

PHOTOGRAPHING PEOPLE

PICTURES OF THE PEOPLE WE LOVE MAKE US SMILE. BE READY WITH YOUR CAMERA AND YOU'LL BE REWARDED WITH MEMORIES THAT REKINDLE EMOTIONS FOR YEARS TO COME.



HAVE FUN!

DON'T WORK TOO HARD TO POSITION YOUR SUBJECT. THE GOAL IS FOR HIM OR HER TO RELAX AND FALL INTO A NATURAL POSE. TRY SHOOTING IN YOUR SUBJECT'S FAVORITE PLACE, OR AT LEAST A COMFORTABLE PLACE. MEANINGFUL PROPS, LIKE A TROPHY, A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT, OR EVEN A FISH, CAN ADD INTEREST.

GET CLOSE

FILL THE CAMERA'S VIEWFINDER OR LCD DISPLAY WITH YOUR SUBJECT TO CREATE PICTURES WITH GREATER IMPACT. STEP IN CLOSE OR USE YOUR CAMERA'S ZOOM TO EMPHASIZE WHAT IS IMPORTANT AND EXCLUDE THE REST. CHECK THE MANUAL FOR YOUR CAMERA'S CLOSEST FOCUSING DISTANCE.



TAKE CANDID PICTURES

IGNORE THE IMPULSE TO FORCE YOUR SUBJECTS TO ALWAYS POSE STARING AT THE CAMERA. VARIETY IS IMPORTANT. TAKE CANDID PICTURES TO SHOW THEM WORKING, PLAYING, LEANING AGAINST A BANISTER CHATTING, OR RELAXING.



USE NATURAL LIGHT

YOU MAY BE SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT CLOUDY, OVERCAST DAYS PROVIDE THE BEST LIGHTING FOR PICTURES OF PEOPLE. BRIGHT SUN MAKES PEOPLE SQUINT, AND IT THROWS HARSH SHADOWS ON THEIR FACES. ON OVERCAST DAYS, THE SOFT LIGHT FLATTERS FACES. INDOORS, TRY TURNING OFF THE FLASH AND USE THE LIGHT COMING IN FROM A WINDOW TO GIVE YOUR SUBJECT A SOFT, ALMOST GLOWING APPEARANCE.



AVOID HARSH SHADOWS

AVOID HARSH FACIAL SHADOWS BY USING THE SOFT LIGHTING OF A CLOUDY DAY OR A SHADY AREA. ON SUNNY DAYS, IF YOUR CAMERA HAS SEVERAL FLASH MODES, SELECT FILL-FLASH THIS WILL FIRE THE FLASH EVEN IN BRIGHT SUNLIGHT. THIS "FILLS" THE SHADOWS ON NEARBY SUBJECTS, CREATING MORE FLATTERING PORTRAITS IN DIRECT SUNLIGHT. CHECK YOUR CAMERA'S MANUAL.



THERE ARE SEVERAL FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN PHOTOGRAPHING PEOPLE:

LOCATION

THE FIRST THING TO DO IS FIND YOUR LOCATION. CHOOSE A SPOT WITH A SIMPLE, MEDIUM-TONED BACKGROUND. TREE FOLIAGE, GRASS OR THE OCEAN WORKS WELL. FOR DARKER SKIN, LOOK FOR A SIMILARLY DARK BACKGROUND TO KEEP THE HIGHLIGHT (AND THUS THE CAMERA'S EXPOSURE) ON THE FACE. MINIMIZE PATTERNS, SHAPES AND COLORS. KEEP THAT BACKGROUND SIMPLE, OR INCLUDE A FAMOUS LANDMARK.

LIGHTING

GET THE SUN BEHIND YOU AND TO ONE SIDE. IF IT'S BRIGHT, PUT PEOPLE IN THE SHADE (HARSH, DIRECT SUNLIGHT WASHES OUT THE FACE). IF IT'S DARK IN THE SHADE, USE THE FILL-FLASH FEATURE TO BRIGHTEN UP THE FACE. THE BEST TIME IS THE LATE AFTERNOON AS IT GIVES A NICE, WARM, GOLDEN GLOW.

A POPULAR TECHNIQUE IS TO PUT YOUR SUBJECT IN THE SHADE, THEN USE FILL-FLASH TO LIGHTEN UP THE FACE. BRING A SMALL REFLECTOR OR WHITE CARD REFLECT SUNLIGHT INTO THE HARSH SHADOW AREAS. OCCASIONALLY, HAVING THE SUN SHINE FROM BEHIND THE SUBJECT (BACKLIGHTING) LOOKS GOOD AS IT CREATES A HALO THROUGH THE HAIR, SHOWING FORM AND DRAWING THE FACE OUT OF THE BACKGROUND. IF YOU'RE SHOOTING INDOORS TRY TO 'BOUNCE' THE FLASH OFF A WALL OR CEILING FOR MORE NATURAL LIGHTING. A SEPARATE HAND-HELD FLASH IS BEST AND CAN BE POSITIONED FAR ENOUGH AWAY FROM THE LENS TO AVOID RED EYE.

LENS

FAVOR LONGER LENSES FOR THE MOST PLEASING PERSPECTIVE. USE THE WIDEST APERTURE (LOWEST F-NUMBER) TO BLUR THE BACKGROUND AND HIGHLIGHT THE FACE. IF THE BACKGROUND IS IMPORTANT, USE A SMALL APERTURE (HIGH F-

NUMBER) TO GET EVERYTHING IN FOCUS. IF YOU ARE DOING ENVIRONMENTAL PORTRAITURE YOU MAY NEED TO USE A WIDE LENS TO INCORPORATE MORE OF THE SUBJECT'S SURROUNDINGS.

POSITIONING

GET CLOSE. DON'T INCLUDE THEIR FULL BODY, INSTEAD ZOOM STRAIGHT IN TO THE FACE. FOR CLOSE UPS, CROP OUT THE TOP OF THE HEAD AND OVERFILL THE FRAME. BEING AT EYE LEVEL USUALLY WORKS BEST, SO FOR CHILDREN, KNEEL DOWN.

PROPORTION

GENERALLY TRY TO KEEP THE EYES, NOT NECESSARILY THE HEAD, IN THE CENTER OF THE FRAME. IF THE PERSON IS LOOKING SLIGHTLY TO ONE SIDE, ADD EXTRA SPACE TO THAT SIDE.

Focus

FOCUS IS BEST KEPT ON THE SUBJECT'S EYES. IF YOU CAN ONLY HAVE ONE EYE IN FOCUS THEN CHOOSE ONE. IF YOUR SUBJECT IS TO ONE SIDE OF THE FRAME YOU WILL NEED TO MANUALLY INTERFACE WITH YOUR AUTO FOCUS. TO DO THIS ON MOST AUTO FOCUS CAMERAS, DEAD CENTER YOUR SUBJECT'S FACE OR THEIR EYE (DEPENDING ON HOW CLOSE YOU ARE), PRESS THE SHUTTER RELEASE HALF WAY DOWN LOCKING FOCUS, THEN RECOMPOSE THE SHOT, AND THEN PRESS THE BUTTON DOWN ALL THE WAY. **RELAX YOUR SUBJECT** GET YOUR SUBJECT RELAXED AND HAPPY. FOR FRIENDS OR FAMILY, REMIND THEM OF A SILLY EVENT. WITH CHILDREN, GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO PLAY WITH. FOR LOCAL PEOPLE, ASK THEM ABOUT THE LOCATION, THEIR JOB OR SKILL, OR COMPLEMENT THEIR CLOTHES. PEOPLE HATE WAITING WHILE YOU ADJUST YOUR CAMERA SO ALWAYS PLAN THE SHOT AND ADJUST YOUR CAMERA FIRST, BEFORE ASKING PEOPLE TO POSE.

FUN SHOTS

TO ADD FUN AND ACTION TO A SHOT, HOLD THE CAMERA AT AN ANGLE - 30 DEGREES WITH THE RIGHT SIDE UP WORKS WELL. IT LOOKS AS THOUGH THE PHOTOGRAPHER WAS CAUGHT OFF GUARD, EMPHASIZING DANGER AND ACTION, AND IS GREAT FOR PARTIES! STAGE A JOKE SHOT BY PRETENDING TO INTERACT WITH A STATUE. OR USE A WIDE-ANGLE LENS TO DISTORT THE FACE.