

Total time:  
1-3 hours



Difficulty Level: Normal

Skill Points:

- Portrait lighting
- Working with children
- Quick exposure setting
- Timing & Patience

# CREATING PORTRAITS OF CHILDREN



Portrait photography of children requires a balanced skillset. Equipment & lighting knowledge is important, but so is the understanding of a child's mind.

**KEY LESSON:** When starting out in child portraiture, keep things simple. Concentrate on one of two types of shots: either a simple head & shoulders shot (with a fantastic expression), or an activity shot- where the child is engaged with props. Children won't wait for you. Engage them as if it's playtime. Capture the child's unique features, such as messy hair or big eyes.

SAMPLE PHOTOGRAPHS



## EQUIPMENT



**Camera**  
Any DSLR, mirrorless, hybrid, compact or smartphone



**Lens + Hood**  
Headshot -> 50mm - 135mm  
½ Body -> 28mm - 70mm



**Lighting**  
Window light, outdoor natural light, electronic flash, large bounce cards.



**Props & clothing**  
Use props to engage the child in playtime.



## ACTION ASSIGNMENT!

- 1- Select a model. Create one portrait of the model indoor and the other outdoors.
- 2- Select a clean background with a neutral or solitary color and a few simple props and clothing.
- 3- **Indoor:** Use a window with indirect bright light for your main light and the bounce cards to lighten the shadow side. **Outdoors:** Shoot during the Golden Hour. Place the brightest light behind the child. Use the bounce cards or electronic flash to light the face. As the Sun sets, use the natural light from the Sun as the main light. Experiment with placing the child in the shade.
- 4- Setup your camera with these general tips: **ISO:** 400 (then adjust as needed) / **Format:** RAW (preferable) / **Focus Points:** Center grouping / **Drive Mode:** Single shot / **Focus mode:** If the child is actively moving, switch to continuous focusing mode / **Metering:** Center-weighted / **Shutter Speed:** 1/250th telephoto - 1/125th normal to wide-angle lenses / **Shooting Mode:** Aperture priority / **Aperture:** From wide open to f/5.6 -Make sure the depth of field covers the eyes / **White balance:** Auto
- 5- Study sample photographs. If the child becomes agitated, create playtime.

## HOW DID YOU DO?

- Did you properly place the focus on the eyes? Is your image sharp and free of camera shake?
- Did you capture interesting expressions? If so, does your portrait tell a story about the child?
- Is the lighting pleasing and can you see all of the child's features? Did you make use of props?