

HELLO &
WELCOME



I CAN'T WAIT TO WORK WITH YOU

table of

CONTENTS

01- Welcome	09 - What to bring to your shoot
02- Hey Mama	10 - Bringing dogs
04- The process	12 - How to style your session
06- Five tips for a stress-free shoot	16 - What to avoid wearing
08- Got some inspiration?	18 - What happens next?

HEY YOU,
WELCOME

Thank you so much for trusting me
to capture your family memories.
I'm so excited to see you all soon!


We will laugh, play, have fun and
capture some beautiful photos of
your family-just as you are.

Please take a look through this
guide, and let me know if you have
any questions about your session.

So much love,

Helen

Did you know? I'M MAMA TOO?



I have two small, wild girls and I get it. Being a mum is the hardest thing I've ever done! You're not the same person that you were before these tiny humans came into your life, some days it's hard to remember who that 'before' woman was.

But you're better, stronger, than you ever were. You can multi-task like a boss. Leaky boobs and super market tantrums don't faze you any more. You are someone for your children to admire, look up to and aspire to be like one day.

You may not quite recognise yourself any more Mama, but let me help to capture the essence of you, the love and connection that you have with your children, the perfectly imperfect family that you have created.

My favourite photos with my girls are ones I had taken when I felt overwhelmed by juggling the two of them, soft in places that I thought were meant to be firm and toned, tired and losing my sense of self. But now that I look back on them, all I see is the love. The way they look at me, how for them I am 'home', just as my body was their home for 9 loooooong months! I treasure the imperfections that I once hated, they are part of this incredible journey called motherhood. And I want for you to have that too.

This is what drives everything that I do. To help you capture that feeling, that moment, that joy and connection that your children bring you. So that you can show them in years to come how absolutely and totally they are loved.

THE PROCESS



Want to know a little more about how it works?
Here's an overview:

- 1 Book your session date (which you have already done, yay!)
- 2 Plan your outfits, pack your bags and attend your shoot.
- 3 You will be emailed a gallery of the best images around 2-3 weeks later.
- 4 You have 2 weeks to select your favourites & place your order online
- 5 Your digital order will be delivered within 2-3 weeks & printed photos take 2-4 weeks.

enjoy!

five tips

FOR A
STRESS-FREE
PHOTOSHOOT



PREPARE IN ADVANCE —————

Preparation is key, especially with kids! The last thing you want is to be rushing around on the morning of your photoshoot, worrying about ironing clothes and frantically shoving snacks and nappies into your bag! Lay all your clothes out the night before, make sure your bag is packed with spare nappies, snacks, changes of clothes and anything else you might need (a towel for beach shoots if your children are anything like mine and totally drawn to water!). This will make everything much easier and less stressful when you are trying to get out the door on the morning of your shoot.

————— DON'T PUT PRESSURE ON YOURSELF

To look a certain way, to wear a certain thing. It can be so easy to just focus on the way we look, but in years to come your babies will not even notice if your makeup wasn't perfect, or your hair was slightly out of place. What they will notice is YOU. You, present in their memories, captured loving on them, having fun with them. A true memory of their family.

PREPARE TO BE PRESENT —————

There are very few times in life when we are completely switched off from the outside world and totally present with our children - make this time one of those. Take this time to breathe them in, enjoy them, be present, and remember why you're doing this. You're preserving family memories, making your kids feel loved and adored. No expectations, no worries about the end result, pick your outfits and just turn up - I will handle the rest.

MAKE IT NO BIG DEAL

One of my biggest tips when it comes to bringing toddlers and young children to a photoshoot is to not over prepare them. The more you tell them they're going to have to sit and smile, the less they're likely too! Simply tell them that you're going to visit your friend Helen, (or I'm coming to you). You're going to play and run around and Helen will need their help to take lots of photos of Mummy & Daddy. There's nothing better than making it into a fun game!

LEAVE THE EXPECTATIONS BEHIND

There's nothing more unpredictable than children! So relax, take the pressure off and trust that I will capture the most beautiful photos of you all no matter what happens! All I need is a milisecond to capture a beautiful photo, so if you're bringing young children along, be reassured that they don't need to sit still or look a certain way - I'm here to capture their beautiful little personality, just as they are.



GOT SOME INSPIRATION?



Have you got a photo idea in mind? Let me know! I love to see your ideas before a session - whether it's a maternity pose idea, or an inspiring outfit.

Please ensure that you send me any inspirational ideas at least a week before your session so I can let you know if it's possible and start planning!

For any last minute ideas, make sure that you show me your inspiration at the beginning of the photoshoot. I can't guarantee all ideas can be done, but will do my best!

For newborn shoots, remember that I'm a natural photographer who uses simple baby-led posing. Some positions, such as baby being led on their front, do require your baby to be sound asleep and I will be led by them as to whether they feel comfortable to do this.



What to bring

TO YOUR PHOTOSHOOT

FOR YOU

- Snacks & a bottle of water
- Your outfit(s) - feel free to arrive in comfy clothes and change in the car when you arrive.
- Anything you'd like included in your photos - a blanket grandma has knitted, a special teddy etc.
- Postpartum mamas, anything to make you comfortable e.g your cushion, ice packs, heat packs, nipple cream, any medication.

FOR YOUR CHILDREN

NEWBORNS

- Extra nappies & wet wipes
- A dummy (if you're happy to use one, even if they haven't had it before as they're useful for soothing)
- For bottle fed babies, more milk than you think you might need
- A change of clothes or two

OLDER CHILDREN

- Something to make them laugh!
- Post-photo entertainment - iPad, book, toys etc.
- Non-messy treats for bribery purposes! - raisins, crisps
- A change of clothes for little ones who like to dribble or older ones who like to splash in the sea!

Bringing Your FURRY CHILDREN!

If you're not already aware, I am a HUGE dog person (mine is a crazy rescue dog from Cape Town called Dixie) and highly encourage bringing your furry friend to your shoot.

Here are my top tips for bringing your dog to your session:

BRING TREATS

Dogs are easier to bribe than toddlers and that's the truth!

DON'T SET ANY EXPECTATIONS

Just like toddlers, dogs can be a little unpredictable so be ready to go with the flow. We will capture some lovely images, no matter how well they sit still on the day!

BOOK A GROOM

You'll be doing your hair and makeup, so make sure your dog is looking fresh too!

BRING THEIR WATER BOWL

And a bottle of water to fill it up with after the shoot.

DID I MENTION, BRING TREATS?

Treats, treats and more treats!

P.S want to bring your cat, parrot or house rabbit to your newborn session? I am open to all kinds of animal siblings, provided they won't poop on me!



How To

STYLE YOUR SESSION



Choosing the right outfit is the difference between a GOOD shoot and a GREAT one!

Whether your session is in your home or outdoors, the same styling rules apply. I've put together my top tips to guide you through your styling choices, but remember you can Whatsapp me at any time (07876 775 265) to ask my opinion - I love chatting clothes!

The number one rule is to be true to yourself - don't wear anything that you're not comfortable in.

Stay away from logos, text and characters. These are distracting and can really date your pictures.

Add some texture, lace, linen and chunky knits (especially in winter) all photography amazingly and add interest without distracting from the people in the photo.

There's nothing more beautiful than feeling confident in your own skin, so make sure that you choose an outfit that you feel comfortable in and that fits well. I always advise to bring at more than one outfit with you. For outdoor sessions, wear clothes that are fashionable, yet still functional for the location - keep in mind we will be moving around!

PICK A COLOUR PALETTE

Choose three or four colours to create a colour palette for your photos, and then incorporate the colours throughout your outfits in varying patterns, solids, and layers. Avoid matchy-matchy and black as your main colour. Soft, muted and neutral colours look great for my style of photography - please avoid bright/neon hues.

It's always a good idea to start with one statement piece - usually Mum's outfit - and then pick the clothing for the rest of the family around that.



ADD SOME TEXTURE

Want to go all-natural but don't want it to be boring? I LOVE texture! Mixing up fabrics is a smart strategy to add some dimension to your images. A good cotton shirt is a good start, but adding things like knits, silks, lace etc can add a beautiful warmth and depth to the images without distracting from the subjects.

TREAT YOURSELF, DRESS UP!

Don't be afraid to dress up! When else can you wear a full length dress and not feel over-dressed?! It's not only fun, but it's something different than the everyday and professional photographs can definitely be considered a special occasion!

DON'T FORGET SHOES!

For outdoor shoots, remember that you'll want to be comfortable as we move around, but please stay away from character themed shoes, athletic shoes, and bulky soles. Personally, I would always look to go barefoot where possible or opt for subtle sandals.

Consider the location - if we're on the beach then smart shoes are a no. That goes for outfits too, no one wears a formal trousers or a suit to the beach!

CONSIDER YOUR NAILS —————

This goes for all sessions but particularly for newborns shoots - think about your nails! You'll forever regret arriving with chipped or half grown out nail varnish. Natural nails look lovely, but if you'd like to get them done then opt for something neutral or pastel - avoid bright colours as all costs!

————— KEEP MAKEUP NATURAL

Whether you plan to do your makeup yourself or book in with a makeup artist a few hours before your shoot, my main advice would be to keep it as natural as possible. Avoid dark, heavy eye makeup and thick fake lashes. Your children are as natural as can be, so take this into consideration.

HAVE A PAMPER —————

Along with your nails, make sure that you're up to date with your hair! If you know you'll look at your images in years to come and wish you'd had your roots done, make it a priority. There's only so much editing magic that can be done!



What to AVOID WEARING



There are a few styles of clothing that I would avoid wearing as they don't photograph well:

AVOID checked shirts - they can cause wiggly lines to appear on your photos!

AVOID bright block colours - they can cause colour reflections onto your skin

AVOID stripes - they're distracting

AVOID neon colours - they will come out a different colour in the final images

AVOID wearing yellow - I take a lot of this colour out of my photos, so any yellow clothing will look more white/cream

AVOID clothing with text, characters and big logos - No one wants "I'm a cool kid" and Chase from Paw Patrol in every image!



Fancy some SHOPPING?

Zara is my go-to for simple linen shirts and beautiful kids knitwear. H&M also has lots of choice.

A-line silhouettes, midi or maxi length and a bit of a sleeve tend to be the most flattering on all figures.

ZARA



H&M



so, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



Imagine your home filled with images of the ones you love.

How many times will you walk past an image of you with your your loved ones? How will your children feel as they gaze up at portraits of you and them together?

Filling your walls with artwork is so simple, yet can have an powerful positive impact on your family as they grow.

Around 2-3 weeks after your session, you will receive an online gallery featuring the best images from your session. This will be anywhere between 40-70 images depending on the style of shoot. At this stage, you have the option to upgrade to add additional digital images, albums, wall art or prints.

Your gallery will be live for 7 days for you to make your choices and you can pay for any extra purchases via online bank transfer



“Because I feel that, in the Heavens above
The angels, whispering to one another,
Can find, among their burning terms of love
None so devotional as that of ‘Mother’”

– Edgar Allen Poe



Feel free to contact me at any time before your shoot - I'm here for anything you need:

Instagram | @helenmildmay_photography

Call/Text/Whatsapp | 07876 775 265

Email | helen@helenmildmay.com