

Digital Photography I

Introduction to Portrait Photography

Review: Composition & Design:
Meet Mike Browne

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0EEp22itejY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VW8L8zxDtTo&index=4&list=PLeu1p5jL9GOPOGNiJPcLHjTGo-x8abhF3>

First: Exposure, a Review.

To understand your equipment,
understand how to control these
elements:

- **The Photographic Triangle**
 - 1) **Shutter Speed**
 - 2) **Aperture**
 - 3) **ISO**



F1,4 F2 F2,8 F4 F5,6 F8 F11 F16 F22 F32



1/1000 1/500 1/250 1/125 1/60 1/30 1/15 1/8 1/4 1/2



ISO 50 ISO 100 ISO 200 ISO 400 ISO 800 ISO 1600 ISO 3200 ISO 6400 ISO 12800 ISO 25600

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 - Sensitivity of the sensor (ISO speed)

People Skills

- People photography is as much about human relation skills as it is about making great images.
- Create rapport with the subject. You will get much better results by putting your subject at ease.
- You can never FORCE anyone to make a natural smile, especially not a child.
- To get people to smile, either make a joke or catch the subject off-guard.

Lighting:

- Natural daylight is most often the best possible light for capturing the human personality.
- Natural light has one big drawback—it changes and it's not always the same from time to time. Because of this, many portrait photographers use artificial light.



Backgrounds

- A bad background can ruin a picture.
- When framing your shot, pay attention to what is behind your subject.
- Use outdoor backgrounds to advantage, such as colorful leaves, or broad expanses of color such as the sky or distant scenery.





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Wide Aperture

- Using a long lens and/or wide aperture can reduce the impact of a distracting background.
- *A wide aperture will help throw your background out of focus, drawing more attention to your subject.*
- Review: depth of field
- <http://www.mir.com.my/rb/photography/fototech/apershutter/htmls/jakie.htm>



Props

- A simple prop often helps set a mood or natural pose.
- Too many props, or unrelated props are only clutter.
- **Pay Attention to Detail**, remove unrelated elements.
- With a young child, it's wise to let them have a toy in their hands. A clever choice of prop can keep a toddler's hands occupied and out of trouble.
- Hats are often very effective, since they can immediately convey an image. Young children, however, will often play with them. Make a game of it!

Shoot away.

- Take advantage of the most important feature of your digital camera - the ability to shoot lots of photos without wasting film.

Sometimes Posed Photography Does Not Work.

- Kids, especially babies, are notorious for getting fidgety during a photo shoot. It may not be possible to set up a perfectly posed photography session with your subjects close to each other, all facing the camera, smiling bright with their eyes wide open. Little children may look away from the camera, yawn, scratch their hair, look away, for example.
- If it is not possible to get the perfect 'posed' photograph, consider taking extra action photos of kids' various activities. Keep your digital camera with you - sometimes these action shots, or other unplanned shots, are more memorable than studio portraits!

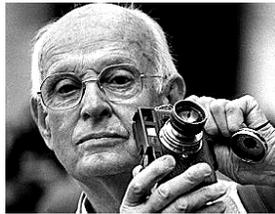


Improve Your Chances

- By taking plenty of photographs, you can help ensure that one of the pictures will be a winner.
- Photographs don't "turn out," –you MAKE them happen. Know your equipment enough so you can predict your outcome and concentrate on getting the ***“decisive moment.”***

The Decisive Moment

- Henri Cartier-Bresson



Lessons Henri-Cartier-Bresson
can Teach You about Street
Photography and more:

<http://erickimphotography.com/blog/2011/08/22/10-things-henri-cartier-bresson-can-teach-you-about-street-photography/>

<http://erickimphotography.com/blog/2014/12/09/17-lessons-henri-cartier-bresson-taught-street-photography/>



Yousuf Karsh, Portrait Photographer

<http://popartpistol.blogspot.com/2010/05/yousuf-karsh.html>

http://www.westongallery.com/karsh_pages/yousuf_karsh_1.htm

Yousuf Karsh, a portrait photographer who focused on public figures. His family fled Armenia when he was 15 and he ended up in Canada, learning photography and gaining access to prominent figures during WWII.

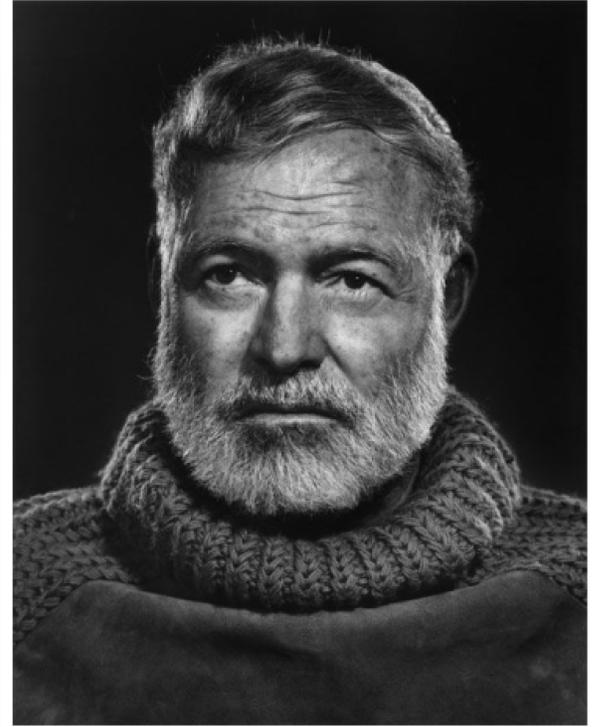
Karsh is best known for his photograph of Winston Churchill, glowering due to Karsh yanking the cigar from his lips.



<https://iconicphotos.wordpress.com/2009/07/31/winston-churchill-by-yousef-karsh/>

<http://www.karsh.org/>





Get in close.

- Don't cut out someone's face when taking portrait photos.
- When photographing a group of people, don't be afraid to tell them to get in closer together.
- Don't be afraid to crop into the top of the head or ear.

Shoot from a child's eye level.

- Let your digital photo show the world as it is seen by the eyes of a child—or your dog!
- When taking photographs of babies or small kids or pets, it is natural, as a 5' or 6' tall adult, to point your digital camera's lens downward toward the child.
- *Review: vantage point, from composition.*
- Kneel or sit when taking a photograph, shooting with your digital camera lens pointed directly at the child.
Show how the world looks to them.

Use simple backgrounds.

- Focus your photo viewer's attention on the subject.
- Focus all your attention on your subject, use narrow depth of field (wide open aperture).
- Also watch for any “telephone poles” growing out of people’s heads.
- **Pay attention to detail.**

Horizontal vs. Vertical

- Rotate your digital camera 90 degrees, make your photographs tall instead of wide.
- Vertical composition: Capture your subject's full body in the photograph.
- Consider composition while photographing your subject – don't crop at the feet or at the knees.

Plan Ahead.

- If you are taking a formal photograph of a subject, try to set your lighting and environment up beforehand.
- With outdoor shots, scout a photo location and clean it of loose twigs, leaves, etc., and test the lighting conditions.
- For indoor shots, set up the background and lighting and take a few test shots with a book, stuffed animal, pet, friend beforehand.

Bring Along a Mirror.

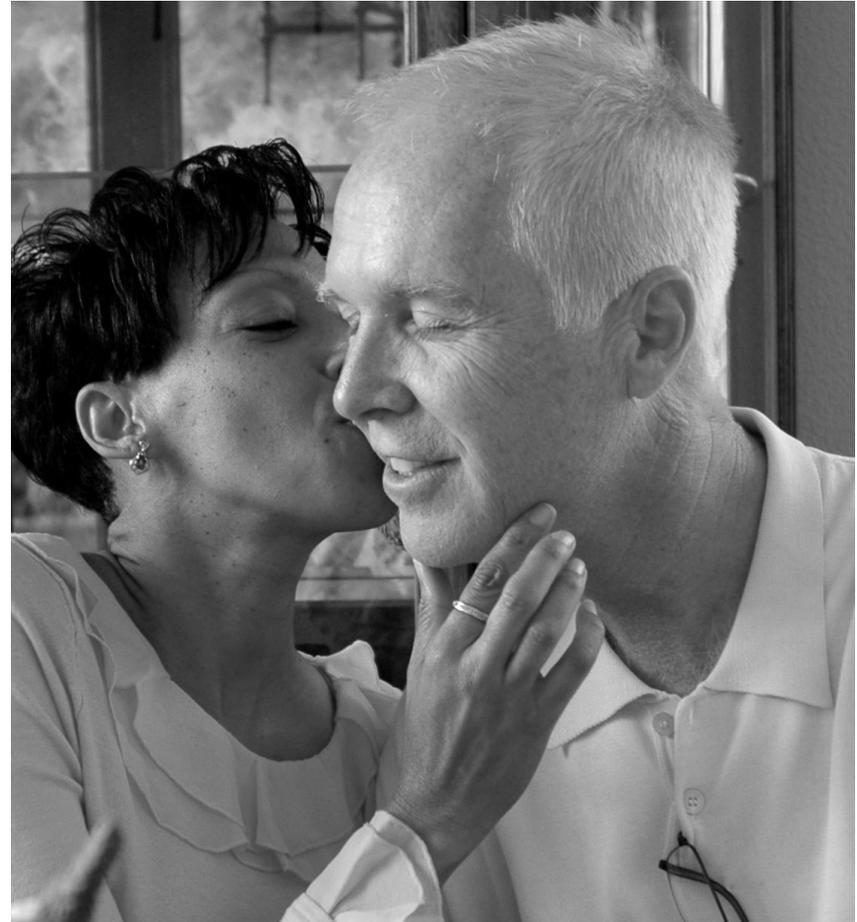
- Bring along a small mirror with you if you plan on taking portraits.
- People like to look their best, and a mirror provides them with a quick way to do touch-ups before you press the shutter.
- Keep a comb or brush and face powder handy
- **Pay Attention to Detail.**

Use a fast shutter speed for babies and toddlers.

- Use a shutter speed to match with how fast a baby can move.
- Instead, you must be ready for quick sudden movements as well as facial expressions that change in an instant.
- With a fast shutter speed and quick reflexes you will have a better chance to take a photo cherished for years to come.

Greyscale adds drama & feeling.

- Grey Scale or Black & White photography can add starkness, drama, and emotion to a photograph.
- Black & White make your subjects look more chic or elegant, especially if they are well dressed.
- Adjust your digital camera settings or experiment with digital photo editing software by converting selected photos to *greyscale mode*.



Try black & white (greyscale) with ambient light.



Don't neglect the hands.

- Include your subject's hands to make their photo more expressive of who they are.
- Although a person's eyes can be the most expressive part of a face, the "windows to one's soul," don't neglect a person's hands.
- While people speak, their hands may be constantly moving, showing a vast array of expressions that may make incredible portraits.
- Even at rest, the positions of one's hands, whether or not they are clasped, in a fist, relaxed to one's side, etc. can add greatly to the expression captured in a digital portrait.

Hands add expression.



Keep people from ‘clamping up.’ Put them at ease.

- If your subject begins to stiffen or 'clam up,' consider this technique to get them to loosen up:
- Set your focus, aperture, shutter speed, etc., then engage the person in conversation on one of their favorite subjects while keeping the digital camera pointed at them.
- Eventually, as the conversation lingers on, your subject is bound to lighten up, perhaps showing a smile or other recognizable expression.
- That is the time for you to quickly snap the shutter button to take the photo, remember the “**decisive moment.**”

Use blur & motion creatively.

- Even though a fast shutter speed may be vital in taking crisp, clean digital photographs of people, in some situations, your photos can express movement.
- Try busy street scenes, use blur creatively to showcase your intent.
- One way of doing this is to use a slower shutter speed when capturing a group of people hurriedly walking. Use a slower shutter speed while panning your digital camera, keeping your subjects in focus yet letting the background blur, expressing movement.
- <http://www.ephotozine.com/techniques/viewtechnique.cfm?recid=248>

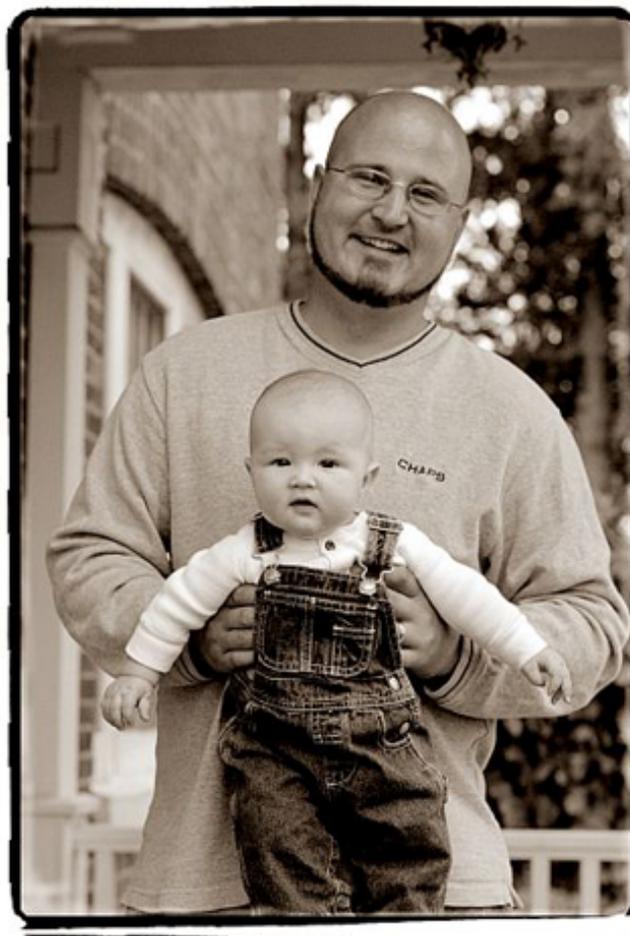


Don't Intimidate – step back and zoom in

- Step back and use your digital camera's zoom feature to make your subject more at ease.
- Get close to your subject instead of using your zoom.
- However, when taking portrait close-ups of someone's face, try stepping back and using your digital camera's zoom lens. ***Watch for camera shake as you zoom in close.***
- Some people may be intimidated by a digital camera too close to their face as you try to fill most of the frame with their visage; step back and use more zoom to these people at ease.

Get the parents involved.

- Ask parents to help you take digital photos of children who don't want to cooperate.
- Have the parent sit in a chair and see if the child (if young enough) will sit on their lap.
- Take a sample picture, and then see if the child is willing to sit alone in a chair without the parent.



Be awake, alert, and smiling.

- Smile, and most likely your subject will smile with you.
- Smile, be cheerful and effervescent and your good mood may then be reflected on your subject, resulting in a **more pleasing picture.**



Use Night Photography Techniques in Low-Lit Areas

Taking digital photos in low-lit situations?

Here are some tips to try, including shutter speed, increasing the ISO setting on your camera.

- Do you need to take digital portraits in low-lit areas such a church, ballroom, group meeting, or other location where it is not feasible to use flash?
- You can use many of the same night photography tips and techniques just as if you were taking outdoor photos at dusk.

Low Light Situations: TIPS

- Increase your camera's ISO if you can do so without adding too much noise.
- Increase your digital camera's exposure time.
- ❖ Bring a tripod if your situation allows it, or practice beforehand holding your digital camera very steady so you can take a longer exposure photograph.

Don't be afraid to rearrange props.

- **Pay Attention to Detail.**
- Use your intuition; remove unnecessary items from digital portrait photos.
- Be sure to look around the room to make sure that nothing distracts from the photo, such as a poster or framed picture, a particular book title, stacks of paper, or whatever distracts.
- Don't be afraid to ask your subject(s) if you can rearrange things in order to make a better photo, especially if you offer to move the items back.

Use your digital camera's 'Portrait' Scene mode.

- Don't have time to calculate settings for a portrait photo? Let your digital camera do it for you!
- Need to shoot a portrait in a hurry and you don't have time to correctly set your digital camera's aperture so that the subject's face will be nice and clear yet the background looks soft and slightly blurry?
- Most digital cameras have a 'portrait' program or scene mode that can calculate settings that usually result in a decent photo.
- In a crunch, this mode, perhaps combined with a red-eye reduced flash (depending on the lighting – you may not need flash all of the time) can often result in better-than-average portrait photos.

Overexpose to reduce blemishes.

- A slight overexposure of your digital portrait photography may reduce visible blemishes.
- Since slightly overexposing an image reduces some of its detail, the 'detail' of the blemishes might get washed out. Note that this requires a lot of experimentation and image bracketing and EV compensation.
- You don't want to overexpose to the point of washing out all of a person's facial features.



Thomas Bui

Step away from the wall.

- Don't place your portrait photo subjects directly in front of a wall.
- If you must use flash to take digital portrait photos, instead of placing your subject directly in front of a blank surface such as a wall, have them step a few inches away from the wall.
- Unless you have reflectors and external flash units to completely control the lighting, the flash may cause a shadow of the subject to form on the wall.

Color vs. Greyscale, cropped.



More Color vs. Greyscale.



Environmental Portrait

- Use of props identifies the subject as a musician & composer
- A portrait can tell a story at a glance.



Environmental Portrait: Ted and cat at home.



Use light to reveal character.



Back light your subjects.



Pay Attention to Detail.



Capture the decisive moment.



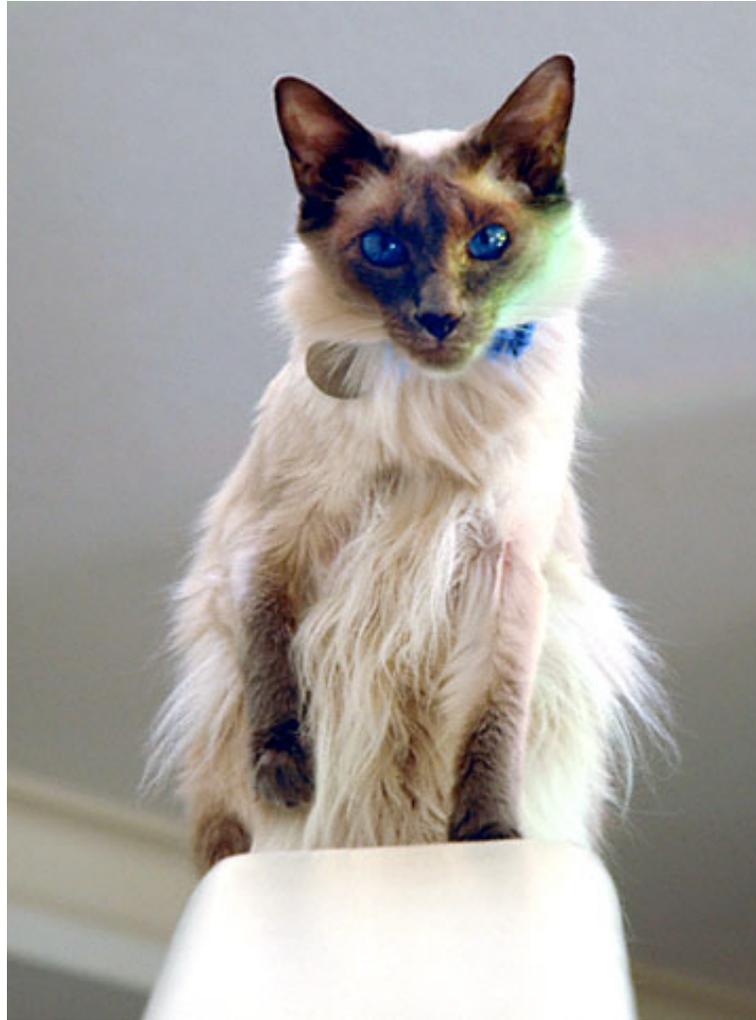
Timing is everything.



Pets make great subjects.



Photograph the family cat too.





[http://xinacat.smugmug.com/
gallery/1662144/1/82186808](http://xinacat.smugmug.com/gallery/1662144/1/82186808)