

TIPS FOR BETTER FAMILY PHOTOS:

Negative space is a positive

—Make your compositions interesting by moving your subjects around. Everything doesn't have to be perfectly centered. In fact, putting the subject off-centre actually makes for a more interesting photo. So leave a little space to one side, and if taking the photo from a distance, make sure to leave more space over people's heads than below their feet.

Step in closer than you think

—Keep your subject in focus and move in. Even if you don't have a zoom lens, you can "zoom with your feet". Get closer and keep your breath fresh. Make sure the subject fills at least 30% of the frame.

Don't have subjects look toward the sun

—If they have to squint, faces will be awkward and washed out... Plus your family won't like you anymore. A professional photographer chooses the right time of day when the foreground and background light exposures are balanced. The "golden hour" is just before sunset.

Keep your viewpoint mid-level

—Position your subjects at flattering angles. Too low = double chins. Too high = trying too hard. Goldilocks would say mid-level or slightly above is "just right."

Capture the mood

—Don't just smile...laugh! The camera catches emotions. Save a good joke and tell it at the right time! Whoever is taking the picture, choose "sports mode" or "long press" for rapid fire photos that will catch the spontaneous laugh of your loved ones.

A tripod and remote work best

—Set your camera mode for "repeat pictures" and use a timer. This way, you don't have to ask a stranger or busy friend to capture your perfect moment. Talk about pressure! Hit the button and run into the frame just in time. Don't trip!

Have fun!

SMARTPHONES:

Get your fingers out of the way and clean your lens.

—Duh!

Double check the resolution (if applicable to your smartphone)

—The higher the better.

Use the volume button for selfies

—You will save yourself time and headache by learning how to take pictures using the volume button rather than the touchscreen. Bonus tip: Set timer to 3 seconds, watch the countdown on screen and smile!

Try portrait mode

—This makes the foreground pop and background fuzzy - people will think you're a pro!

Line up to the grid

—Keep your backgrounds level by using grid lines OR purposefully take a tilted photo to spice things up.

Edit your photos for better lighting but don't "over filter"

—So yesterday!

THANK YOU to Teena Franklin and Darlene Hildebrandt for copy editing support.

SUPPORTING ARTICLES written by Darlene Hildebrandt—Digital Photo Mentor

Check these out!

Photography Basics for Beginners (<https://www.digitalphotommentor.com/photography-basics/beginners/>)

Basic Photography Tips for Beginners (<https://www.digitalphotommentor.com/photography-tips/>)

Portrait Photography Tutorials (<https://www.digitalphotommentor.com/portrait-photography/>)