

Karen Léger
photography

CUE THE CLASSICS: FAMILY PORTRAIT DAY TIPS

A LAID-BACK GUIDE FOR A STRESS-FREE SHOOT



Why this guide rocks

to prepare you for the day

Just like curating the perfect playlist, getting everyone photo-ready should be satisfying, not chaotic. Here's your session prep checklist—easy, relaxed, and totally authentic.

Your Shoot Is Gonna Be Epic - Even If the First 10 Minutes Feel Weird
Let's be real-99% of the time, the first few minutes of a photoshoot feel a little awkward. That's totally normal. You're in front of a camera, you're thinking about your smile, your shirt, your kid's shoelaces-it's a lot. But trust me, it won't stay that way.

I've got you.



What to expect

on the day

I'll guide you through everything-from where to stand to how to move-so you're never stuck wondering what to do with your hands. I'll prompt you with easy directions and real moments that bring out your natural energy.

Whether it's a group hug, a walk-and-talk, or just a goofy moment with your kiddo, I'll make sure your vibe shines through.

And hey-this isn't a performance. It's a memory in motion.

Feel free to throw in your own movements and poses. Spin your partner, tickle your toddler, fix your teen's collar. The goal? Be you.

The most natural version of you is what photographs best. If you ever start feeling stiff, no big deal-just shake it out, take a breath, and roll with it.

This session is about connection, not perfection.

So come ready to have fun, stay present, and trust that I'll make sure you look and feel amazing from start to finish.



What to expect

more on the day

I Promise—This Is Gonna Be Fun

Seriously. By the end of your session, you'll be total pros in front of the camera. The awkwardness? Gone. The nerves? Faded. What's left? A bunch of real moments, genuine connection, and some seriously amazing photos.

This is more than a photoshoot—it's a good time, a memory in the making, and a chance to just be together while I handle the rest.

Thank you for trusting me with your story. I'm honored to capture it.

Let's make some magic.



Timing

I love to shoot when the sun is low in the sky—just before sunset or just after sunrise. This "golden hour" light is soft, warm, and makes everything look magical.

That said, golden hour doesn't always match family schedules (especially with little ones). That's okay! What matters most is choosing a time when your family is happy and relaxed.

We'll chat about when your kids are at their best and build the session around your rhythm.

Hot tip:

One day before the shoot, get all of your things ready and have them in the car. Give yourself lots of time to get to the location so you don't feel frazzled and rushed on arrival.

When a family shows up to a shoot having had to drive illegal speeds to get there, it sets the tone for a chaotic session. Allow plenty of time for showers, baths, grooming, and forgetting things.



How to prep

Family sessions always come with a few wild cards-mostly in the form of kids.

The truth is, no matter how much we plan, their moods usually set the tone. That's not a bad thing-it just means we roll with it.

In the days leading up to your shoot, hype it up for them. Let them know this is easy, fun, and totally about being themselves. We'll probably play a few silly games, laugh a lot, and yes-snacks are part of the deal. A stash of mini marshmallows or bite-sized treats can go a long way when attention starts to wander.

And parents-this part's for you: don't stress about how your kids act. I've got it handled. I actually focus most of my attention on the youngest ones, since they're usually the ones keeping things interesting. That means you get to relax. Smile, move naturally, and just be you.

The best photos always happen when everyone's having fun-so let's keep it light and let the kids lead the way.



If your kids want to bring their favorite stuffed toy, style their hair their *style*, or wear their favorite bright red tie, let them!

It'll only add to the authenticity of the shoot!



@photocredit



Location

If you already know where you want to shoot, that's amazing – I'm always up for discovering new places. If you're not sure, don't sweat it! I've got my own little index of locations for almost every scenario and we can go through them together.

Ideally, we're looking for somewhere where there aren't too many distractions, where the light is soft, and where there's enough space for us to move around without breaking anything.





If it feels like too much of a struggle to get everyone dressed and fed and out of the house on time, consider having the session at home! From candid moments around the kitchen table, to rolling around in tickle fights on the bed, I am a huge fan of in-home sessions for the way they authentically capture a snippet of your family reality.

So you want to bring *your pup*?

They are part of the family, after all! If you're arriving with your a four-legged-friend in tow, here are some things to consider first:

- ✦ Make sure the location that we've chosen is dog-friendly
- ✦ Brush up on some commands and tricks to make sure they're on their best behavior
- ✦ Make sure they've had lots of exercise beforehand so that they're calm and attentive when it's go-time
- ✦ Pack treats, toys, and a lint roller
- ✦ Give 'em a good brush beforehand



Family constellations

Let me know if there are specific combinations of people who you'd like me to photograph together and I'll make sure to prioritise based on what's most important to you guys. I've got tons of poses and prompts up my sleeve for any scenario, so all you have to do is relax and go with it!



It's all part of it

If you walk away after reading this and only remember one thing, let it be this: have zero expectations. Embrace what comes – the wind, the rain, the laughter, whatever unfolds. It's **all about YOU** and capturing your life exactly how it is on the day of your shoot – wrinkles, tears, joyous abandon, and all.

Throw your checklist out the window and know that magic will naturally unfold. When it does, I'll be there to capture it.

This is the only checklist you need :)

- ✓ Outfits coordinated
- ✓ Snacks + comfort item packed if you have young ones.
- ✓ Everyone well-rested
- ✓ Time of day chosen (kids first!)
- ✓ Playlist ready for good vibes... seriously, if you want to load one up, let me know. I am happy to bring my portable speaker!





thank you