

How to Coach Subjects for DIY Portraits

Ditch the portrait studio, and take great photographs of your friends for their profile page, their rock band poster, or just because you're feeling inspired!

With our easy-to-follow portrait guide, you'll be snapping amazing portraits in no time. Creating authentic photos with personality has never been easier with these awesome coaching tips. Let's get started...



How to Coach Your Friends for Great DIY Portraits

INGREDIENT LIST

- Digital camera – either a DSLR or a point and shoot
- Access to natural light



STEP ONE: SELECT YOUR LOCATION

Find a complimentary background for your portraits. The location should have soft natural light in the morning or late afternoon. The background you select should go well with your friend's clothing and personality.



STEP TWO: CHOOSE YOUR CAMERA SETTING

You want to be sure that you have the correct settings before you begin. Select portrait mode on your point and shoot camera. If you have a DSLR, you can choose the same portrait setting, or select aperture priority (Av) and use a low f-stop like 2.8, to get a nice soft background.



STEP THREE: POSITION YOUR SUBJECT

This step is where you start to impress your friends! Show your friend the location and have them sit to relax for their portrait. Sitting instead of standing will put them at ease. Ask them to face the natural light, and have them angle their body towards the camera.



STEP FOUR: CREATE YOUR COMPOSITION

Move in closer to your subject or use your zoom to compose your image. Try to create an interesting crop around their face for the portrait. Consider positioning their face off to one side of the photograph to add interest within the frame. Everyone says the eyes are the window to the soul, so make sure they are in focus!



STEP FIVE: CAPTURE PERSONALITY

Everyone loves portraits that show authentic personality. You can help coach your friend to their best portrait yet by engaging them in conversation while taking their photographs. Ask them to do something funny or silly and then be prepared to capture the laughter afterwards.



TAKE IT FURTHER: Once you download your photos, open up one of your favorite images in the photo editing software on your computer. Reduce the image color saturation. Then boost the contrast and brightness to create a timeless black & white feel to your portrait!



MORE IDEAS

- Take the photographs from slightly above your friend for flattering and interesting angles.
- Ask your friend to move around, act spontaneous, or do something fun for action photos.
- Experiment with different crops of your friend's face; focus on just their eyes or their smile.