

# SESSION GUIDE



KELLY & SCHUSTER

# WELCOME!

*I can't wait to create some magic together!*



I'm so excited you have chosen me to document this season of life and I cannot wait for our mini adventure together. I know that stepping in front of the camera can feel incredibly daunting, and it is something many people have little to no experience with. This guide will help answer some commonly asked questions and help you best prepare for our time together. As your shoot date approaches, I will also be available to review wardrobe options and answer any other questions that may arise!

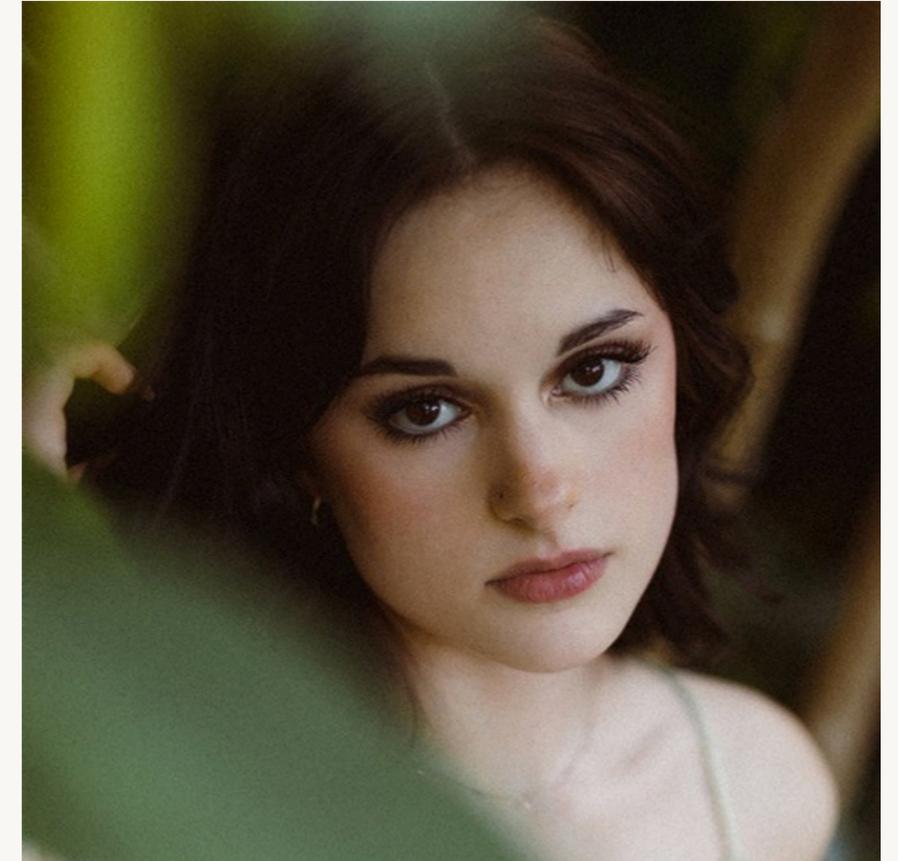


# SESSION PREPARATION

The best thing you can bring to your session is simply yourselves. Try to arrive rested, fed, and without rushing if possible (especially if there are pets or kiddos joining your session). Give yourselves a little extra time so the experience feels calm instead of stressful. You do not need to practice posing or worry about what to do. My job is to guide you and create space for real moments to unfold organically.

In the weeks and days leading up to your session, I will be fully available for you and will help you plan out not only your vision for the session overall, but how you want to look in the photos themselves. I can be your sounding board for all things - I promise, there are no silly questions and I'm truly here to help!





# HAIR & MAKEUP

Professional hair and make-up, while by no means essential, can make a significant difference in the overall aesthetic of an image. For this reason, I have curated a list of exceptionally talented artists on the Sunshine Coast and Vancouver who can help you achieve whatever your desired look may be. Once your session is officially booked I will share my list of preferred vendors with you!

That being said, many clients prefer to look natural in their images and I am always 100% in support of that! The most important thing is that you look and feel like yourself in the final images.

# OUTFIT PREPARATION

Choose outfits that feel like you, just slightly elevated. The goal is not to look like someone else or wear something you would never normally choose. When you feel comfortable and confident, it naturally shows in your body language and expressions, which matters far more than wearing something trendy or overly formal.

Try everything on ahead of time, including shoes and underlayers, so there are no surprises on session day. Make sure you can sit, walk, hug, and move easily. If you find yourself constantly adjusting straps, pulling at fabric, or worrying about wrinkles, it will take you out of the moment. Comfort is always the priority.

I recommend laying everyone's outfits together before the session to see how they work as a group. Coordinating is better than matching exactly, and softer, timeless pieces tend to create images that stand the test of time. When in doubt, keep it simple and choose pieces that make you feel like your best, most relaxed self.





*Patterns*

*Layers*

*Accessories*

*Textures*

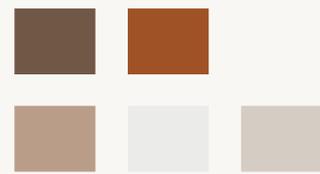
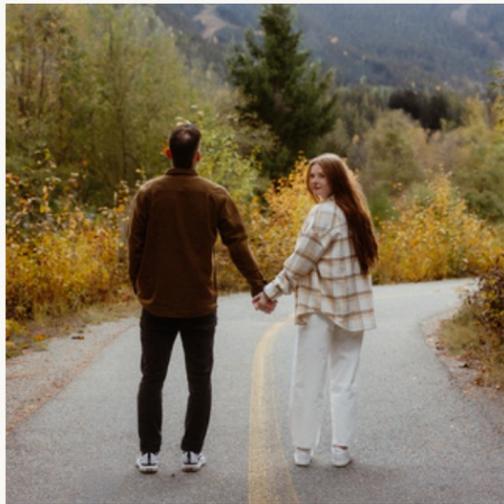
*Props*

*Colours*

*Pets*

**OUTFITS**





# MOOD BOARD

---

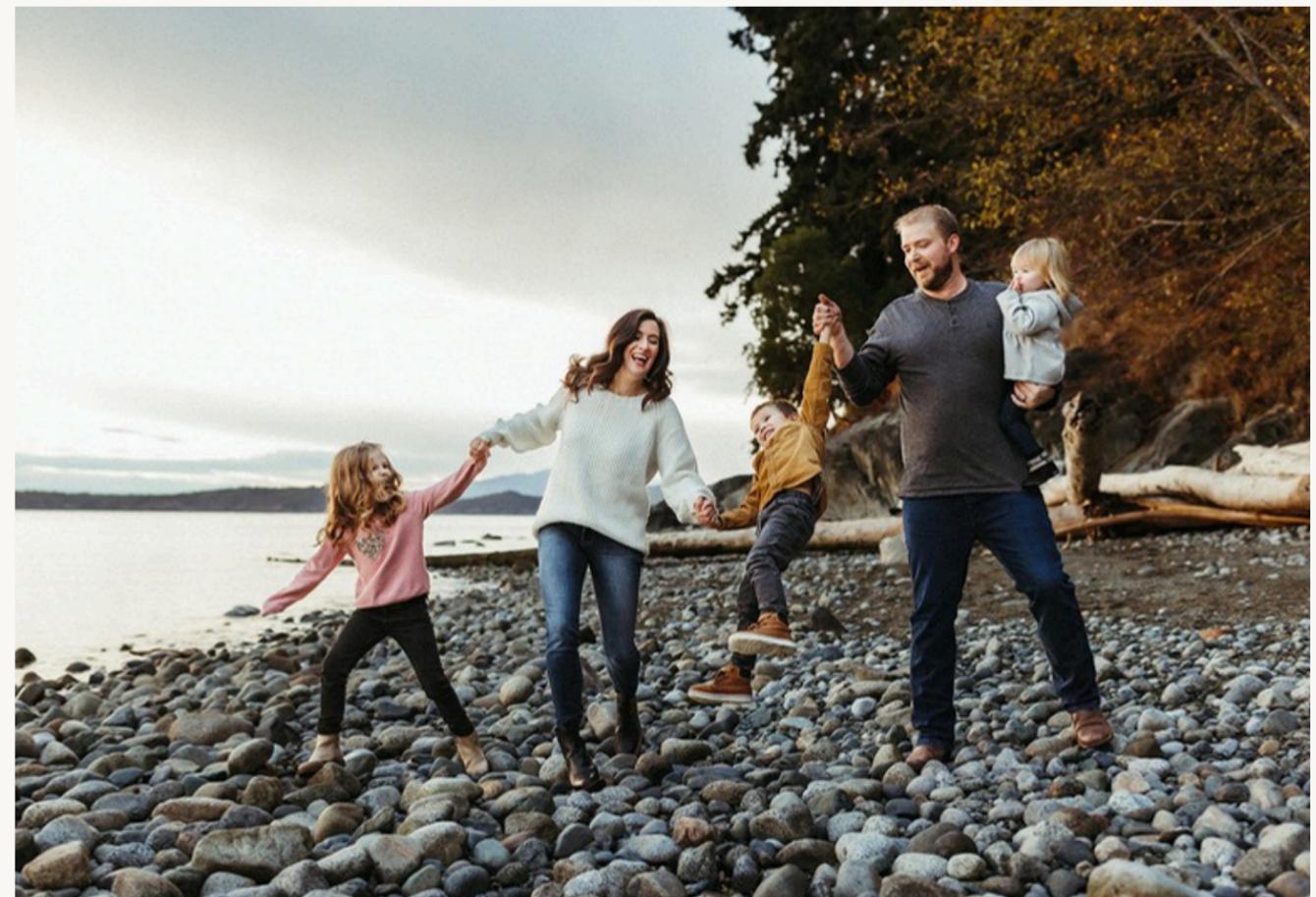
# COLOURS

Soft, neutral, and earthy tones tend to photograph best because they keep the focus on connection rather than clothing. Think creams, warm browns, muted greens, soft blues, or gentle pastels.

Coordinating colours works much better than matching exactly. You want to look like a group that belongs together, not a uniform.

If you aren't sure where to start or what colours might work well together, check out the website [colors.co](https://colors.co) and take a look at some of the different palettes! You can start with a colour you know you want to wear and build from there.

*Example Colour Palette:*





# TEXTURES

Texture adds depth and interest without being distracting. Knits, linen, denim, cotton, wool, lace, and flowy fabrics all photograph wonderfully. Texture helps images feel cozy, natural, and dimensional, especially in outdoor settings.

Textures also move beautifully in photos, especially outdoors where wind and movement add life to the scene. Mixing a few different textures across outfits helps create variety while still keeping everything cohesive.

*Texture Examples:*



# PATTERNS

Patterns are absolutely welcome, just keep them soft and intentional. Smaller or more subtle patterns tend to photograph best, while large logos, heavy graphics, or very bold prints can draw attention away from faces and connection.

If one person wears a pattern, balancing it with solids on others usually works perfectly. The goal is visual balance rather than everyone looking identical, so the overall image feels natural and easy on the eyes.

*When possible avoid:*

Logos

Shirts with text

Zippers (buttons are best)

Clashing/competing patterns





# LAYERS

Layers are one of the easiest ways to add variety and movement to your photos. Jackets, cardigans, scarves, overshirts, or shawls can quickly change the look of an image without needing a full outfit change. They also help create a relaxed, lived-in feeling.

Layers give you something natural to interact with, which helps people feel less awkward in front of the camera. Holding a jacket, wrapping up together, or adjusting a sleeve often creates organic moments that feel genuine and effortless.

# ACCESSORIES & PROPS

Accessories are a great way to add personality and tell a bit more of your story. Hats, jewelry, meaningful heirlooms, or cozy blankets can add interest while still keeping the focus on you. Choosing pieces you genuinely love will always feel more authentic than adding something just for the photos.

Keep accessories simple enough that they complement rather than compete. A few thoughtful details often photograph more beautifully than too many competing elements.

Props are completely optional, and simple is always best. If there is something meaningful you would naturally use together, feel free to bring it along. Think picnic blankets, a favourite book, musical instruments, or something connected to your shared story.

The goal is to enhance connection rather than create a staged feeling. If a prop helps you relax, interact, or feel more like yourselves, it will naturally add depth to your photos.



# PETS

Pets are always welcome because they are part of your family too. Bringing a leash, treats, waste bags, and possibly a helper who can take them for breaks when needed makes the session run much more smoothly. This allows us to include them in some moments while also giving you space for photos without them.

We will embrace a little unpredictability because life with pets is never perfectly still, and that is part of the charm. Some of the most genuine moments happen in the in-between chaos.

## *Cuddle Warning:*

*As an avid pet lover, please note that if you have pets in your session I will absolutely need extra time set aside for cuddles and snuggles. You will also likely receive an obscene number of images of your pet within the gallery*





# TIPS FOR POSING

You do not need to know how to pose — that is completely my job. Most people tell me they feel awkward in front of the camera, and honestly, that is very normal. Instead of stiff or overly structured posing, I focus on gentle guidance that helps you move, interact, and settle into moments that feel natural and comfortable.

I may ask you to walk together, lean in close, talk to each other, or do something a little playful. These prompts are designed to create real reactions rather than forced smiles. The goal is not perfection, but connection. The small in-between moments, like laughter, quiet glances, or adjusting into each other, are often where the most meaningful photos happen.

If your session is a solo shoot, I will guide you how to move your body and, the most frequently asked question, “what do I do with my hands!?”

The best thing you can do is stay present instead of thinking about the camera. Trust the process, be willing to move a little, and don't worry if something feels slightly silly at first. Once you relax into the experience, everything starts to feel easy, and that is when the magic really happens.



# EXTRA TIPS FOR LITTLES

Kids do not need to behave perfectly. Truly. The happiest sessions happen when children are allowed to be themselves rather than being asked to sit still and smile constantly. Bringing snacks, comfort items, or a favourite toy can help them feel safe and relaxed.

We will take breaks when needed, play games, and follow their energy instead of forcing moments. Some of the most meaningful photographs come from laughter, curiosity, cuddles, and even a little bit of chaos — because that is what real family life looks like.

## *Secret Weapons:*

*Bubbles, lollipops, candy, stickers – I highly recommend bringing these if possible!*



# FREQUENTLY ASKED

## *What if it rains?*

If there is a torrential downpour, we can of course reschedule for a day with more clement weather. However, if it is more of a drizzle, I always try and stick to our original date and instead plan for an alternate location, or use of clear umbrellas. It's the PNW - finding a rain-free day can be tricky so I say, embrace it!

## *Do you have a studio?*

Yes! I have a home studio that can be used for boudoir, portrait sessions, and some types of family sessions. The light in my studio is typically the best in the morning or early afternoon, and is less suitable for sessions in the late afternoon or evening.

## *Will you travel to us?*

Absolutely! Travel is my greatest joy and I am always happy to hop on a ferry, bus, train, or plane to come to you. When filling out my contact form, be sure to mention your location so I can provide a detailed breakdown of any travel fees.

## *How long does the session last?*

I offer a variety of collections, so the duration of the session will depend on what collection is booked. However, most sessions start at 60 minutes. Sessions can often run a bit over time, especially if we are all having fun and feeling inspired, so I recommend adding a little buffer of extra time between our session and your next activity that day.

## *When will we get our gallery?*

Sneak peeks are delivered within 48 hours of a session. Full gallery delivery depends on the type and length of session booked, but most clients receive their full gallery within 8 weeks of the session date. If you require a faster turnaround time, I do offer express delivery with a rush fee.

## *How many photos do we get?*

Lifestyle and couples sessions will typically receive a gallery of 50+ images with a 60-90 minute session. Boudoir deliverables and storytelling sessions will have different amounts based on the collection booked.

---

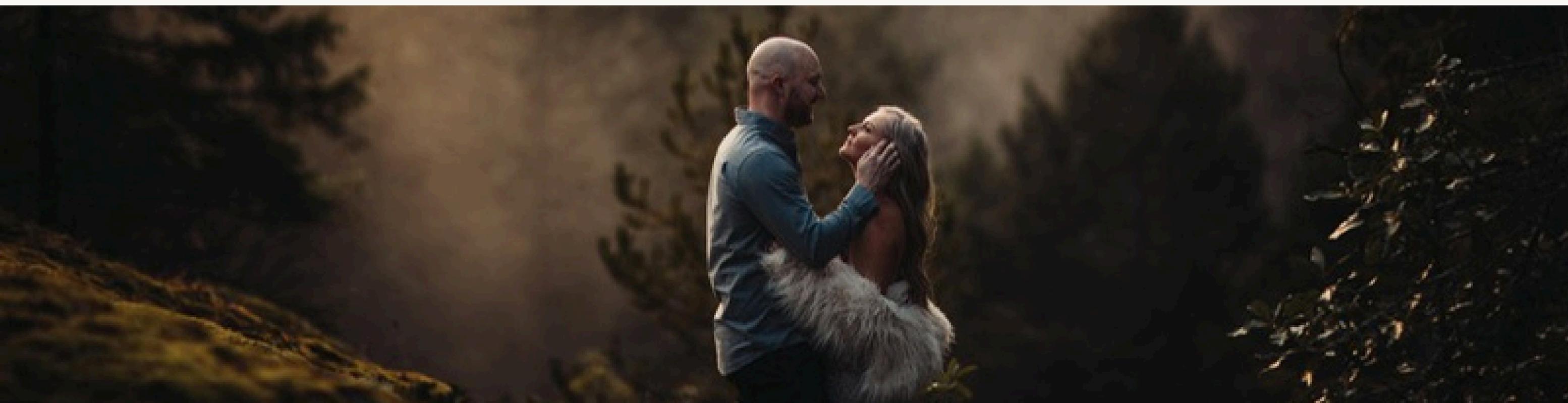
# SESSION CHECKLIST

---

- TRY ON OUTFITS
- IRON/STEAM CLOTHES
- COMFY SHOES
- BACKUP OUTFIT
- MAKEUP TOUCHUP KIT
- HAIRBRUSH
- TOYS/BUBBLES (FOR KIDS)
- TREATS/WASTE BAG (DOGS)
- JACKET / LAYERS
- PHONE ON SILENT
- CLEAN GLASSES (IF YOU WEAR THEM)
- HYDRATE
- POCKETS EMPTY
- PEE BREAK BEFORE STARTING!
- EXCITEMENT!!!!

# OVERALL TIP

As nerve-wracking as it can seem to step in front of a stranger's lens, the best advice I can give you is to trust the process and know that my entire goal is to make you feel comfortable and look amazing! I am an expert at finding your best angles and I promise I will keep you entertained with my bad jokes and repeated clumsiness. Photoshoots should always be a fun experience and that is what I promise to deliver!



KELLY & SCHUSTER



[INFO@KELLYSCHUSTERPHOTOGRAPHY.COM](mailto:INFO@KELLYSCHUSTERPHOTOGRAPHY.COM)

[WWW.KELLYSCHUSTERPHOTOGRAPHY.COM](http://WWW.KELLYSCHUSTERPHOTOGRAPHY.COM)