

Engagement Photo Outfits + Top Tips for Preparing

Today we share tips and tricks how to plan and prepare for your engagement session. Learn from our experience how to look and feel your best for your engagement photo session.

Let's start by talking about what to wear. If you really want to get the most out of your photo-shoot you have to put some effort into your outfits, because if you just walked out of your home for your engagement session in clothes that you would wear every single day, that is really not taking advantage of the opportunity that you have to have your photos taken by a professional wedding photographer.

I find that if you can wear a casual outfit just any day anybody could photograph you wearing it on any given Tuesday, then that's probably not something that's going to hold up that well for an engagement session.

If you're really looking to have very impactful engagement photos then I think it is very important to step things up a notch, put more effort into your outfit and dress up a little bit or a lot. I'm actually have a proponent of dressing up a lot and wearing a formal outfit.

When it comes to outfits themselves I think that for brides a dress or a skirt with a lot of movement in the body but a fitted waist is very very beautiful. The way that movement in clothing looks on camera, it's very dynamic and it's very powerful.

I find that something with a little bit of body in it and movement, whenever the wind hits it or whenever you're walking or lightly jogging, which is sometimes fun to do in your engagement photos. I think that's really a very gorgeous look.

Now you can wear something that's fitted off throughout that's totally fine too but personally I do love the outfits that have some kind of flowyness to them. For guys what I see over and over them doing wrong is not having clothes that fit them. Whether it be a suit or just a regular pair of khakis or whatever, I find that a lot of grooms are coming to engagement sessions and ill-fitting clothing particularly suits.

So if you have some pants on that are way too big for you it's going to be very distracting in the photos so it looks so much better to take the time to have your clothing tailored to your body, especially for the wedding day.

You really don't want to show up to your engagement photos wearing something that's baggy and unflattering because it just swallows you up and does not show your shape. Now if you're trying to hide your shape in a very big volume of clothing because you feel like you're a little bit larger than you want to be then that is still not a solution for you. You can find something that is not baggy but also not skin tight that still flatters your figure and makes you feel comfortable in the skin that you're in.

Again for women having something with movement is really great but fitted at the waist I don't recommend something that is not fitted anywhere at all unless you're teeny teeny tiny because showing the shape showing the waist is really going to help flatter any woman any size.

For guys I would say another tip is to make sure that if she's in a formal gown you're not in shorts and flip-flops. You need to kind of match with her at least like somewhat of a good balance she should not be at opposite ends of the spectrum because it will really clash and not look very good.

Some of the places that I recommend for finding outfits for the engagement session are The Black Tux for grooms I find that the black tux offers a variety of suits and tuxes for any sort of event engagement or wedding and I think they're absolutely fantastic. They have very high-quality suits and tuxes at a very very reasonable price. You can even rent an entire outfit from a jacket the pants the shirt and the shoes from them so they make a very very great one-stop shop for your engagement and wedding outfit.

Now for ladies I really love Rent the Runway a lot of people are very familiar with that site you can rent a dress or even some sort of skirt top outfit combo and I think they have a wonderful very large diverse selection of outfits that you can select from. It's a great place to go to find a really nice gown that you don't want to purchase because you're just wearing it for engagement photos.

Now if you are looking to step it up a notch go a little bit more high-end a little bit more Couture avant-garde then there is another resource that I recommend for women's rentals and it's called Armarium.

They are a newer company, very similar to Rent the Runway, but just a lot higher scale in terms of the pricing and quality and designers of clothing. You're going to find outfits there that are more like the several thousand dollar retail price with a couple hundred dollar rental price. Whereas Rent the Runway kind of averages more I would say around several hundred dollar retail price to maybe the low ones maybe even two thousand dollar retail price, and then the rental is usually between maybe like twenty five and two hundred dollars on average.

So if you just want something that's a little bit extra, than our Armarium is probably going to be a better bet for you but, if you do want to purchase I think there are a lot of amazing places that you can go to and find a really nice outfit.

So for me personally I picked two different outfits for my photo session, that's actually coming up this Monday. I'm very excited about it so I picked two outfits. The first one is a really pretty off-the-shoulder floral dress. It's got a lot of movement in it and it's really fun. It's very kind of festive and it's not something that I would usually wear but I wanted to do something different.

I'm pairing it with some pink pumps which I think will be really cute and then my other outfit I'm so excited for is a Marchesa dress that I did order online. It's just really elegant and I think for the fact that we're going to Balboa Park with gorgeous elevated architecture that it's going to be a great fit.

Another tip off of that is to consider your environment and I do think that you can even throw something like a formal outfit in a field. As long as things match beautifully and balance and they make sense then I think it's good. Sometimes doing something that's totally opposite of what you would expect can be really beautiful.

So those are just my tips for outfits and then as far as preparing for your session to get the most out of it there's a couple different things that go into it. One is to make sure that you really trust your wedding photographer. If he is telling you things to prepare you definitely listen to them they know what they need from you.

I always like to say that the success of engagement photos is 80% of photographer and 20% the couple, so your 20% is going to be you trusting them, you coming with a great attitude and being a team player. I have had engaged with sessions where perhaps the bride is really excited about photos and she's in

great mood, she's so ready but then the groom is really grumpy and he is just kind of bringing things down. It's really only an hour to an hour and a half maybe two hours of your life so I think it is a worthwhile investment to have beautiful photos that you can use for the rest of your lives.

So if you are a couple where one of you is excited and one of you is not, try to find a way to get both of you excited because it's going to help a lot in the photos, to have two people that both really want to be there and aren't wishing they were somewhere else. So that's just a tip as far as attitude goes.

Another tip would be make sure that you are kind of preparing yourself physically too. The week of your engagement session you might not want to do any heavy drinking and you might want to make sure to drink a lot of extra water so your skin is not dehydrated. I would also recommend if you have drier skin maybe exfoliating, doing extra moisturizing things like that to really get your skin and your base looking a lot better for your photos.

Another thing to actually not do is to get a spray tan. I am one of the many wedding photographers who think that the spray tan does not photograph as well as natural skin tones do on camera. They tend to pick up very orange on camera and so for example, if you are a bride who got a spray tan and your groom did not you are going to look quite orange and tan next to him, and he is going to look very ghost-like in comparison.

In portrait wedding photography when editing to try to make the bride look less orange you end up kind of making the groom look more colorless. It's a very hard balance and I personally think that natural skin tones, even if you are a very fair skin like I am, photograph a lot better. You just never know even if your tan looks okay in person the camera always picks up different things than you see with your own eyes.

So it's just a tip if you want to be more tan in your engagement or wedding photos, I would recommend doing it naturally out in the Sun. Make sure you have enough SPF on but I think a natural tan looks a lot better than a spray tan. That's just something I'm very passionate about and a lot of photographers agree with me. For my own session even though I wish I was more tan but I'm going to skip the spray tan because I know that this is going to photograph much better than if I were to be orange or muddy red.

Another thing to consider is manicures or even if you're a guy if you don't want to go get a manicure but obviously no polish on, you could at least just clean up your nails. I've had grooms come to sessions with dirty fingernails or just bad cuts all around them. So that's something that definitely clean up because your hands will probably be photographed a lot in the session.

For brides if you want to have your nails done, I personally think that neutral tones pastels are even a fun color that balances with your outfit looks really really beautiful. I've had brides wear red had them wear bold pinks even softer pastel colors like a light French blue or a light blush that all photographs really beautifully.

I'm a huge fan of the single color. If you like the white tip acrylic look that's totally fine personally I just find them a little bit distracting in photos because the white tends to look so unnatural, so I find that a single solid color or even a design something fun at a cool nail bar that works really well too.

Now another thing you can do is actually start practicing your posture. So if you and your fiancé start playing a game of watching out for each other's postures if you see one of them slouch and you can say hey hold your shoulders back. So you start getting in the mindset of having really good posture. That's gone be very helpful for your engagement session, because your wedding photographer won't have to remind you as much, as it's just kind of already clicking in your mind.

Posture is one of those things that make a phenomenal difference in your engagement or wedding photos. It looks so bad when you're slouching and it looks so much better when you are standing or sitting up straight. So that is HUGE!

Another tip is your smile. Sometimes when people are told to smile at the camera, which is a very common shot, it's one that you always need to be getting in your engagement or wedding photos because it's very popular as a print and parents really love it as well. So that's something there sometimes people will smile at the camera and it looks very forced. So one thing I recommend if start practicing your smile in the mirror. Try to think of different ways whether you're thinking about something funny or something sweet to kind of induce a smile that looks a little bit more natural.

You can practice in front of a mirror, you can practice in front of your fiancée, whatever you would like to do but that is a really really great tip.

Now some things that do come up from time to time are hey - I have this tattoo I don't like it can you photoshop it out? Most of the time something like that like a big heavy removal from a photo is going to cost you extra. If you were in this boat, if you have a tattoo you don't like, or scar or something that you do not like it's possible your photographer might do it complimentary for one or two images. I would not expect that but it's possible.

For most of the cases your photographer is not going to retouch that out for free so you need to work around that by either covering it up or wearing an outfit that does not show it and at the very least telling your photographer ahead of time.

This could even be something that bothers you. If you don't like your body from the side or if you don't like a certain angle of your face. Tell your photographer - they do not know these things if you do not tell them. So never assume that they're going to not do something because you haven't told them.

So if there's something about your body or something about you that you need them to know because you don't like it or you don't want it in pictures tell them so that they can do their best to minimize it. So for example if you have a tattoo on your left hand that you hate guess what you're not going to show your left hand in your photos. You are going to show your right hand so there are different things you can do to work around it if you do not want to spend the money to have it retouched.

Now the same sort of goes for different features of your body. I for example like the left side of my face better than the right side of my face that doesn't mean I'm going to delete all the photos with my right side. It just means I'm going to let my photographer know that I prefer this side of my face so whenever possible if he can shoot me from this sides of this side that's great.

So that's something that you need to be aware of they don't know these things unless you tell them. So tell your wedding photographer anything that you don't like or that you want them to know, or something that's a concern or something that's important to you.

So those are my tips for how to find an outfit for and how to prepare for your engagement session. Another last tip to let you guys go is to get lots and lots of rest the night before your session and be excited. Remember your wedding photographer will let you know everything you're supposed to do.

He is going to guide you through it and he will tell you what to do. Your photographer will make sure you look great so don't worry about it don't get too nervous. It's going to be great and after a couple minutes it's going to feel very easy and very natural and you will love your engagement photos.

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