

THE ENGAGEMENT SESSION

STYLE GUIDE





SCHEDULING

your SESSION

WE PHOTOGRAPH ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS THE WAY WE LIKE TO BE PHOTOGRAPHED OURSELVES:

Outdoors, in natural light, because we love images that are clean, bright, fresh and timeless. Images that look and feel like you. That's why we begin all of our sessions 1-2 hours before the scheduled sunset -- during the magical "golden hour" -- when the light in the sky is the softest, dreamiest and most flattering.

You can use a sunset calculator online to determine the scheduled sunset for the date and location you'd like to do your session. Then, just subtract two hours to figure out your approximate session start time. If you're wearing one outfit, we'll start your session about 90 minutes before sunset. When scheduling your date, it's important to remember that the sun sets much earlier during the colder months of the year and much later during the warmer months, so make sure to factor that in when choosing your engagement session date -- especially if you're taking off work or have evening plans afterward. We always recommend going out for a fun date night afterward since you're already dressed up!

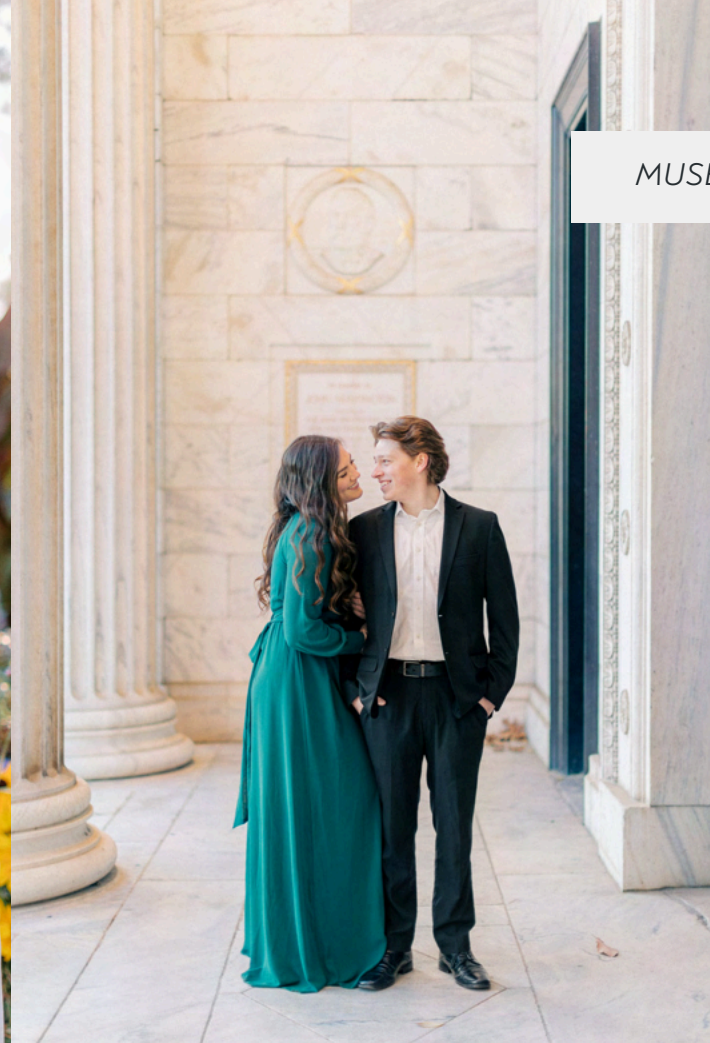
Our weekends fill up fast and far in advance, but our weekdays are much more flexible. So if you'd like to do your session sooner rather than later, scheduling mid-week is the way to go!



FLOWER FIELD



MUSEUM



PLANNING *your* TIME

ALLOW YOURSELF MORE TIME THAN YOU THINK
YOU'LL ACTUALLY NEED

When you're planning "getting ready" time before your session (scheduling your hair, makeup, etc.) please give yourself a lot more time than you think you'll need. Make sure to account for things like traffic, getting lost and parking, so you can prevent unnecessary stress, arrive a few minutes early to your session and be ready to start on time. We're only able to shoot when light is still in the sky, so we'll want to take advantage of every minute we have together before the sun goes down!

HISTORIC
STREETS



CITY PARK



CHOOSING *the* LOCATION

THE LOCATION OF YOUR ENGAGEMENT
SESSION IS COMPLETELY UP TO YOU!

The location of your engagement session is completely up to you! As you'll see throughout this guide, most of our couples love showcasing the natural beauty of our area to give their out-of-town guests a fun preview of what to expect when they travel here for the wedding. For most of our sessions, outdoor, open-air environments are always our first choice. We love shooting in wide-open natural spaces because the light is divine, especially during golden hour. There are great options all around the tri-state, so even if you've never seen us photograph in a specific place before, we're always up for exploring a new spot together!

STYLING *your* SESSION

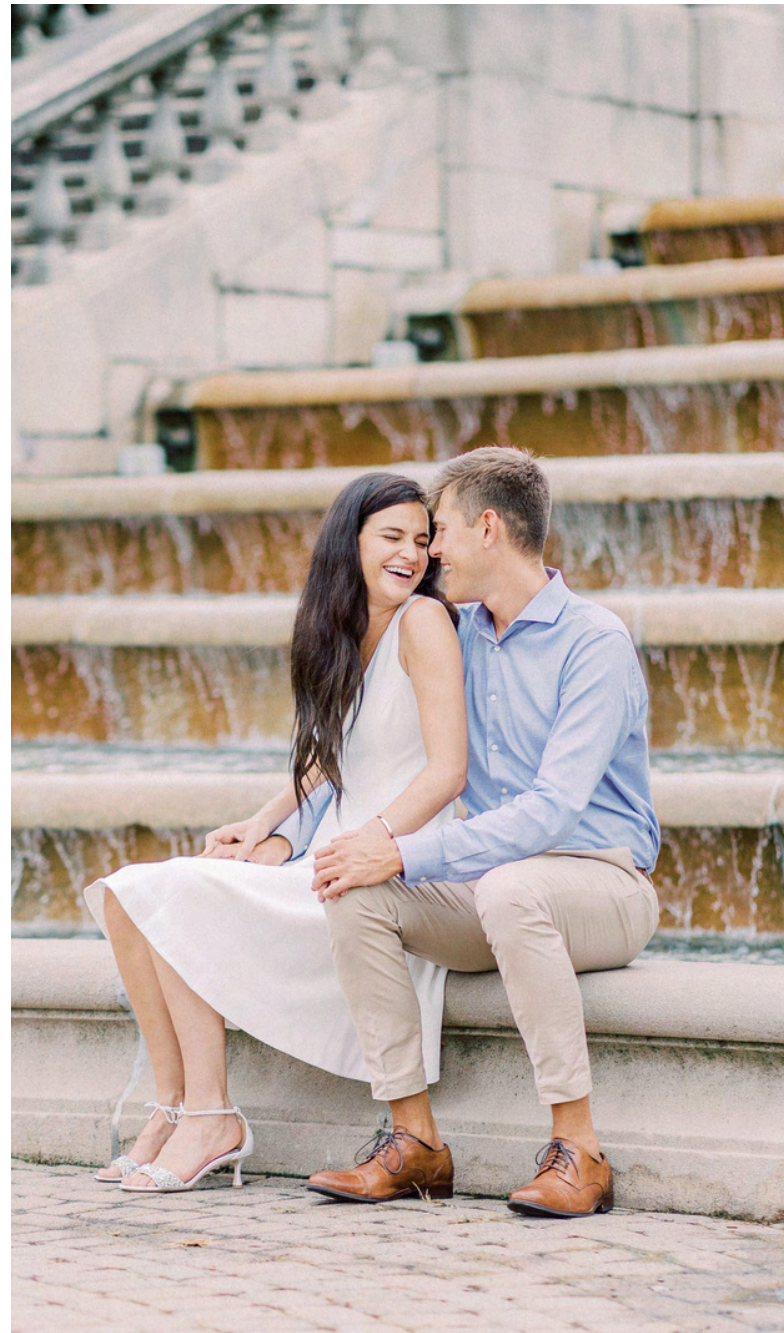
IF YOU WANT YOUR ENGAGEMENT SESSION IMAGES TO LOOK AND FEEL A LITTLE MORE EDITORIAL, WE RECOMMEND BRINGING A FEW SMALL, SIMPLE PROPS WITH YOU, LIKE FRESH FLOWERS TO HOLD OR A BLANKET TO SIT ON.

If you want to set up a picnic or incorporate another special element into your session, just let us know! Maybe you have access to some larger props that have a real “wow” factor, like a boat, classic car, vintage bicycle or hot air balloon. This is the time to dream a little bit and decide what really feels like you! Props aren’t a must by any means. Some of our couples love them and go all out. Some pick one or two items to bring. Others stick with just their outfits -- and that’s great, too! The most important things you need to bring to your session are love and laughter. We’ll take care of the rest.



STYLE TIPS *for* HER

THE ENGAGEMENT SESSION
STYLE GUIDE



DRESS *it* UP

HAVE YOU BEEN EYEING A GORGEOUS DRESS, BUT JUST NEVER HAD AN OCCASION FOR IT?

This is your chance to do it up! Remember: there's no such thing as "too dressed up" when it comes to your engagement session, so don't be afraid to have some fun! If you don't want to spend a ton of money adding a new permanent piece to your wardrobe, a lot of our brides love Rent the Runway for their engagement photos because you don't have to spend a lot to feel like a million bucks. Plus, you can send the outfits back when the session is over. Some of our brides love having an excuse to go shopping and purchase a new permanent piece (or two!) for their wardrobe -- and that's okay, too! Whatever works for you!

SAY *yes* TO THE DRESS

THERE'S NOTHING MORE ROMANTIC THAN A LONG, FLOWY DRESS

Dresses and skirts tend to look most stunning on camera because they really flatter the female body – which is probably why the red carpet is always full of so many dresses and not very many pantsuits! We recommend choosing long, flowy dresses or skirts because they're flattering on all body types, look amazing on camera and bring extra movement and dimension to your photos. Maxi (or floor length) skirts and dresses will give us the best “twirl factor,” add more romance to your walking photos, and look especially gorgeous when juxtaposed with nature, like the desert, forest, fields or beach. Cute, shorter cocktail-length dresses or midi skirts photograph beautifully as well. Our brides who choose to bring two dresses will sometimes choose one of each! We recommend avoiding pants and shorts for your session, and saying yes to a dress (or skirt!) or two! You won't regret it!



ONE OR TWO? *it's up to you!*

Most of our brides who choose two outfits will bring one “wow” dress, and then another shorter cocktail-length dress or midi/maxi skirt for a more casual “us on a date” feel. But if you want to bring two “wow” dresses and forgo the more relaxed dress altogether, give yourself permission to do it! The camera loves runway-esque apparel and so do we! Remember, though, you don’t have to bring two looks if it’s too stressful. If you’d rather just stick to one fabulous outfit, that’s fine, too! One look that you love will be so much better than one outfit you love and another you’re not very excited about. So, whether it’s one or two is really up to you!

If you’re having a hard time making up your mind, feel free to shoot us an email with pictures! We’d be happy help you narrow down your options or give you our opinion about what will look best on camera!

CHOOSING COLORS

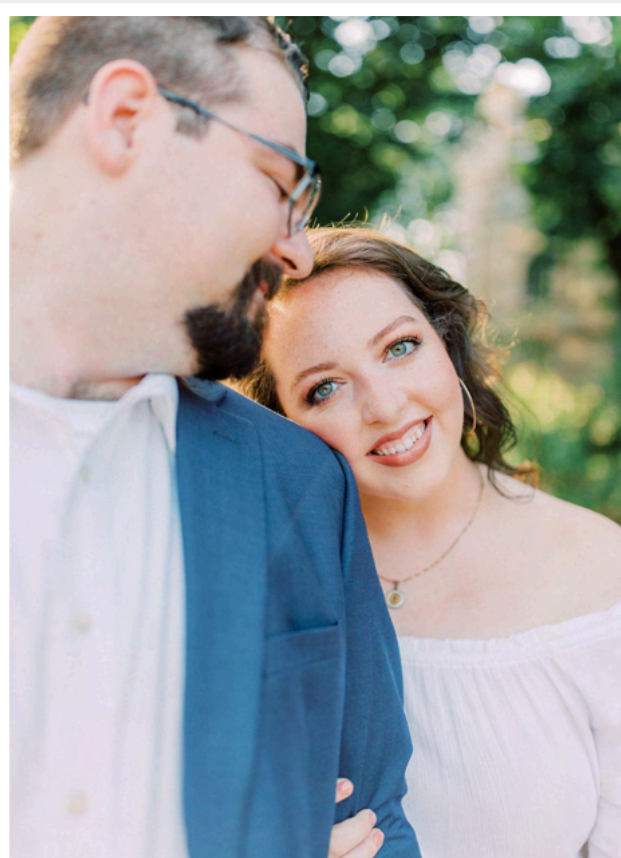
When choosing colors for your outfits, we recommend selecting lighter, neutral tones and more muted shades. Bright, bold or neon colors are distracting and take the focus away from where it should be: you two and how much you love each other. You can never go wrong with light neutral colors like cream, taupe, camel or light gray. The camera loves shades of soft pinks and muted blues, mixed with sophisticated light-colored neutrals. That softer, more pastel-leaning color palette fits beautifully into almost all natural outdoor environments -- and especially complements the rolling hills and fields of Ohio!



COORDINATING THE LOOKS

AS YOU'RE COORDINATING YOUR OUTFIT WITH YOUR FIANCE'S, KEEP IN MIND THAT YOUR OUTFITS WILL LOOK THE MOST COHESIVE ON CAMERA WHEN THE COLOR PALETTE AND WARDROBE PIECES COORDINATE, BUT DON'T ACTUALLY "MATCH."

You should each wear a different dominant color, but stay within a similar color palette family. So if you're wearing a blush dress and nude heels (blush being your dominant color), then he could wear a navy coat with gray pants, paired with brown leather shoes and maybe even a blush pocket square. Now he has his own dominant color (navy) while still incorporating a few touches of your color palette. Most of our brides choose their dress first, and then put together their fiance's outfit based on that. That's why we have a section for each of you!





the *SHOES*

For shoes, keep in mind that heels elongate women's legs and force constant tension in the calves -- which makes them look more toned. Closed-toes heels, in particular, look great on camera because they carry out the line of your leg all the way down to your toe. You can never go wrong with a pair of neutral pumps! If your toes are showing in a peep-toe heel, you might want to schedule a pedicure before your session so you don't regret letting your toes show. Lastly, make sure to bring a pair of flats to wear when moving from place to place. Your feet will thank you later!

FLATTERING *your* FEATURES

In our experience, every woman (regardless of her size or shape) has an area of her body that she's self-conscious about. Recognizing the areas you're self-conscious about when selecting your outfits is key. Choosing flattering silhouettes and colors that complement your natural features is the best way to ensure you'll love the way you look in your photos. Three-quarter length sleeves create an awesome slimming effect on all arms, so be on the lookout for an option with a longer length sleeve. If your dress has shorter sleeves (or no sleeves) consider bringing a cute jacket, blazer, cardigan or pashmina to incorporate into your look. Skinny straps or strapless dresses have the opposite effect on arms on camera. For most women, skinny straps actually make arms look BIGGER. So we recommend avoiding those whenever possible if your goal is slimmer-looking arms. If it's colder outside, we suggest bringing a warm coat (the longer, the better!) to wear when we're not shooting so you don't freeze in your dress.



MAKE a STATEMENT

PAIRING AN ACCESSORY OR TWO WITH YOUR OUTFIT CAN REALLY HELP BRING SOME EXTRA DIMENSION TO YOUR IMAGES.

Whether it's a necklace, belt, bracelet, earrings, hat, or scarf, bringing an accessory or two can bring great visual interest to your photos, so choose one or two that don't compete for attention when paired together. For example, if you go with bolder earrings, you might want to choose a more humble necklace, or maybe even no necklace at all. Fresh florals in a crown or bouquet can be a really romantic touch as well!



GO PRO: *hair & makeup*

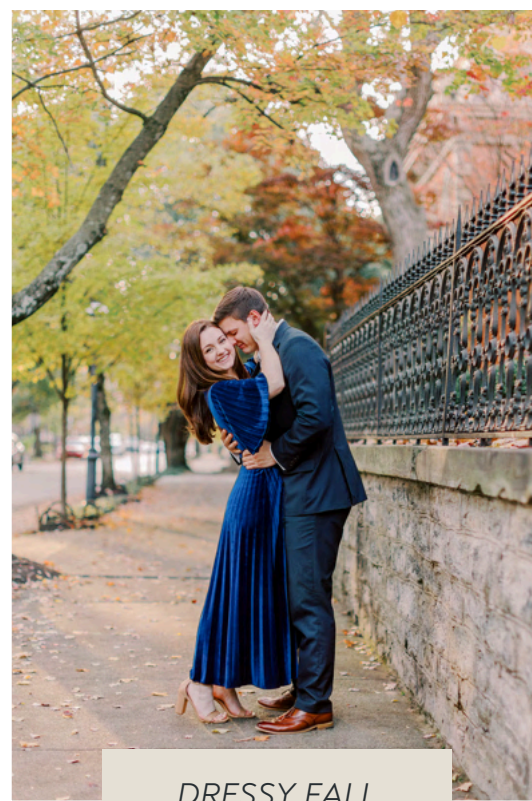
PROFESSIONAL HAIR AND MAKEUP IS ON THE TOP OF MOST OF OUR BRIDES' ENGAGEMENT SESSION CHECKLISTS.

It looks amazing on camera and removes the stress of getting ready on your own. You'll have these photos forever, so this is the time to pamper yourself! Whether it's lash extensions or blown-out hair, professional hair and makeup will give you an extra boost of confidence in front of the camera, and it always photographs like a dream. If you're working with a makeup artist, have her apply your makeup in natural light (if possible) so that it looks fresh and not too heavy. Plus, that's the type of light we'll be shooting in, so it'll give you the best expectation of how it will translate on camera. Most of our brides feel like their makeup is "too much" at first, since it's more than they would wear on a normal day, so if you feel that way at the beginning, don't worry! Good makeup artists know how to get it just right for the camera — and our brides always love the final result. If you need a recommendation for hair and makeup, we work with the best in the business and have a go-to team! They're sweet as pie, talented as heck, unbelievable professionals and wonderful people. You'll LOVE them! Just let us know and we'll send you their information. We know they'll take good care of you!

FALL & WINTER SESSIONS

When seasons change and temperatures drop, sometimes it's just too cold for a dress and heels by themselves (no matter how warm your coverup overcoat is). So we have some suggestions for late fall and winter that will still help you be fashion-forward and keep your color tones camera friendly.

First, let's talk about color palettes. Just like in warmer weather, we recommend muted hues over bold, primary colors. During fall, warm neutrals like camel, taupe, cream, champagne, and gray are still going to look great. If you'd like to incorporate color, choose sophisticated jewel-toned versions of bright primary colors. Here are some examples: mustard over yellow, crimson or burgundy over red, camel over orange, sage or emerald over green, and powder blue or navy over blue. These jewel tones will photograph beautifully in any season.



DRESSY FALL

COZY FALL



COLD WEATHER TIPS:

Add a peacoat, tights, scarves and heeled booties to a form-fitting cocktail dress.

SNOW SESSIONS:

Statement coat with a beanie, scarf and gloves or a warm, oversized, snuggly sweater with tall boots and a hat. The great thing about snow is it creates a beautiful white backdrop, so even though it might seem counterintuitive, soft pastel, muted colors like soft pinks and powder blues still look great! And, remember, regardless of the setting, you can never go wrong with neutrals!



FASHION TIPS for HIM

TOPS & BOTTOMS

The same way that a dress is the most flattering silhouette for the female body, a blazer, sport coat or suit jacket has the same flattering effect for men. You can't go wrong with a dress shirt, slacks and a blazer, or a well-tailored suit.

COLORS

For colors, we recommend neutrals and soft, warm tones that complement your bride's look. When selecting your pieces, we recommend choosing a different "weight" for the pants and coat. So for example, navy pants (darker) and a heather gray coat (lighter). Or gray pants (darker) with a soft powder blue shirt (lighter).

SUITS

When selecting a suit for photos, the most important part isn't the price. It's the fit. For men, it's critical to have a suit jacket that fits snugly (but not too tight), and pants that are the correct length and don't have too many breaks. Just like high heels make women look taller than they are, bunched up fabric stacked on top of a man's shoes makes him look physically shorter than he really is. If you already have a suit that you like and want to wear at your session, make sure to try it on a few weeks beforehand (with the shoes you'll be wearing) so you have time to make alterations if needed.

If you don't have a suit, now's the perfect time to invest in something you'll wear for the rest of your life! The best part? It's a lot less expensive than you might think! While custom suits can cost thousands of dollars, some of the most well-known brands sell really nice off-the-rack suits for a fraction of the price that, with a few alterations from a good tailor, can be made to fit like a glove.

Solid shades of gray or navy are a strong complement to most women's outfits, whereas pinstripes or plaid patterns tend to distract the eye, so stay away from too strong of prints, and opt for solids instead.

LAYERED LOOKS

The next time you walk by a store like J. Crew or Banana Republic, you'll notice the male mannequins and models are always wearing several layers at once. Layers on men look great on camera, so even when it's hot outside, it's worth an hour or two of discomfort for photos that will last you both a lifetime. Adding extra layers will bring additional dimension and visual interest to your photos. If the temperature permits, he could even consider adding a v-neck sweater with a pop of color from a long-sleeved collared shirt and tie underneath. Don't be afraid to get a little creative with layers!



IT'S ALL IN THE DETAILS

Long pants and closed-toed shoes are the most sophisticated and masculine looks for men. They draw attention away from his legs and feet, and place it where you want it: on the face you fell in love with. So, for your session, it's best to leave the shorts and sandals at home. Suit pants, dress pants or colored pants work best. Brown leather dress shoes complement almost every look, whether he's wearing a full suit, or a blazer and colored pants. Ties, bowties, pocket squares, colored socks, belts, tie clips, suspenders, vests, and watches are sharp complements to any suit. If you bring two suits to the session, you can start with a traditional necktie and belt, then switch to suspenders and a bow tie for your second look. If two suits are too stressful, no problem! One look will do the trick! A lot of our grooms wear one suit and just change their dress shirt and/or pocket square/tie. Other guys wear one pair of pants and change their jacket. You can still mix and match accessories to complement both of her dresses without doing a full change during the session. So, either way, you win.





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