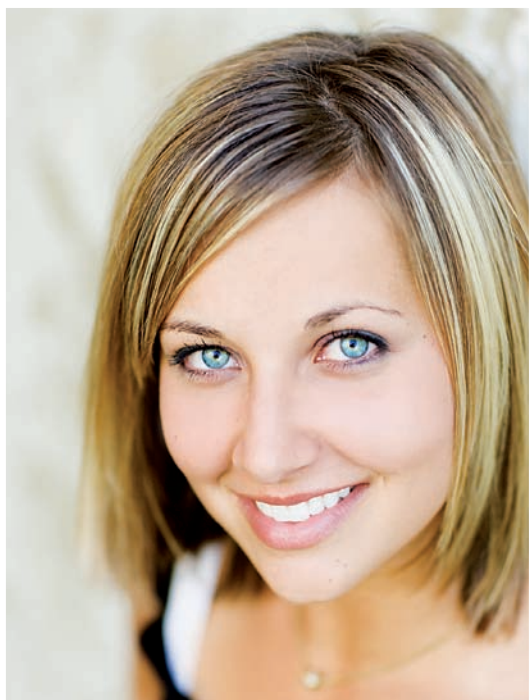


# Learn how to take creative photographs

## People & Portraits

### Learn to photograph people better and shoot truer portraits

Young, old, small, big, adorable, cheeky, beautiful, distinctive, moving. Name a characteristic and there's a person who personifies it. This is what makes people an inexhaustible source of inspiration for photographers. But how do you capture them in a way that best reflects their appearance and personality? How can you ensure that children look as natural as possible in a photograph? Which practical approach produces the most intriguing portraits? You'll get more out of your camera and yourself and the person in front of your lens with the following tips and tricks. Apply them and the results will amaze you. Whether you're just starting out in photography or you already have some experience. Have fun!



### 1

#### YOU ARE LOOKING AT A PERSON, NOT YOUR CAMERA!

What does a person look like exactly? What are a person's special characteristics and what does their posture say? Do you surprise someone by spontaneously shooting a photograph, or, instead, do you give them specific instructions in advance? You have to take into account all circumstances when photographing people. Whatever the situation, try to shoot the photograph 'away from the centre' for a change and don't take it slap bang in the middle. Don't just think about asking the person whose portrait you're taking to change to another position, but do it yourself too. You're the one who determines the most favourable or creative angle. The camera records what you have discovered in someone!

#### Move!

Let's assume that someone has a double chin. Generally, you won't want to accentuate that. Shoot your photograph from a slightly higher angle. Keep observing the person's posture. Many people have the tendency to 'throw' their head back. Certainly when they laugh. Ask them to lower their chin slightly. This often helps to shoot a more attractive picture of someone. You'll want the eyes to be prominent in the picture. They are after all a lot livelier than the chin. In the case of a small person, or for children, bend your knees, lowering yourself. Photograph as much as possible at eye level and continue to move!

### 2

#### KEEP THEM OUT OF THE SUN FOR A CHANGE



Position a loved one in the shade for a change. This will allow you to shoot a softly lit picture. Shadows, or a cloudy day, actually produce friendlier and more diffused light. This, in turn, produces a softer portrait. We associate warmth with the sun. Rightly so, if you're discussing temperature. But sunlight produces high contrasts and shadows on the face. Above all, people often blink their eyes in full sunlight which does not usually benefit a good-natured expression.



## 3 DISTRACT CHILDREN

Children are one of the most satisfying subjects to photograph. But they often don't cooperate, or they cooperate too much. Under the influence of the 'official moment', they can adopt a forced pose. Smaller children sometimes find it a little bit scary. Or they walk away just at the moment you're going to shoot. In brief: a natural and spontaneous portrait of a child isn't an easy thing to take. The solution is often to choose the right distraction at the right moment.

### Create a friendly atmosphere

Parents are good at creating a distraction. Have one of the parents stand diagonally behind you, with their face at the same height as the camera. If a child is finding it all too intimidating, they will automatically look for eye contact with their father or mother. Because they're standing next to you, it's just as if the child is looking into the lens. If there isn't a parent around, draw their attention with a game and continue to talk to them.



### Take lots of photographs

Shoot lots of pictures in succession. Then you'll get that special moment that you might otherwise have missed. The 'continuous shooting' mode is very handy for this. With this feature, the camera can shoot multiple photographs of a single situation in rapid succession. In the case of digital photography, you can easily delete less successful photographs afterwards. So shoot yourself silly and keep what you like!



## 4 CONCENTRATE ON THE EYES

It is not for nothing that people's eyes are referred to as the 'windows on the soul'. They are the most important part of a portrait, which is why it's always important to focus carefully on a person's eyes. Check if the camera is focusing properly on this position. Most cameras show the focusing points in the viewfinder or on screen. You can often change these points too. This will allow you to photograph with even more precision.

## 5 PREVENTING RED EYES WHEN USING FLASH



If it is dark, pupils become dilated. Due to this, eyes can appear red in a photograph under the influence of light from a flash. To prevent this, switch your flash to the 'red eye reduction flash' mode. This is in the standard menu on most compact cameras. The camera produces a brief small flash just before the actual shot. At the moment that the photograph is actually taken, the pupils are already considerably contracted and the red eye effect no longer occurs, or is considerably reduced. Take into account that the flash has a minimum and a maximum range.



## 6

## REMEMBER THE BACKGROUND

You want the attention to be focused on the person you're photographing, not on the background. So be aware of that background. This actually influences the entire photograph. If you want to express calm in a portrait, choose a calm, nondescript background.

**Portrait mode**

Many cameras have a special portrait mode. Through adjusting the size of the aperture, this mode ensures that the subject is sharply in focus, while the background is actually blurred. This automatically draws all the attention to the person. If you want to learn more about this principle, study tip 8 too.



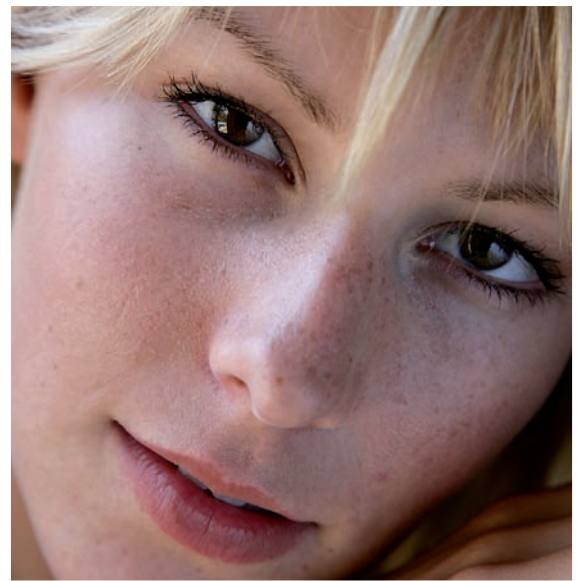
## 7

## CREATE EXTRA LIGHT

If there is too little light, or if you want to avoid patches of shade on a person's face in strong sunlight, you can add extra light. Use a piece of white cardboard, polystyrene or a professional reflection screen. This catches the light and reflects in the desired direction onto the face.

**Reflection screens**

The technique described above is also suitable for filling in and neutralising dark areas in the face (not just shadows but also wrinkles or sagging). Or position someone next to a window and reflect the light coming through the window onto the part of the face that requires extra illumination. Experiment with this from different angles and positions. If you find this too complicated you can also use fill-in flash for the dark areas of the face. Check your camera to see if the flash is switched on. This method also works well with backlighting.



## Tips for Semi-Pros

Your camera has many more possibilities than have been discussed here for getting more out of yourself and for taking more attractive photographs. Many people are hesitant about delving deeper into the menu and trying out new functions that they don't already know. Understandable, but certainly unnecessary. Experiment and don't let yourself be put off. And if you get stuck, switch your camera off and start again!

If you've been taking photographs for a while and the tips above are obvious to you, you may benefit more from the following more advanced advice.

## 8

## ADJUST THE FOCUS YOURSELF

We stated previously that the attention needs to be on the person in a portrait, instead of on the background. You can do this by using the portrait mode, but try experimenting by switching your camera to Av. This is how you adjust the aperture. This controls how much light enters through the lens.

**Individual portraits and group photographs**

The smaller the aperture, the greater the depth of field. Use a larger aperture for an individual portrait (for example F8). This will accentuate the person you are photographing. If you would like to shoot a group photograph in which everyone is sharply in focus, select a smaller aperture, for example F16. Try using both possibilities step by step in a single situation and compare the results with each other. Look especially at depth and blur.





## 9

### GET MORE ATMOSPHERE FROM YOUR FLASH

Every type of light has its own colour and nuance. Due to this, light determines to a large extent the atmosphere in a photograph. Using the shutter, you can experiment with this. The shutter controls the time that the light has to affect the film or sensor.

#### Long and short shutter times

With long shutter times (1/30s or longer), the light from the flash and the ambient light - for example disco lights or a burning candle - both get the opportunity to reach the film or sensor. In the case of shorter shutter times (1/60s or shorter), the flash determines the light and the atmospheric lighting in the location is omitted. So if you want to shoot a portrait during a pleasant dinner, you'll have to use slower shutter times.

#### M Master the essence of photography!

Once you have mastered the techniques above, switch your camera to 'manual' (M) for a change.

#### Tv

You then determine for each photograph the correct combination of shutter speed (Tv) and aperture (Av).

#### Av

From that moment, you are immersed in the absolute essence of photography!

## 10

### EXPERIMENT WITH THE LIGHT METERING



If your camera allows this, you can adjust the light metering yourself. Consider beforehand which part of the photograph you want to be properly lit. In the case of a portrait, this will usually be the face. With 'partial spot metering' you can measure very precisely. Certainly in difficult situations, such as high contrasts, this can be worthwhile.



#### Under and overexposure

Try practicing with over and underexposure, depending on the type of skin the person you are photographing has. You will have to overexpose a very white skin while a very dark skin will require underexposure.



### Beautiful (portrait) photographs start with you having fun!

Photographing people as they really are, or shooting a portrait of someone in a unique way; this demands patience, practice and a certain degree of luck. Apply the tips above and you'll see that straightaway you can shoot very different photographs. But the results will certainly sometimes be a disappointment. Don't be discouraged by this, but let it inspire you to go on and investigate what you can do to discover the photographer in yourself. Most of all, it's about having fun. The pleasure you

experience from the unexpected possibilities of your camera and of the new way of looking at people. Are you going to get cracking with portrait photography? Don't forget to take several memory cards, an extra rechargeable battery, ordinary batteries, a charger, a portrait lens, an auxiliary flash and a tripod with you. Visit [www.canon-europe.com/store](http://www.canon-europe.com/store) for a complete overview of handy accessories. Good luck!

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