

A romantic couple stands in a field of tall grass, looking at each other. The woman is wearing a white tiered dress and sandals, and the man is wearing a dark shirt and light pants. A small brown dog is sitting in the foreground. The background features trees and a clear sky.

*Chrissa J*

PHOTOGRAPHY

# WHAT TO WEAR GUIDE



# WHAT TO WEAR?

Getting dressed in the morning can be quite a challenge, and when you add the pressure of standing in front of a camera to showcase your best self, it becomes even more daunting.

For a photo shoot, even the most self-assured fashionistas might find themselves pulling out their entire wardrobe, hoping to discover the perfect outfit that truly captures their essence.

Don't worry if you feel a bit anxious about choosing your outfit! It's completely normal, trust me. Before you find yourself staying up late, endlessly browsing online stores and constantly adding and removing items from your cart, let's have a chat about what actually works and what doesn't. Here's the most important thing to remember: Comfort is key! Above all else, you should aim to look and feel like your authentic self.



# BE COMFY *please*

It's not uncommon for people to want to shop for new, sparkly, fabulous clothes to wear to a photo shoot. And that's totally fine.

The best route is usually to go with something that's tried and true.

Something you know moves with you and hugs you in all the right places.

Don't get me wrong - it 100% does not have to be jeans and a t-shirt. You can glam it up a bit more if that's what you fancy. But if authenticity is what you're after, you're going to have to show up as yourself. And if you want to capture this time of your life in all its glory, then it's about the feeling of being in your own skin.





# MATCH YOUR OUTFIT *to the location & season*

If you're wearing a fancy dress in your living room, the viewer might assume you're going to a wedding. A little sundress number in a snowy field and the viewer might suffer from a crippling amount of pity for you. You and I will be collaborating on telling your story together, so let's get this right.

Plan your outfits around what you know about the conditions at the location we'll be shooting at. You'll want to be warm enough (or cool enough!), have pain-free feet, and look relatively native to your environment.

Think through your clothing choices logically based on location, vibe, and comfort level.



# BRING MULTIPLE *outfits*

Gather up 2 or 3 outfits that you feel amazing in and we can play around with different combinations on the day. I'm not trying to photocopy trends in all their boring hues, I'm looking for the you-est you. Bring things that help you express yourself - I want you to grace my lens with your true, full personality!

Providing options helps me to make sure your threads complement the environment - keeping the focus on you, where it should be!





# INCORPORATE *movement* & TEXTURE

Pick fabrics that move and flow with you. Ones that add a cosy texture, or get picked up by the wind, filter the late afternoon sun, and glow in the morning light.

Natural fibres like linen, cotton, or wool are amazing. Avoid stiff-seeming garments with collars as they look a bit too formal and often get tucked in weird spots and need adjusting.



# COLOUR *scheming*

Aim for neutrals and earthy tones. These colours compliment the outdoor environment almost anywhere you go and look gorgeous as a printed, framed photograph.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not advocating for a beige world of quiet and inoffensive colours. By neutrals, I just mean softer tones. Primary colours are incredibly striking, but can sometimes have the effect of detracting from the main subject (which is you). So for example, instead of electric blue, go for something closer to sky blue. Instead of bright orange, opt for burnt orange.

A rule of thumb here is to choose to either complement your natural environment or contrast it. A mustard dress in a deep green forest will look epic, whereas a bright pink, patterned dress doesn't really fit in with your surroundings. It totally depends on what you're looking for! For families it's best to keep your colour scheme limited to four colours. You can choose one person to wear a feature colour and have everyone else's outfits complement that.





# COLOUR THEORY

*in action*

Remember the colour wheel from 6th grade art class? Maybe you've gladly left your middle school days in the past, but the colour wheel comes in handy when making good colour decisions (aka planning what to wear). The colour wheel is a great reference point when trying to figure out what colours look a bit weird together and what colours are a match made in heaven.





# COMPLEMENTARY = GOOD MATCHING = BAD

Complement each other, don't match each other.

You don't want to create the illusion of being your partner's siamese twin. When multiple people wear the same colour, sometimes their matching outfits blend together so much that you can't really see any of them properly. The viewer can't tell where one person begins and another one ends. They turn into one uniform blob.

In order for the aesthetics of your photograph to really sing, you want to find complementary outfits that showcase a variety of colors, textures and tones. Complement the other people in the photograph as well as your surroundings. The idea is to have everything look good together without everything looking the same.



# CAREFUL OF PATTERN & PRINTS.

Avoid large bold patterns as they often dominate the photograph and detract attention from your beautiful face.

Usually, subtle smaller patterns work best. Flannels or a light floral print are great when they complement the location. But less is definitely more with this one, try to limit yourself to one pattern at a time. Matching patterns is a tricky task, and it's super difficult to do well.

If you're not quite sure what category your patterned clothes fall into, shoot me an email or send me a text and I'll be happy to weigh in.





# WHAT ABOUT LOGOS?

Much like crazy patterns, clothing with writing or logos on it tends to be a bit distracting. We're not getting paid for Adidas' not-so-subtle product placement.



## THE FINE ART OF *accessorising*

Watches are a bit of a weird one, especially in couple sessions. The big fat face of a watch is particularly apparent when people are holding each other's faces and bringing them in for a gentle embrace. Best to leave the watch at home unless its sentimental.

# SHOES. SHOES. SHOES.

You can't have come this far, painstakingly planning your outfit, only to stop at your ankles. Shoes are a key part of a look and ideally complement the rest of the outfit.

If you wear heels like a pro, I definitely don't have the authority to tell you not to do that! But if you, like the rest of us mere mortals, find heels to be moderately uncomfortable, then do yourself a favour and ditch 'em. In most cases, we'll be stomping around on some relatively uneven terrain and I don't want you spraining an ankle - not on my watch. I'll probably be giving you some energetic prompts to follow, too, so you'll want to be ready for action.

Select the right shoes based on the location, and consider what you'd normally wear if I wasn't following you around with a camera. Being barefoot makes sense on the beach, and boots are beautiful in the mountains.

Leather is great for boots, and know that sandals win over flip flops by a long shot. Always consider context when choosing footwear for both aesthetic appeal and practicality.

## LET'S TALK. *props*

Props don't have to scream 'PROP!' Go for the subtle things that accentuate your personality and help to tell a story about your life. Think picnics basket, family pet, a special throw.



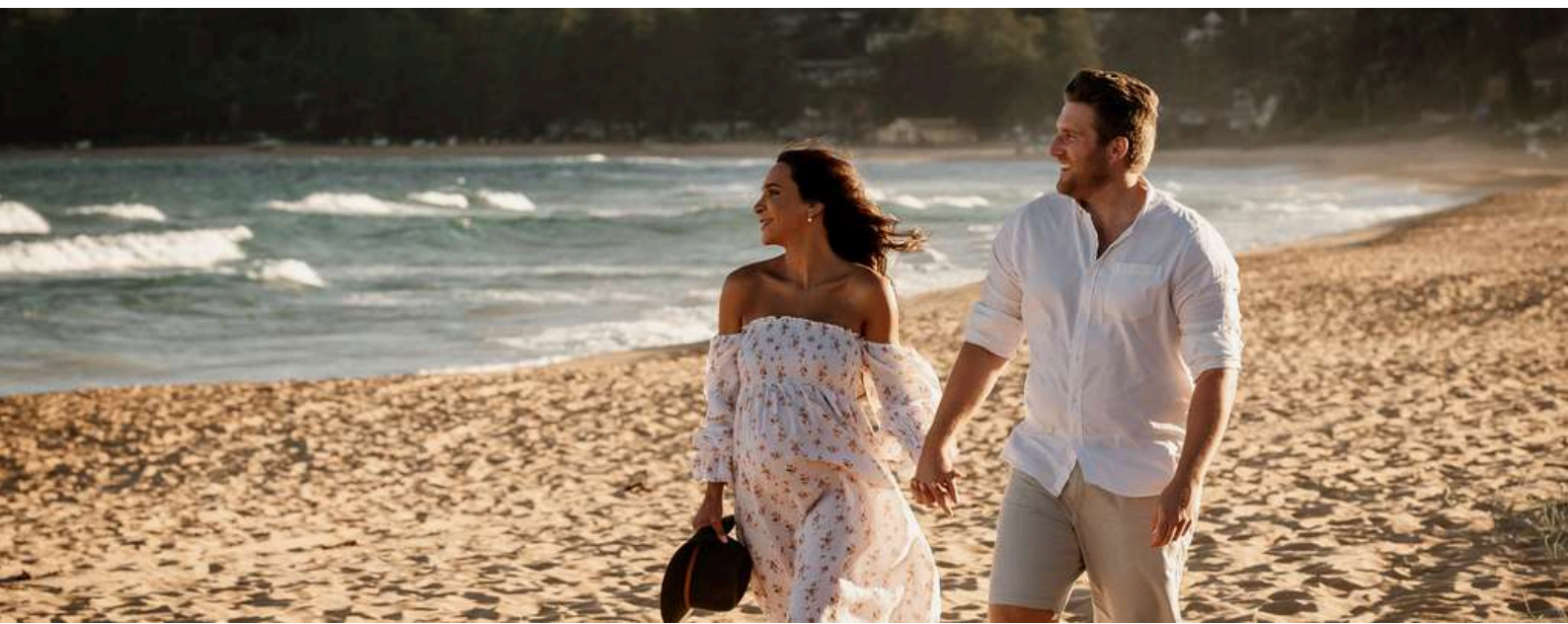
# HAIR & MAKEUP

## *do's (and don'ts)*

So this is totally your call! But, if I may... I would suggest cultivating a bit of the French "*je ne sais quoi*" that balances elegance and ease so well. I want you to look like you. So do whatever you need to do to feel confident and beautiful.

Hands tell such a story about who you are and where you've been and play a crucial role in photography. Sometimes photographs magnify bright nail polish, chipped manicures, and dirty fingernails. And once you see it, you can't un-see it - your eye just keeps on zooming in on that one bit of the photograph. It's really distracting. Treat yourself to a little subtle manicure or make sure your nails are neat and tidy before the shoot.

As for hair... I'm a sucker for the way a wild mane blows in the breeze. Up-dos are alright, and I totally get it - it's so easy to throw your hair up! But when it comes to saving a moment and putting it in your pocket, hair down is the way to go. With your hair down, you get movement, you get interest, you get some perfect slices of imperfection in the best possible way.



# LET'S RECAP

Dress for the season.

Dress for the location.

Compliment - don't match (unintentionally).

Wear something comfortable that you feel like yourself in.

Natural fibres and earthy colours look amazing in most settings.

Avoid large prints, logos, and patterns.



thank you!  
Nerissa