

Portrait Photography Refresher

How – working with subject –posing men

A man wants to appear strong, fit and tall while oozing coolness, confidence, and self-control.

While posing women we usually try to accentuate curves, when posing men the opposite holds true.

A man's body is not about curves, it is about angles and raw power. It's about the V shape and the jawline.



How – working with men –jawline

Make sure the jawline is well defined and as angular and sharp as possible.

Ask the subject to push their chin out and a little bit down. This will gently stretch the neck while hiding part of the neck from the camera.

You can further refine the jawline by clever use of shadow.

Never let your subject pull his chin back. This will create a double chin !

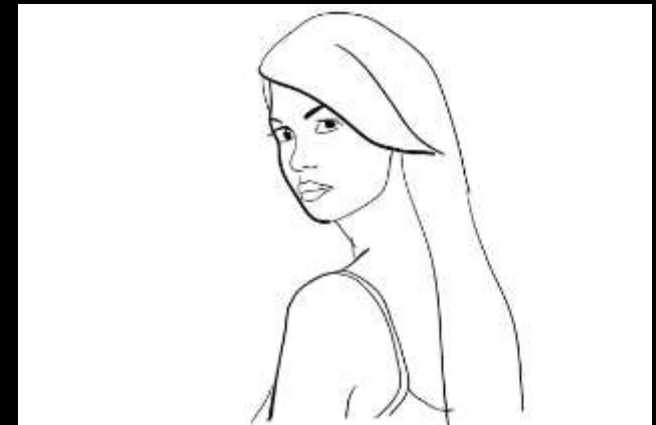


How – working with subject –posing women



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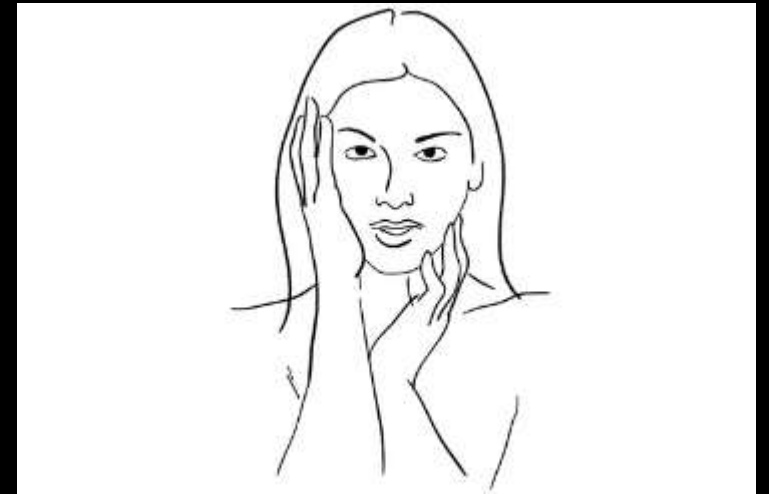
Have the model look over
her shoulder.



How – working with subject –posing women



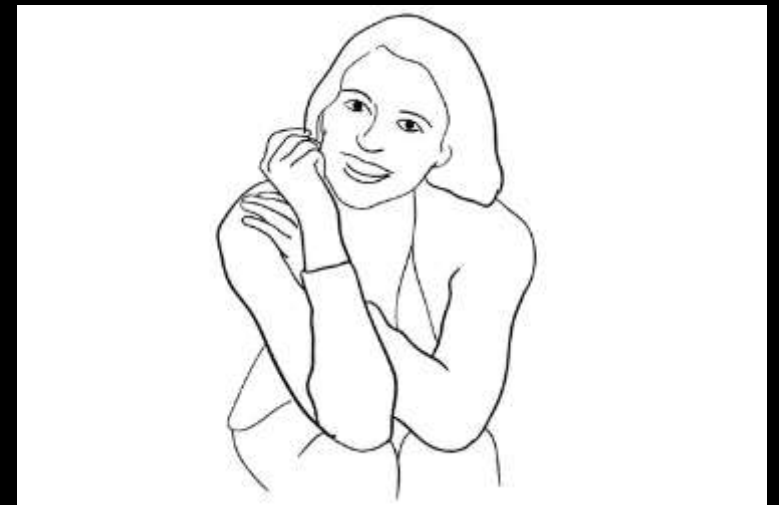
Asking the model to play around with her hands trying different positions around her head or face.



How – working with subject –posing women

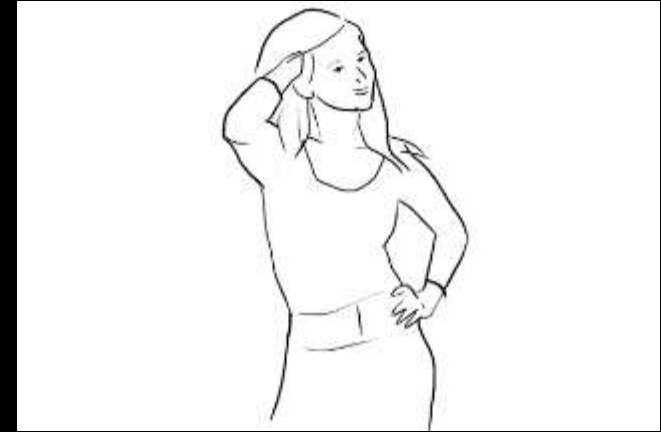


Asking the model to sit
knees together and
leaning forward.



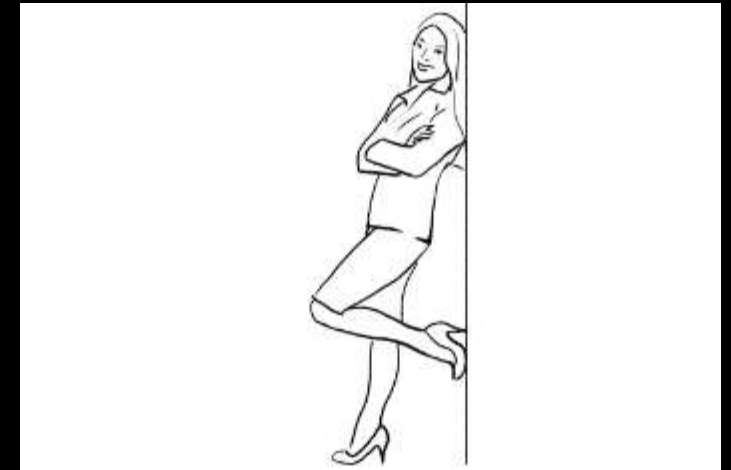
How – working with subject –posing women

Playing with hair / flowing hair



How – working with subject –posing women

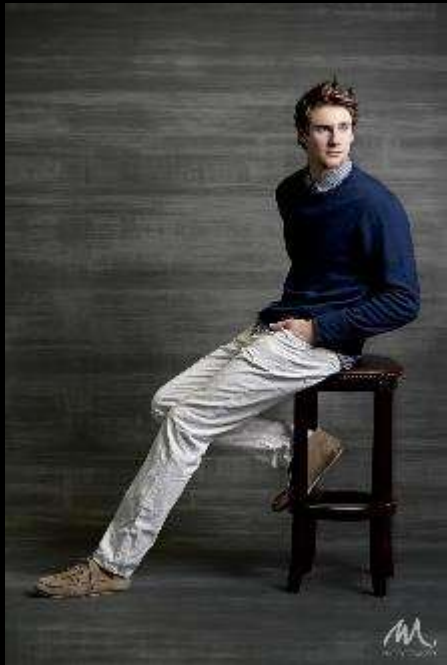
Leaning on wall / fence



How – working with subject

Using props – for both men & women

Have your subject sit down. This keeps them still and they'll feel more relaxed and comfortable.



Lighting – Working Indoors – Natural light



We can still use natural light indoors, by placing the subject close to windows and doors.

Doors provide more creative control than windows because you can open and close them to adjust the amount of light allowed through.

The larger the window, the softer the light. A large window also provides a wider angle from which the light falls on to the face and it produces less shadows.

You can also reduce the amount of light through windows using blinds/net-curtains, or try sticking some white tissue paper to the window to diffuse strong sunlight.



Lighting – Working Indoors – Natural light - window



As windows are fixed in position, you have to think where you want your subject to be placed, rather than just moving the studio light to where you need it.

The soft nature of window light makes it very flattering for portrait photography. The shadows that appear on the face are very natural and don't accentuate any features.

If there are any features on the subject that you would want to hide, stand the subject farther from the window, or try reducing the light by blinds/nets or even try a smaller window !

Lighting – Working Indoors – Natural light - window



Moving your entire setup to the window will allow your subject's face to receive the most light. However, you'll need to be more careful as window light can produce a high contrasts/shadows on a bright summer day.

You can also try a silhouette effect, by placing your subject between the camera and the window, with the light behind the subject.



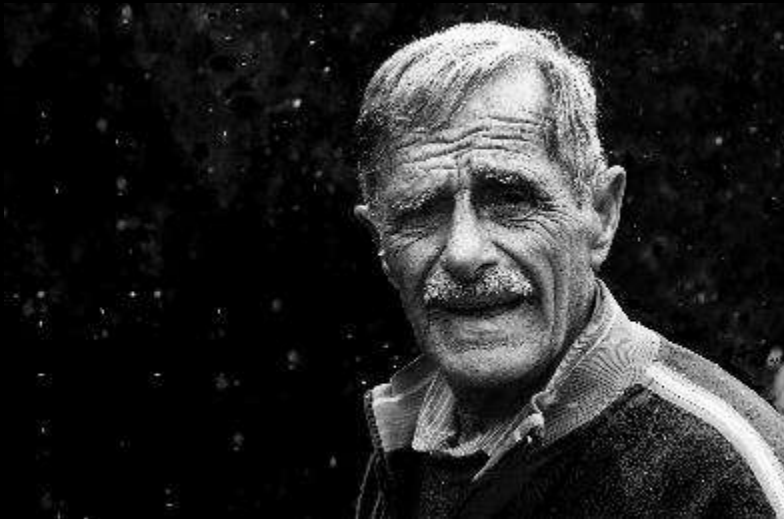
It can be difficult to get the correct white balance if you mix sunlight with light from an internal light bulb.

Try to use only 1 type of light-source at a time.

Indoors Natural light Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5rhmmFmXAk&t=10s>

Lighting – Working Outdoors – Harsh Light



When the sun is high in the sky, the light is harsher and more direct.

Shooting in this light will give your portraits contrast and create harsh shadows. These are good conditions for street photography.



When direct light hits your model's face, it will highlight a lot of flaws, but you can use this. Photos of old people in direct light can look amazing, because of all the textures and shadows the sun highlights.

Do not ask your subject to look directly towards the sun.

Apart from hurting their eyes, it is likely they will screw up their eyes or blink and you won't get the image you want.

Lighting – Working Outdoors – Golden Light



When the sun is lower in the sky, the light is softer and has a golden appearance.

Photographs taken during the “golden hours” near sunrise and sunset produce warm, vibrant colours.

They can also be used to create dreamy atmospheres.

Golden-hour **backlit** photos are ideal for creating moods of this kind.

Lighting – Working Outdoors – Shooting into the sun



When the sun is behind your subject, this is called being “backlit”.

The resulting backlit “halo” effect can be quite stunning, but one issue may be that your subject’s face is in shadow.



To bring out their features, you may need to use your camera flash, or a reflector, to add light to your subject’s face.

This is called using “fill-in” light.

Lighting – Working Outdoors – Working in Shade



Using shade produces soft, indirect lighting which can create beautiful portraits.

NB - Make sure at least some light is reaching your subject !

The background may be darker depending on the amount of shade. Remember to expose for the subject – use centre-spot metering if required.

Walk around your subject- try soft light from the side, as well as the front – but always aim to have most of the light on their face.

Lighting – Working Outdoors – Cloudy Days



Clouds act like one big soft diffuser of sunlight.

Cloudy days create soft even lighting – the opposite of harsh sunlight. This gives us more options in where we place our subject and the camera.



However, most overcast days will still have some directional light around, i.e. brighter areas of the sky.

A quick tip is to point your subjects towards the brighter areas of sky, to illuminate their face - the opposite of shooting under harsh light conditions.

Outdoor light Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-Cw0qr7K-Q>

Summary

In this presentation we have covered ...

Some portrait poses for men and women

Using natural light, indoors and outdoors

