above looking down.
 - In close with a wide angle lens for more distortion.
- Leave space for your subject to look or move into.
- Place your subjects in the shade. Do not have them squinting towards the sun.
- Try back lighting and fill flash.
- Look for an unobtrusive background. Avoid background features growing out of the subject's head.

Children:

- Avoid straight on body shots.
- Turn the body a bit. Perhaps have the child look over the shoulder at you.
- Try having the child lean forward a bit towards you.
- Get close and down to their level.
- Show the eyes.
- Photograph older children in action.
- Photograph wide angle to place children in context and then zoom in or move closer for the more intimate shot.
- Watch for and photograph silliness.

More Formal Portraits:

-Angle the **shoulders**.

-For a thinner **waistline**: Rotate the waist slightly.

-To hide heavy **thighs**: Cross one leg over in front of the other.

-To emphasize the **bust**: Arch the shoulders back a bit.

-Hands

1. When posing a subject pay particular attention to their hands and encourage your model to keep them relaxed and their fingers separated.
2. If your subject can't seem to relax their hands - consider composing shots that don't include the hands (head shots and upper body shots).
3. Sometimes the best thing to do with hands is to give them something to hold or do. Consider using a prop (as long as it adds to and is relevant the shot and isn't distracting) or have them rest upon some other element in the shot (a leg, a chair etc).
4. Hands tend to look best when shot from the side. Front on shots of hands can often look quite blob like.

-What **clothes** to wear in portraits.

1. Comfortable clothing relaxes the model.
2. Clothes can put people into context.
3. Dark and plain clothes show off the model's face.
4. Collared shirts are especially effective for males.

Travel People Photography:

-Asking permission

- You are a guest in their country and should behave with **respect and friendliness**. You should politely ask permission if the person is to be the main subject of the photo.
- Not if the person is a minor subject in your photo.
- Getting 'permission' can mean different things in different situations** - often it's simply a matter of holding up your camera and smiling with a raised eyebrow. Other times you might actually ask but gesturing will usually be sufficient enough to get a nod or a shake of the head. It's quite rare to be refused by a friendly approach.
- If permission is not given or you're sensing the other person is not comfortable with your actions stop and politely move on.
- Before you travel do some research on what is and isn't acceptable culturally. While this isn't directly related to taking photos it does have an impact upon those you meet along the way that you might wish to photograph.
- Smiling at the person and maintaining strong eye contact before, during and after taking your photo does wonders.
- If you are watching a performance or show where photography is allowed you probably don't need to ask permission of individuals.
- If photographing children:** take extra care to get permission from a parent where there is one present.

-It's your choice to **pay or tip people** for photographs

-Don't travel in a **large group**. If traveling with a larger group hang back on the edges of the group and look for your own opportunities.

-Composing the photograph

- Choose your background carefully to put people into context.
- Choose a dark background to emphasize faces.
- Fill your frame. Take close-ups of people's faces.
- Try natural un-posed shots.
- Adding a second person can show relationships.

-**Metering modes:** choose a spot metering mode when shooting portraits - particularly when the subject is backlit or where there are bright or dark parts of the image that could skew the results.

Action Photography:

- Anticipate and photograph the **critical moment**.
- Shoot wide angle and zoom.
- Be careful not to leave important parts out: racquet, covered face.
- Shoot action early.
- Watch for peak action.