

# How to Look Great in your Wedding Photos

Banish your photo fears with my 20 top tips and you'll look picture perfect.

## 1 Have an Engagement Shoot.

Most people hate having their picture taken, and if you're one of them, you'll need to get used to being in front of the camera for the big day. The best way to achieve this is by arranging an engagement or pre-wedding shoot. Email me for details.

## 2 Speak Face to Face.

You'll be putting your trust in me to ensure you'll look your bridal best, so it'll be helpful if we get along. We'll meet once or twice before your big day, so we can get to know each other and you'll be comfortable seeing my running around you on the big day..

## 3 Laugh rather than Force a Smile.

If you feel uneasy stepping in front of a camera, here is a little mantra to remember for both your pre-wedding shoot and your wedding day – it's always better to laugh than to force a smile. Tell silly jokes with your husband or remember a funny story so that your smile comes naturally. Try smiling in the mirror at home. You might feel a little silly at first, but if it helps you feel more confident on your wedding day, it has to be worth it.

## 4 Know your Best Side.

There's no shame in this, so be honest from the start. You know the way you look better than anyone, so if there's something that you're not 100 % happy with, let me know and I can discretely work around it. If it's good enough for Mariah Carey (She never allows anyone to photograph her from the left), then it's good enough for you.

## 5 Visit your Venue.

Along with me, it is a good idea for us to meet here. We can find the best locations for various photographs. And by doing this, we can minimise time spent away from your guests on the day. And we can make plans in case of bad weather!

## 6 Have a Schedule.

This is so important because you do not want to be rushing about trying to organise things, or you'll end up looking flushed and stressed. Schedule a time for your couple shots, portraits and group shots, and then get ushers and the best man on the case to round up everyone else. Write down all the timings, either on a blackboard for everyone to see, or on a sheet of paper, which you can hand out to the bridal party.

## 7 Maximise Natural Light.

Rooms with low ceilings can be dark so avoid these if you can. Also, when you're getting ready, choose a room with lots of windows and then sit near them! Remember it's always best to apply your make-up in natural light!!!

## 8 Hold Something.

Often couples say 'I don't know what to do with my hands.'. Well for girls it's best to hold your bouquet. I always tell brides to hold their bouquets mid stem – if you hold it too far down, it can look a bit like a baton. Also, tilt the flower heads down and angle them slightly, so you will always be able to see the full bouquet rather than a side profile.

Finally, hold your arms away from your body, with your shoulders down and relaxed, and a slight bend in your elbows. You can also lean on each other, wrap your arms around your groom's arms or chest, or hold hands – whatever comes naturally.

### **9 Practice Makes Perfect.**

Spend some time before the big day practicing how you'll stand together in ways that will flatter you both. Find pictures in magazines or online – Show them to me so I can get an idea of the looks you want.

### **10 Learn how to Pose.**

You can do this, again, by looking at magazines, online or even get a Bridal coach. Michele Paradise is a coach. Have a look at her website at [theBridalCoach.co.uk](http://theBridalCoach.co.uk) for inspiration.

### **11 Great Make-up.**

Beautiful make-up is a big day essential and if you're not completely confident with doing it yourself, it's probably best to leave it with a professional. I work with an absolutely amazing make-up artist. She has been in the business for many years and everyone she works with has had nothing but good things to say about her. Contact me for details.

### **12 Prepare Yourself.**

A good skin care routine and a healthy diet are both essential for glowing bridal skin. It also goes without saying that you should try and get lots of sleep and drink plenty of water so your body is in perfect condition before you go in front of the camera. Get regular check-ups with your dentist, too, so your teeth are the very best condition they can be. Consider whitening treatments if you're not 1100% confident – a tight lipped smile can look strained and fake. Let your mouth relax and show off those pearly whites.

### **13 Take it Steady at the Champagne Reception.**

The bubbles in Champagne can go straight to your head pretty quickly, and it's not ideal to have squiffy eyes in all your wedding photographs. I'm not saying don't have a celebratory drink. I'm just saying take it steady. After all, you probably won't feel like having a huge breakfast, especially if your dress is tight. You still want to look glamorous, poised and sophisticated all day long, not like some hot mess who couldn't handle her drink.

### **14 Stretched Suits.**

This is one for the guys to think about the suits and how they will look in the pictures. Firstly, don't put anything bulky in the pockets. If you need your wallet or phone, give them to your best man to hold on to. Unsightly bulges are not what you want to be looking at in 20 years time! Secondly, when posing with your gorgeous new wife, try to avoid putting your arms up around her neck and shoulders too much if you are directly in front of the camera. This can cause your suit to rustle and stretch up, leaving it gappy and exposed. Not a great look. It will also be uncomfortable for your bride, especially if she's wearing a long dress.

### **15 Troublesome Arms.**

Many brides feel anxious about the way their upper arms appear in photographs. Particularly if they're wearing a strapless dress. But fret not! There are a few tricks you

can do to minimise their appearance. First off, try not to stand with your arms hanging down by your side, as this will squish your arms into your body, causing them to look unrealistically large. When you're holding your bouquet, try to keep your arms slightly tensed, but your shoulders down and relaxed, and your hands soft. And finally, if I ask you to lean against a door/a wall/your husband, try to perch and not flop. Just brush it with your body so it gives the appearance of you leaning gently, without the unsightly squishing effect!

### **16 Show off your Details.**

You have probably chosen your structured wedding dress because it makes your waist look tiny. Or a hair accessory to highlight your hairstyle. Don't forget to get shots of these things too. Think about the reason you chose a particular detail and make sure I capture it for you to remember it forever.

### **17 Perfect Posture.**

Think 'long' when you're standing, elongate your body, extend your chin and think about pulling your body upwards to make you appear taller and thinner. Envisage pulling your belly button inwards towards your spine, as this will make you naturally hold your stomach in. However, try not to go too far the other way and don't hold your breath. Again, this will look forced, and will give you a strained look. Also, if you turn your head slightly away from the camera, it will draw the viewer's eye up and down instead of side to side. This will help if you dislike your ears. By posing at a three-quarter angle to the lens, your ears will appear smaller.

### **18 Hair Heaven.**

Unless you're going to have a hairdresser on hand all day long, your bridal 'do will be prone to falling out, particularly if you've chosen to have pictures outside. Do take regular toile breaks to check everything is still in place. The last thing you want is to have stray hairs tickling you in the face and distracting you during your shots. Similarly, ask a trustworthy bridesmaid to be on veil duty and to arrange it neatly before any pictures are taken.

### **19 Make me Up.**

Arm your chief bridesmaid (or your mum) with blotting paper, lipgloss, powder and a hairbrush, so she can help to refresh your look throughout the day. And don't forget to refresh your make-up and hairstyle before the evening guests arrive. The official photos may be over, but they will be snapping away too, and you'll want them to see you at your bridal best.

### **20 Be Yourself.**

Just be yourself – It's as simple as that. Act naturally, do whatever you normally do as a couple and the love you have for one another will shine through. More often than not, you'll find that the candid shots of you and your new husband together will be the ones you love the most, and you probably didn't even notice me taking them. So enjoy all of your hard work and relax.