

## Posing Tips by Seattle Photographer Natalie Fobes Natalie@fobesphoto.com

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There are a few rules that will help you when you are arranging people.

Avoid the body in the middle of the frame, feet pointing straight to the camera, face forward, hands to the side stance unless you want that aggressive pose for some reason.

Instead, create movement in your images by adjusting body parts. As Bambi Cantrell says, if it moves, bend it! (when appropriate.)

After you have set up the pose, stop for a moment to check the heads, hands, shoes and background. Make sure your subject is sitting up straight and have them extend their necks. Make sure there are no rolls: posture is everything.

Posing from the bottom up: Your goal is to pose a person in such a way that you can take a number of different angles and get great shots. This means starting at the feet or the bottom if they are sitting on the floor.

Standing shots. Position the person so s/he turns their tummy away from the main light. Have the person stand with their back foot parallel with the camera and their front foot pointing to the camera. Have them put weight on their back leg and bend their other leg slightly. This causes the body to naturally turn a little away from straight on to the camera. The hips are shifted and natural as are the shoulders. If you have someone tilt their head slightly it will lower their shoulders. If you have them bend their arms and maybe put them in their thigh, in their back pockets or on their hips it will create another nice line for the eye to follow.

If a person is sitting on the floor have them sit on one hip to create movement in the lines. The top leg should be over and in front of the bottom leg. Have their supporting hand parallel with the camera while their other hand is draped on their thigh. Try tilting the head in different directions to change the mood.

Guys are great posed behind a woman in this pose. Have him kneel with the leg closest to the camera bent and forward. He can then fold his arms and rest on that knee. Never have a man sit or kneel with his lower torso pointing straight at the camera.

Chair shots: Feminine pose: The chair is turned into the light. Have your subject sit on one hip and leaning on the chair of the arm. The bottom foot goes in front and the top foot goes behind. Always show the side of the hands. Never have them pointing straight at the camera. Masculine pose: The chair is pointed toward the light. The legs are open. The leg closest to the camera is slightly forward. The back leg is bent backward. Have the subject lean on the arm of the chair possibly holding his hands.

Shoot from below carefully. Very few people look good from that angle. If you do have to shoot from below try having them tilt the crown of their head toward you so the plane of their face is more parallel with the plane of the camera.

## Problem solving

Shoot from above to emphasize the eyes and minimize double chins.

For protruding ears, make sure their face is never turned directly at the camera.

Slenderize people by having them turn at an angle. Have space between their torsos and arms. Separate their legs too.

Another trick is to have them sitting with their back to you, leaning on an arm and looking over their shoulder to you. Again, a slight tilt to the head adds to the lines of the body. Or position them behind something or someone.

A great way to shoot a head and shoulders shot is to have the person sit in a chair with their feet on the floor. Then have them lean with one arm on their knee. You should shoot from slightly above catching the nice diagonal of their shoulders and uplifted face.

If you want to add dimension to a thin face use a telephoto lens to flatten the features. Don't put anyone on the edges of a wide angle or it will broaden them!

You'll hear me talk a lot about cutting off body parts. Don't cut a person's arm off in an awkward place, ie, wrist, elbow arm or mid hand. Be mindful of where you cut off someone's legs. Thighs are good most of the time. Below that, beware!