



Engagement photos don't have to be posed portraits. Experiment with looks that fit your personalities for memorable photos.

Engagement Photo Tips

Newly engaged couples choose to capture the occasion in photos that they can cherish. Often, one of these photos is used as an announcement to family and friends and might even be published in the newspaper.

Engagement photos may be part of a package negotiated with the photographer who will be covering the wedding day. Some couples enlist the help of a friend or a budding photographer to capture an engagement shot. The average cost of engagement photos can range from \$200 to \$500. Some couples opt to use a photographer who might specialize in other areas (i.e. fashion models) but may want to break into the wedding biz because of how lucrative it can be. Costs may be negotiated as a result.

When shopping around for a photographer, there are certain things couples should keep in mind. The first and most important is selecting a photographer you can relate to. If you don't feel a connection with the photographer, he or she will have trouble coaxing the shots that will produce the best results. He or she should also be a professional and have some experience working with posing couples. This way the photos don't look stiff or contrived. Here are some other tips that can lead to great photos.

- * Find a photographer who fits your style. If you're a quirky couple, go with a quirky photographer. If you're reserved and a follow-the-book type of couple, then select a more traditional photographer. Some photographers out there forget that this is your moment and want to impart their idea of what you want. Make sure he or she takes your ideas into consideration.

- * Select one who is open to different shoot locations and brainstorming. Some of the best photos occur in natural settings, where things aren't entirely planned. If a photographer simply works out of a studio, you

may want to select one who has more free reign with different locales.

- * Choose your location wisely. Certain locations will stand out in your minds because they are visually stunning or are special places where you have spent moments as a couple. By choosing a place that offers a personal connection, there's a good chance you'll appreciate the photos in the long run. Also, be open to the fact that unplanned stops may offer a great background for the image. Be open to the unexpected.

- * Try random poses and some candid shots. Although you might have a vision of the perfect photo in your mind, experimenting with different ideas can sometimes lead to a great photo you really love. Expect to take your share of kissing, nose-touching and portrait shots. But some fun poses, such as running or jumping (or rolling around on a beach full of waves) can produce candid shots that are truly masterpieces. Remember, sometimes photographers will pose you in positions that seem a bit awkward, but this is to get the best lines of the body and flattering images.

- * Choose clothing that fits the mood. If time and budget allows, have several different wardrobe changes so that you can see which outfits work and which ones don't. A formal outfit, comfortable street clothes, something beachy or clothing that fits with your interests (such as polo or baseball) can make for interesting engagement photos. Avoid clothing that is too trendy or busy, which may take away from the actual images in the long run. Plus, you don't want to look back at these photos in the future and say, "What was I thinking?" Avoid matchy-matchy, though. If you are dressed alike, you may appear to be trying too hard. It's the individual personalities you want to shine through.

Advantages To A Wedding Video

In a financial climate where most people are pinching pennies, it comes as no surprise that many engaged couples seek ways to cut costs with regard to their weddings. Some couples are undecided whether certain components of their wedding are necessary.

The decision to hire a videographer is one such area couples fret over. After all, with a photographer snapping hundreds of pictures, having a video may seem like an unnecessary luxury. However, people often find that having a wedding video to cherish long after the day has passed is well worth the price.

There are several advantages to hiring a professional videographer to capture the day. A professionally produced wedding video is not the same as Uncle Fred carrying around his archaic camcorder and catching a few embarrassing dance moves during the reception. A professional video will showcase all moments of the wedding from perspectives not easily captured by photography. In addition to showcasing the images of the wedding, the video will also share the sounds and emotions of the day. Here are some things to think about.

- Choose a videographer who will work in conjunction with the wedding mood and parameters. You probably don't want a videographer who uses bright lights that can be distracting. Nor do you want a videographer who pushes the camera in guests' faces for a less-than-candid interview. Today's professionals are inconspicuous and simply record the events as they unfold.

- The videographer often works in tandem with the photographer. Some photographers have a videographer on staff. But

it is fine to bring in your own if you like the quality of the photographer's photos but not the videographer's work.

- A videographer will capture the things you may have missed during the busy day. He or she can serve as the eyes and ears for the things you're not seeing and hearing.

- Although ours is an increasingly digital world where people capture photos and videos on their smartphones and other devices on a regular basis, a wedding video can serve as a family memento. What other time, apart from the holidays, do you have all of your friends and loved ones together in one place?

- Although no one wants to think of a friend or relative passing away while planning their wedding, the fact remains that after a few years some of the people who attended your wedding may no longer be around. Having a wedding video may be the only last moving image and sound of a special person who is no longer in your life.

- Sound is a portion of the wedding that photos simply cannot capture. To relive the music and the words of the day, a videographer is a necessity. Professionals who use wireless microphones will produce a video with the best sound quality.

- You can work with a good videographer so it's not simply a video with close-up shots of your face or unflattering perspectives. Talk about your preferences and even fears about being filmed (some people just don't like watching themselves on TV), and the videographer can no doubt find solutions that will accommodate your needs.

- There are many things that you will not see at the wedding



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but may have liked to, such as the first gasps of wonder upon guests walking into the reception room, or the tears on the face of an aunt who was sitting too far back in the church pews. This is where a wedding video can prove invaluable.

- Modern videographers offer high-resolution, edited movies. These can be delivered via Blu

Ray DVD and ensure the best quality for your package.

Although brides and grooms may be cutting costs with regard to their wedding, they may not want to pass on the wedding video.

GREEN

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bus to transport guests to the wedding saves fuel.

- Seasonal flowers. Instead of paying top dollar to have exotic blooms in bouquets and centerpieces, choose flowers that are in season and regional. You can also choose to use fruit in centerpieces, which is cheaper than flowers.

- Use recycled paper. Insist that invitations be printed on recycled paper and skip all of the extra inserts inside of the invite, such as directions, registry cards, etc. Direct guests to your wedding Web site for the information they need.

- Elope. One of the more affordable and environmentally friendly ways to get married is to skip all of the "to-do" and simply elope or have a small ceremony. There's no rule that says you have to invite 300 of your not-so-close friends to your wedding.

- Go green on the honeymoon. There are a number of eco-conscious hotels and resorts for newlyweds to choose from. Or honeymoon close to home to cut down on the hassle of flying elsewhere.

Couples interested in having an eco-conscious wedding can go green in a number of ways and still make the day unique and special. Furthermore, couples won't have to compromise their ideals or tastes to achieve a wedding that is both green and beautiful.

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