

5 Tips for Styling a Family

The Ultimate
*Style
Guide*



5 What to Wear Tips for Styling a Family

Having family photos taken is so exciting but it can also be daunting to pull together outfits for the entire family. Where do you start? As a photographer I love guiding clients as they pull their outfits together. Here are five tips to style your session:

1 Use location for inspiration. The location and time of year should guide the wardrobe choices, and ideally the location is selected before the outfits. A flower garden or field of wild flowers is great for neutral, romantic attire, whereas bold colors are wonderful on a cloudy fall day or neutral hay field. Think about how the environment will complement the outfit choices to ensure a cohesive feel.



2 Begin with mom. It is so important for the mom to feel relaxed, confident, and beautiful on the day of the family session. I like to find out from mom if she prefers a dress or pants, then assist in building options from there. Think about the practicality of the outfit. Does she have young kids and will be moving or crouching a lot? Then a short dress might not be a great choice in this scenario, but longer dresses, maxi skirts, or pants would be a great place to start.



3 Colors & Layers. Use similar color families to keep the outfits cohesive and varying lengths on top and bottom to add texture. You don't want everyone to look too matchy-matchy, but you want the colors to blend well. Also, layers can easily elevate and add interest to any outfit. Add a solid button up left open or a cardigan over a blousy top or dress, and hats and scarves for winter sessions. It is those little details that pull the location and outfits together for a visually appealing, stunning family session.



4 Lay everything out together. Before I make my commitment to clothing for any family session, I lay it all out on the ground and see how it looks together. If you're questioning your wardrobe choice, I encourage clients to send me a picture to make sure everything looks great together. Trust your gut – if something feels a little off, it probably is. I usually have a few options that I switch in and out until I have it just right. Once it feels like you've got it, set the outfits aside and forget about them until your session or you could drive yourself a little crazy.



COMPLEMENTARY

In art and design, the color wheel is an indispensable tool. Colors opposite each other on the wheel are complementary. I like to use the color wheel to guide my clients to colors that look great together and don't clash. If a family loves the pairing of orange and blue, for example, I suggest some pops of orange amongst varying tones of blue in cotton, denim, and chambray fabrics. For single subjects, I recommend outfits that complement the tones in the location. In a green field, for example, dark pinks stand out beautifully.



Remember:

You don't have to be a fashionista.
You don't need to have champagne taste.
You don't need to be an "it" girl.
You just need to put some thought and care into it.

5 And last, A smile is your best accessory. It's my job to make you look beautiful. You just have to show up, and I take it from there! It's the experience that makes fun! Smiling, laughing, being an affectionate, and enjoying your time together is the perfect icing on the cake.



Dos

Timelessness
Movement
Comfortable, flattering pieces
Textured, muted fabrics

Don'ts

Logos, brands & characters
Neon colors
Matching outfits
Clothes that pull focus from the subjects themselves

