

FAMILY POSING PLAYBOOK

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO MY FAVOURITE FAMILY PORTRAITS

33 PORTRAITS DECONSTRUCTED SO YOU CAN SHOOT THEM TOO



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Club
lilypad

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HOW TO USE THE PLAY BOOK

I recommend you use this playbook like a recipe book.

Flick through when you first get it, and perhaps pick out and bookmark your favourites.

Pick up your camera and try out a few images.

Experiment and play, use a few more poses as a starting point for your own amazing images.

Go rogue! Try something totally new and don't be afraid to fail!

... or is that just how I use recipe books?

1 | NEWBORN GAZE



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/160sec

APERTURE: f3.2

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 50mm 1.4

TIME OF DAY:

Any time during daylight hours when bub is most happy.

I truly believe our eyes are the windows to our souls. And despite the current trend towards those gorgeous sleepy curly newborn images, this eyes open, direct simple portrait style image is hands down my favourite newborn portrait. My clients wholeheartedly agree and this is the shot that graces more announcement cards and walls than any other.

Luckily it's also the easiest to take :)

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is shot indoors, close to a nice big window where there is no direct light shining in. Put bub on a cushion, bean bag or something soft and place them on a 45degree angle from the window, with their head closest to the window. Look for the sparkle in their eyes. Make sure they haven't sunk into cushion where a shadow might be cast on their face.

SETTING THE SCENE:

Wrap baby up securely and make sure they are warm and comfortable. A full belly can help if bubs is unsettled.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Try taking a series of different images and expressions, babies have the best faces ever! Capture yawns, squints and if you're lucky the odd smile. Choose the lowest capture your camera will allow. You might need to take a lot of images to get one where they are looking directly into the camera. Drop the camera lots and chat to bubs a lot to help encourage great expressions.

2 | MUMMY NAP



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/125sec

APERTURE: f3.2

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 50mm 1.4

TIME OF DAY:

Any time during daylight, just after a feed when bub is very sleepy.

This image works really well for babies from newborn to around four months. I love the connection with Mum, it's often a place baby naps naturally.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is shot indoors, near a window on the right. Have Mum turn so that there is a nice soft light falling over baby's face. About 45 degrees from the window is a sweet spot.

SETTING THE SCENE:

This is the perfect post feed shot, put bub up there to burp or while they are milk drunk. If you can, lift one or two arms over the shoulder as well. Under their chin if they will let you otherwise over the shoulder is great. You'll find baby will be higher up on Mum than when they are just having a cuddle. Compose the shot so you can see Mums eyes and eye lashes but focus on babies eyes. Mums eyes are out of focus.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Keep an eye on the clothes you have bub in, keep it neutral and toned in with Mums top. You can also put a little wrap or blanket around them, but keep those arms out. Of course this also works really well with Dad.

3 | BABY TOES



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/250sec

APERTURE: f3.2

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 85mm 1.8

TIME OF DAY:

Any time during daylight hours when bub is happy.

This image works really well for babies around four to six months. I love how this portrait highlights one of those habits baby don't have often have for very long.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is shot indoors, along a wall that is at a 90 degree angle to glass french doors with no direct light shining in. With their head closest to the window.

SETTING THE SCENE:

Some babies will politely grab their toes with no prompting. Other babies will need encouragement. If you have another person there, it can help if they are positioned just out of shot at the toe end and pick up babies toes and put them in their hands. Most of the time, baby will take it from there. You need to get down low and lie on your tummy so the camera is at the same level as the baby.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Remember to keep an eye out for any private parts, especially on boys, and angle yourself so the front leg screens anything you don't want to see :) This also works just as well if baby is looking up, at his toes or even eating his toes. And you can also have baby in a nappy, if you prefer, though perhaps look out for a nappy cover or plain white nappy.

4 | WEIGHT LIFTER



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/160sec

APERTURE: f3.2

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5D Mark III, 50mm 1.4

TIME OF DAY:

Any time during daylight hours when bub is asleep.

This image works really well for babies around one month to six months. I just love the way they sleep with their arms up, chubby belly, too cute not to photograph!

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is shot indoors on the main bed, using window light. Baby is sleeping parallel to the window so there is a nice soft light falling across their face.

SETTING THE SCENE:

Plan ahead for one of baby's naps and put them down (even just briefly) to sleep where the light is perfect. The main bed is often the best spot. Stand or kneel (on the bed) above baby and shoot directly overhead. Make sure NOT to shoot from below so you're aiming up baby's nose and always use the camera strap around your neck when you're standing over a baby. Also consider having a spotter in the room close just out of shot in case baby rolls. Safety first at all times.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

The key to this shot is capturing your baby's classic sleep pose, so it might vary to this shot. Explore different textures and colours in blankets and singlets, or even go the bare belly. I do love the bare arms as you can see all those gorgeous rolls. Keep an eye out for wrinkles in the blanket, a stiff or firmer bedspread can be easier. If your bed is too soft and you're making deep wrinkles, consider setting up a "bed" on the floor by a window.

5 | BARE BUM



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/250sec

APERTURE: f3.6

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 85mm 1.8

TIME OF DAY:

Any time during daylight hours when bub is happy.

This image works really well for babies around six to nine months. When they can sit and before they can crawl. This works especially well for the chubbiest of babies!

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is shot indoors, along a wall that is at a 90 degree angle to glass french doors with no direct light shining in. Sit baby so they are facing the corner of the wall and the window. Keep an eye out for clutter and any distracting elements in the image. The less the better.

SETTING THE SCENE:

You need to sit baby so they are facing the corner of the wall and the window, then call their name and get their attention, they will generally look over their shoulder back at you, allowing you to capture the gorgeous bottom and cute face in the one shot. Babies this age respond to you, not the camera, so make sure you pop your head out from behind the camera and talk, smile and laugh with baby.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Move baby around to capture lots of different angles with the exception of front on for obvious reasons. Sitting baby at a 45 degree angle to you, with their face closer to the window ensures private parts are covered and all the cute rolls are on show. And you can also have baby in a nappy, if you prefer, though perhaps look out for a nappy cover or plain white nappy.

6 | FAVOURITE TOYS



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/250sec

APERTURE: f3.6

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 85mm 1.8

TIME OF DAY:

Any time during daylight hours when bub is happy.

This image works really well for babies around six to nine months. When they can sit and before they can crawl. The main aim of this portrait is to capture interaction with their favourite toys.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is shot indoors, along a wall that is at a 90 degree angle to glass french doors with no direct light shining in. Keep an eye out for clutter and any distracting elements in the image. The less the better.

SETTING THE SCENE:

This portrait is really simple, and always unique to the baby. Sit them facing you, or turned ever so slightly towards the window, hand them their favourite toy and snap away. Look for the concentration, the focus, the joy, even the eating!

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Keep baby dressed in simple clothes, nothing too distracting, you want to focus on baby's actions, not their outfit. You can also have baby in just a nappy if you prefer, though again look out for a nappy cover or plain white nappy.

7 | PEEKABOO!



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/250^{sec}

APERTURE: f3.6

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5D Mk III, 85mm 1.8

TIME OF DAY:

Any time during daylight hours when bub is happy.

This image works really well for babies around six to nine months. I love the playfulness of this shot and the big open smiles you can capture.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is shot indoors, along a wall that is at a 90 degree angle to glass french doors with no direct light shining in. Keep an eye out for clutter and any distracting elements in the image. The less the better.

SETTING THE SCENE:

Put baby on their tummy on a matt, fluffy rug or floor and play for a few minutes with a nice neutral or textured blanket, gently covering their head and face and playing peekaboo. When they are having fun, step back and take a shot. You need to be at their eye level.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Some babies don't like playing peekaboo and get upset, so be sure to test it out. It can also help to have a second person doing the blanket peekaboo with baby so you can stay back and snap away.

8 | SUPER BABY!



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/500sec

APERTURE: f4

ISO: 800

GEAR: Canon 5D Mark III, 50mm 1.4

TIME OF DAY:

Any time during daylight hours when bub is most happy.

This is one of my favourite shots of babies with their Dad. They love being flown around and playing around with dad and the big massive smiles and joy are unforgettable.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is shot indoors, along a wall that is at a 90 degree angle to glass french doors with no direct light shining in. Keep an eye out for clutter and any distracting elements in the image. The less the better. Dad is standing facing at around a 60 degree angle to the window.

SETTING THE SCENE:

This shot is all about the fun, the joy. You can't see it, but Dad actually has two hands on his daughter which is really important. Always make sure baby is secure. I simply ask Dad to play, zoom and fly baby in and out towards me. If he's a little fast and crazy, I ask him to gently pause when reaching out so I can focus and shoot.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

There's a lot of movement in this shot so make sure you have a higher shutter speed and it also helps to have a slightly higher aperture and depth of field as well. I use single shot focus and focus when baby is close to me only. I take some compositions with Dad in the background and some where I crop in tight to just the baby.

9 | HOLD UP THE WALL



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/250^{sec}

APERTURE: f2.8

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5D Mark III, 85mm 1.8

TIME OF DAY:

Any time during daylight when the wall is in shade.

This image works really well for kids from around three to any age. It's even great for adults. I love that it's different to the standard "head shot". Leaning against the wall adds some interest to the composition.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is shot outdoors along any wall, a neutral colour is best, that is in shade and the shaded area extended at least around 1m from the wall.

SETTING THE SCENE:

This is easy to set up, ask your subject to stand up against the wall or lean on the wall and you also lean against the wall. A really small aperture/narrow depth of field is best.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

If your little one is relevant to follow instructions and stand against the wall, try asking them to look closely at something in the wall, or even lean up against and see if they can "hear" what the wall is saying. If your wall is a strong colour, or a colour very different from skin colour, you can end up with colour cast on the face. If it's really bad and you can't fix it in post, think about presenting it in B&W.

10 | LOOK AT ME

**SHUTTER SPEED:** 1/250^{sec}**APERTURE:** f3.2**ISO:** 400**GEAR:** Canon 5DIII, 85mm 1.8**TIME OF DAY:**

Morning or afternoon, in a shaded area.

This is a gorgeous simple portrait. Perfect to capture and highlight eyes, smiles, and features. Perfect for any age.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is outdoors in the shade of a large tree with a thick canopy, the girl is sitting on a boat that complements her eyes, allowing me to shoot on a slightly downwards angle. You can use any location for this shot, so long as the light is nice and even and there is "sparkle" in the eyes. The subject needs to be facing towards a source of light for the sparkle, so towards the unshaded areas.

SETTING THE SCENE:

If your subject is old enough, just ask them to sit either on something or on the ground and look up towards you. Crop in tight so the eyes are the main focus.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Shooting on a downwards angle makes your subject's eyes seem even bigger, perfect for kids and babies. If your little one is likely to follow instructions and stand against the wall, try asking them to look closely at something in the wall, or even lean up against and see if they can "hear" what the wall is saying. If your wall is a strong colour, or a colour very different from skin colour, you can end up with colour cast on the face. If it's really bad and you can't fix it in post, think about presenting it in B&W.

11 | CONCENTRATION



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/250^{sec}

APERTURE: f3.2

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 85mm 1.8

TIME OF DAY:

in the last hour before sunset
when the river beach area
was shaded.

*Kids have an amazing level
of focus when something
catches their attention. Even
the very busy ones can be
momentarily engrossed.*

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is taken in the last hour before sunset on a river beach on a very calm day. The beach area was in shade and the river very still, making for a very clean and simple image.

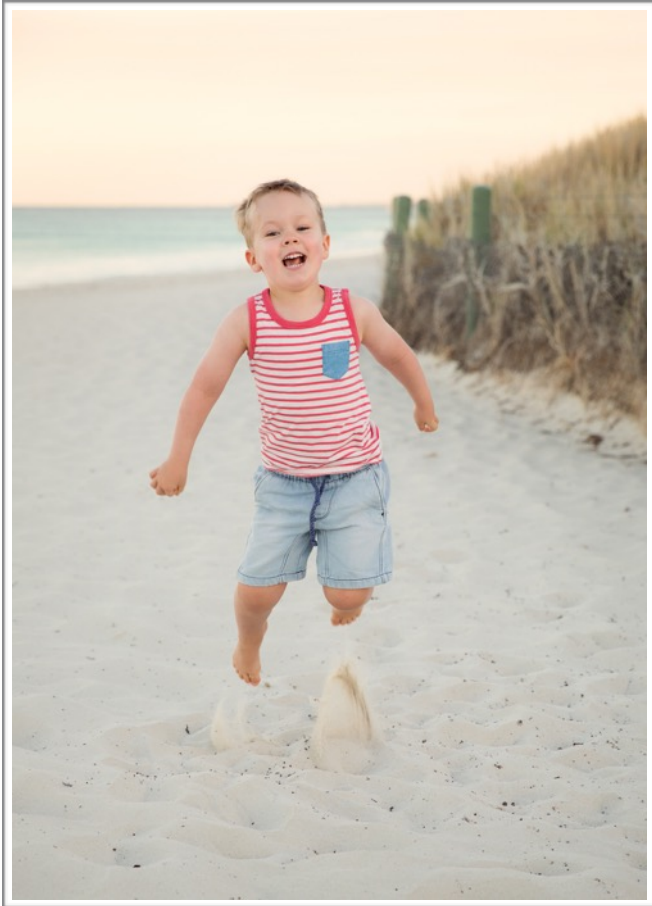
SETTING THE SCENE:

It doesn't often take a lot to encourage a child to draw in the sand, look for a shell, build a castle. Set up the play then step back and take the shot. Keep your composition as simple as possible. If the eyes are in the image, I focus on the eyes.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Keep an eye out for lots of candid opportunities when your little one is engrossed in an activity of some sort. Look for ways to frame your image so the composition is as simple as you can, with the focus solely on your little one's action.

12 | JUMPING



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/800sec

APERTURE: f3.2

ISO: 1250

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 50mm 1.4

TIME OF DAY:

Before sunrise.

Kids of almost any age need very little encouragement to jump. I love to capture a series of jumping images and often present them in a set of three in our family albums. The faces and expressions are priceless.

LOCATION NOTES:

I've taken this jumping portrait at sunrise, however you can take this in almost any location around so long as the light is right. Again, keep your eye out for any distracting elements in the frame.

SETTING THE SCENE:

Too easy for this one. Find a spot and ask your child to show you how good they are at jumping!

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Have fun with this shot, make sure your shutter speed is nice and fast and it helps to have your camera on rapid fire so you have plenty of images to choose from.

13 | JUMPING PEEKABOO!



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/800sec

APERTURE: f3.2

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 85mm 1.8

TIME OF DAY:

Late afternoon when the street was in the shade.

This image works really well for babies around four to six months. I love how this portrait highlights one of those habits baby don't have often have for very long.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is taken on the streets of Fremantle, with the little boy jumping out from the doorway of an older building.

SETTING THE SCENE:

You often need to demonstrate what you want here. Stand in the doorway and jump out going boo! Tell your little one to hide in the doorway and jump out and try and scare you on the count of three.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Be creative, there are so many things kids can hide behind to jump out from. Big trees, walls, doorways, fences . . . Again, have fun and make sure your shutter speed is nice and fast and it helps to have your camera on rapid fire so you have plenty of images to choose from.

14 | JUMPING TOGETHER



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/1000sec

APERTURE: f3.2

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5D MkIII, 50mm 1.4

TIME OF DAY:

Late afternoon.

The one thing kids love more than showing you how high they jump is trying to jump as high as their siblings, friends or anyone else!

LOCATION NOTES:

I've taken this jumping portrait in the late afternoon in the middle of a park's grassed area. With the reflection of the grass being really bright and green on the boys' faces, this image looked best in B&W. However, you can take this in almost any location around so long as the light is right. Again, keep your eye out for any distracting elements in the frame.

SETTING THE SCENE:

When lining kids up to jump, I am always very specific about where I'd like them to stand, either making an imaginary line on the ground or a real one in the sand. I want them all in a line so they are all within my narrow plane of focus.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

If your kids are going crazy and moving out of the line, think about using a wider aperture. Once again, have fun and make sure your shutter speed is nice and fast and it helps to have your camera on rapid fire so you have plenty of images to choose from.

15 | RACE TIME



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/500sec

APERTURE: f4

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 24-70 2.8L

TIME OF DAY:

In the hour before sunset.

One of my favourite action sibling shots. Kids love to run and play and the way they run at different ages is just gorgeous!

LOCATION NOTES:

In a park by a lake (hence the reeds in the background) just before sunset with the sun behind the subjects, ever so slightly to the left. I particularly love how in this location, the sun is behind the subjects, really separating them from the background of the reeds, which from our view point are in shade.

SETTING THE SCENE:

Set the kids up in a line and tell them where they are running to, usually me! Count them down to run and take lots of shot, refocusing as you go unless you're using a focus tracking mode. I use single shot. Some images will miss focus but as you practice more, you'll end up with more than enough winners.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Take a few images before they start to run, to add to the variety. This is one of the situations where I like to use my zoom lens, I can adjust the framing and composition on the fly as the kids are running.

16 | DANCE PARTY



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/500sec

APERTURE: f4

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 85mm 1.8

TIME OF DAY:

Late afternoon.

Siblings and friends close in age share a special bond, and dancing shots, especially in a series show that bond off beautifully.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is shot on the shaded side of a building - with a very cool purple wall. This side was a carpark that was only used on occasions so there was lots of room to play. Sadly this building has now been knocked down. I need to find another purple wall!

SETTING THE SCENE:

I asked these two cuties to hold hands then dance and twirl, they took it from there! Some kids need very little prompting.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

If you're shooting kids that need more prompting, suggesting a game of ring-a-rose, or "wash the dishes" Keep in mind these games will likely end in the kids falling down, so are best done on soft ground, not the bitumen of the car park in this image.

17 | SWEET KISSES

**SHUTTER SPEED:** 1/250_{sec}**APERTURE:** f3.5**ISO:** 640**GEAR:** Canon 5DMIII, 50mm 1.4**TIME OF DAY:**

Any time during daylight hours when bub is happy.

A simple and gorgeous portrait of a little one with a new sibling. It's not always about the looking at the camera shot!

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is shot indoors in front of a large window. I've put a nice rug on a small foam mattress on the floor. They are both lying parallel to the window, so there is a nice soft light falling across their faces.

SETTING THE SCENE:

For this image I lay down the older sibling first, then very gently lay the new sleeping baby next to them while telling the older child how good they are and how they must stay very, very still. Then I ask for the kiss, showing them exactly where to kiss with my finger otherwise there is a good chance they will sit up and kiss them on the nose.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

You could also use the main bed for this shot, just watch they aren't close to the edge. Always use the camera strap around your neck when you're standing over a baby. Make sure to not shoot from below to avoid aiming up their noses. Also consider having a spotter in the room close just out of shot incase baby rolls or the older child gets upset and starts to wiggle around. Safety first at all times.

18 | HUDDLE TIME



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/500sec

APERTURE: f3.5

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 85mm 1.8

TIME OF DAY:

Late in the afternoon.

This is the looking at the camera smiling shot of siblings that I love. What parent wouldn't want this image!

LOCATION NOTES:

Taken in the late afternoon just before sunset. Taken amongst the trees with the sun filtering through the sparse tree line behind.

SETTING THE SCENE:

This will only work with kids that are happy to get close, I stand them next to each other and ask them to cuddle, and do the "cheek to cheek". Showing them exactly how to do it. I will often even go up and physically move their faces close, right where I want them, then step back a little, making jokes to get those natural smiles. Then I ask them to squeeze! This image often ends in fits of giggles falling on the ground.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

You need to keep the moment light for this to work. If you try to force the pose it will show with forced smiles or complete lack of co-operation. Making it fun and being silly goes a long way!

19 | SAND CASTLES



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/250^{sec}

APERTURE: f5.6

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DMIII, 35mm f1.4L

TIME OF DAY:

Just before sunset.

When the sky is gorgeous or the location beautiful, I like to take candid images that balance the scenery and the subjects.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait was taken just before sunset on a cloudy day, the sun is setting to the far right of the image and is behind a cloud at the time of this shot, giving a lovely soft feel to the image.

SETTING THE SCENE:

Candid images don't always just happen, in this instance I set the kids up building a sandcastle where I knew there would be balanced with the background. I also chose to shoot this with a wide angle 35mm lens, to give a real feel of the kids being in their environment.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

This style of shooting works really well when the scenery is gorgeous and is just as much a part of the image. Sometimes you can truly grab a candid image, but often you might need to help it along. Suggest a game or activity that puts the kids right where you want them.

20 | GIGGLES AND TICKLES



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/500sec

APERTURE: f3.2

ISO: 800

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 85mm 1.8

TIME OF DAY:

Late afternoon.

I just love tickles! The anticipation, the hilarity and the laughter and I love capturing the variety of emotions.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait session is taken late in the afternoon on a pathway through some swamp/ parklands. I love pathways as a location for sessions, the path provides some lovely leading lines in the image and the trees on either side frame your subjects. If the trees are high enough you can shoot further away from sunset and still get that gorgeous soft light. The sun is on the left here, however the trees have completely shaded the path.

SETTING THE SCENE:

I had the girls stand side by side holding hands and told them after I counted to 3 they could turn and tickle each other. The anticipation makes for the gorgeous shot in the middle. The tickles, the fun images on the outside.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Look out for dappled light. Find a spot on the path where there are not patches of sunlight. If you need to, wait until the sun is a little lower.

21 | SNUGGLES



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/250^{sec}

APERTURE: f3.5

ISO: 250

GEAR: Canon 5D Mark III, 85mm 1.8

TIME OF DAY:

Late afternoon.

There is something special about hugs with Mum, there's a special place little ones fit on Mums chest, these cuddles don't last forever. Capturing them before they're gone is a must.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is shot in full sun on a jetty in the late afternoon. The sun is behind and to the left of the subjects and I've exposed for the subjects, letting the background blow out almost completely.

SETTING THE SCENE:

This is another image that can't be forced. Kids hugs are unconditional, and most of the time need little encouragement. I asked this little guy to give Mum a big hug and told Mum not to look at me. I loved the smile this little one gave, it seemed to say "mine" in the most adorable way.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Experiment with all sorts of variations, with and without eye contact. A reluctant cuddle can sometimes be encouraged by being asked if they want to run in and cuddle, making it a game.

22 | NOSEY MUM SNUGGLE



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/500sec

APERTURE: f3.2

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 135mm
f2.0L

TIME OF DAY:

At the end of the day,
towards sunset.

*One of my favourite ways
to capture Mum and babies
or toddlers with close loving
giggles and smiles. I just love
it!*

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is taken in parklands, with water and trees in the distance, the sun is setting just behind the subject and slightly to the left. The sun is falling very softly (it was partly obscured but very light, hazy, low cloud) on the back of the subjects, helping to separate them from the background.

SETTING THE SCENE:

One of my favourite images, I ask Mum to lift her little one and play by moving them in and out and touch noses sometimes. I also ask Mum to not lift straight upwards towards the sky, but to reach out forwards a little. It's more flattering to Mum.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

This works just as well with dad, try keeping an eye out for the legs, making sure they don't get lost behind Mum's arms. The light filtering in from behind to me really make these shots.

23 | FLYING WITH DAD



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/800sec

APERTURE: f3.5

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DMIII, 80mm f1.8

TIME OF DAY:

During the last few hours of the day.

This is my favourite Dad version of the Mummy snuggles. These images always capture real smiles and genuine love.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is taken in parklands opposite a large river. The sun is setting behind the trees behind them and to the left, throwing a lovely clean back light on the subjects, helping to separate them from the background.

SETTING THE SCENE:

One of my favourite images, I ask Dad to throw the kids in the air, if this is something they do when playing day to day. Some Dads make some serious air time, others don't let go. Either way it's perfectly capturing their relationship. I use a fast shutter speed to freeze motion and shoot on rapid fire so I have plenty of images to choose from.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

This works just as well with Mum. The light filtering in from behind to me really make these shots.

24 | ZOOMING WITH DAD



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/500sec

APERTURE: f4

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 24-70
2.8L

TIME OF DAY:

Just after sunrise.

Toddlers love being flung around by dad and it makes for such gorgeous moment.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is at sunrise, using a brightly coloured wall at some changing rooms near the beach. The sun had already risen, but was on the other side of this wall so the boys are in shade.

SETTING THE SCENE:

Toddlers are often very busy and rarely hang out where I want them to during a portrait session. One of the methods I use to "put" them back, is have dad fly them in like they are an aeroplane. Plane noises and all. In this instance it was just too cute not to photograph. The low angle captures the smiles and is also flattering to Dads who are starting to thin a little on top. I was fairly close to these two and was at the wider end of the 24-70 lens, which I think really adds to the composition of the image.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

This shot is the perfect example of keeping your eyes peeled for great moments and an open mind. It's not what I intended to capture at the time and wasn't even on the list, but it's perhaps one of my favourites from the session.

25 | FAMILY TICKLES



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/250^{sec}

APERTURE: f4

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 85mm 1.8

TIME OF DAY:

Early in the day.

Family portraits are the cornerstone of my business. I love both the classic 'looking at the camera smiling' shots as much as these moments.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is taken early in the day on the streets of Fremantle at a well known, rough red brick wall carpark. In the morning, this area is in the shade.

SETTING THE SCENE:

I have Mum and Dad crouch down together and put the child (or kids) in the middle, then I tell them to tickle their little one on the count of three. Easy as.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

This shot can be taken in any location you love, make sure you remind Mum and Dad not to look at you when they tickle.

26 | STANDING PROUD



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/250^{sec}

APERTURE: f3.5

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DMIII, 85mm 1.8

TIME OF DAY:

Late afternoon.

One of my favourite ways to pose and photograph a family with older children. It's relaxed yet oozes closeness.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is on the family's property in the far North of WA. The day was cloudy and the sun is behind thick cloud behind the family.

SETTING THE SCENE:

I have Mum and Dad stand close together and get the kids to pile in around. As I start taking images I ask them to squeeze in close together. This both results in gorgeous smiles, and giggles, as well as eliminates any gaps between them. The strength in this pose is the lack of gaps.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

You'll likely have to ask everyone to get closer several times. Even small gaps really stand out in this portrait. Also keep an eye on where the kids are placed, make sure no one's head is directly above or below someone else's.

27 | THE FAMILY CRUNCH

**SHUTTER SPEED:** 1/250^{sec}**APERTURE:** f4**ISO:** 640**GEAR:** Canon 5D Mark III, 85mm 1.8**TIME OF DAY:**

Late afternoon.

I love this pose for a family portrait as it brings everyone's faces nice and close.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is outside on a boardwalk through swamp land. It was a cloudy afternoon and the sun was behind a cloud. It's a few hours before sunset, if the sun wasn't behind a cloud the light in this spot would have been too harsh.

SETTING THE SCENE:

Mum and Dad crouch down and the kids jump in. Depending on their height I'll have them stand or sit so that everyone's heads can be close together. If needed I'll ask people to lean in closer, when I'm happy I do silly things and take images of the gorgeous smiles.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Keep an eye on the heads, try not to have them all in a perfect row of even height, staggered like above is perfect.

28 | SUNSET SILHOUETTE



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/2000sec

APERTURE: f5.6

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DMIII, 85mm
24-70 2.8L

TIME OF DAY:

Sunset.

When the sun is low and you want to capture the mood, light and feeling of an afternoon, you can't go past a sunset..

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is taken right on sunset, on a patch of sand heading out into a river bend.

SETTING THE SCENE:

You need to adjust your exposure here so that the colours of the sky show up, and the objects are silhouettes. I tend to raise the shutter up and down and leave the other settings alone. I had this family walk along the water's edge then stop and look for the resident dolphin. I purposefully raised myself to a point where the family were all in the patch of water and no heads crossed the land at the horizon. The bird was just pure luck!

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

You can have a lot of fun with silhouettes and don't have to wait for the exact sunset moment either. Just adjust your settings to suit. Jumping, dancing, playing all work beautifully here.

29 | HOLD ME UP!



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/250^{sec}

APERTURE: f3.2

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DIII, 85mm 1.8

TIME OF DAY:

Early in the morning.

I love this pose for little families. I cut off the parents heads on purpose and love how it brings the attention to the child.

LOCATION NOTES:

This portrait is shot in the early morning on a boardwalk through some paperbark trees. The sun is very bright and behind the family to the left.

SETTING THE SCENE:

An easy image to take, have Mum and Dad hold their little one and lift them up to jump. Pausing when they put them down allows you to capture the most amazing smiles.

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

If you have a shy or non smiley little one, this is one shot that almost always gets a smile. They feel safe and secure with Mum and Dad and love being lifted into the air!

30 | FAMILY JUMP TIME



SHUTTER SPEED: 1/500sec

APERTURE: f3.5

ISO: 640

GEAR: Canon 5DMIII, 24-70
f2.8L

TIME OF DAY:

Late afternoon.

The whole family version of hold me up, with the jumping action being captured. Another lovely way to capture the fun, love and laughter of a family.

LOCATION NOTES:

In a park by a lake (hence the reeds in the background) just before sunset with the sun behind the subjects ever so slightly to the left. I particularly love how in this location, the sun is behind the subjects really separating them from the background of the reeds, and the trees on either side and on top are framing the family.

SETTING THE SCENE:

Have Mum and Dad hold hands with the kids in a line and tell the kids to jump on the count of three. Remind Mum and Dad they don't need to jump and if they are looking at their kids it works best!

SUGGESTIONS & NOTES:

Have the camera on rapid shutter, you'll likely have to do this lots of times to get them jumping together. Luckily it's fun!

THE FINAL WORD

Hopefully as you've read your way through this play book, you'll have realised a few common themes.

Fun - if it's not fun, it won't likely work.

My setting don't often change much. I have a particular style to my photography. Soft, even light or back lighting, narrow depth of field. 95% of my images, whilst varied in location, are taken in similar lighting, and aiming for a similar look, hence the familiarity in my work.

Use this playbook to inspire you, and go find your style and most importantly, to capture your family. Forever.

Any questions or busting to learn more? Checkout Club Lilypad for loads of free and some paid courses to help you on your family photography journey.

www.clublilypad.com