



FOR THE LOVE

an inspirational guide and adventure
into photographing your family
by jinkyart.com

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A simplistic guide and adventure into opening up your world and allowing time to breathe, time to love, and time to embrace what you have.

An invitation to explore your creativity, whilst also recording the moments that your heart tells you that you must.

“For The Love” is a gentle reminder to mums, dads and grandparents that we need to slow down, record, and remember these precious days.

it’s for the love after all. When setting out to put this book together I knew exactly what I wanted to talk about: the reasons behind taking photographs; the heart and soul of what each click can and could mean; and the extraordinary gift that each of us has by giving our children something to look back on and remember their childhood by.

I started this book one year ago. It has sat with me for a long while now. Too busy. So rushed. So distracted. I was a photographer with my own blockages and no plumber on hand to fix them.

And so began this personal journey of documenting my children’s growth all over again. I have this book to thank for lighting the fire in me. It inspired me to simply document moments in time, reigniting the spark in me that enjoys creating beautiful gifts that I can pass along to others. In that, I found so much pleasure, that I fell right back in love with this thing called photography.

In this book, my aim is to inspire you to document your children and loved ones; your life - real and fabulously raw. It’s not about taking the best photographs on the planet, it’s about shooting purely from the heart. Throughout this book I have opened up my own heart and home to show you my own journey.

“For the Love” is a guide to keeping a detailed timeline of your children and their life for them to cherish forever. And to create gifts to share with others. It’s all about creating just for the love of it.

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THE AUTHOR



Barb Uil of JinkyArt is renowned for her whimsical photographs that depict a child's world and imagination. Her simultaneously true-to-life and magical work captures the very essence of childhood whimsy. Barb has been featured in magazines and books internationally, and is a recognised name in the industry of children's portraiture. However, more than any acclaims or accolades, Barb would love for her work to speak for itself.

Please visit: <http://www.jinkyart.com.au>

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Special thanks to all our wonderful and talented contributors



documentary style photography comes from the point of view of the photographer. It is a raw and pure account of events taking place in front of the camera. Documentary style photography traditionally means there is no posing and stipulates that the photographer has not interacted with the subjects at all, and has not caused events to take place.

It's real.

This book is about capturing those genuine moments, whilst also guiding those moments along. Sometimes, it can't hurt to have a little help along the way.

Let's call this family documentary. One part documentary, one part love, and one part family. All for the love of it.



let's motivate

I'm going to be clichéd. Each and every day I am reminded of how fortunate I am. And it's this great fortune in having the love around me that I have, that gives me the great motivation to capture it. No matter what stage of life you are in, or the wealth that you have, what is truly important is the love. What else is there? My aim is to always depict and celebrate each stage in which my family grows and lives.

In fact it is something that I see as so important, that I hold it in very high regard. Let's face it, old family albums are usually shoved away in a far corner collecting dust. However, you must admit, that whenever they are opened and viewed there is a sense of wonderment that is unlike any other. It's not a place we all long to visit every day, that feeling of "yesterday", yet we know that family albums are some of the most treasured items in the world. The one thing we would take with us in a fire.

Yet in today's world, the family album is becoming obscure. Forgotten about. And we are raising a generation of children who will have had their memories lost in a hard drive crash, or on a forgotten DVD drive. If this rings bells with you, I encourage you to make a change today.

Usually that change just requires a little bit of motivation. There are a few things that I do to help motivate and remind myself of the importance of capturing the everyday. They are simple tasks, yet they have become important in my journey.

1. The first task that keeps me motivated is to create memories for our children to leave behind treasured books and albums. However, I find that I need to make this task as easy as possible, which is why I have listed the below:

2. Keep your camera within arm's reach. I keep my camera on a bookshelf in my lounge room (see previous page). And not only that, I leave it turned on, with my lens cap off and in settings that I know are easy to use. You may even want to consider a semi-auto mode such as Aperture Priority with settings such as $f/2.8$, 400ISO. Also, if you can, choose a lens that is great for shooting in low light such as the 50mm or the 35mm.

3. I also find that there are certain days that I am more likely to document. And these days are truthfully based around how clean my house is. Let's face it, there is nothing more demotivating then pointing your camera at your child and being faced with a huge pile of dirty laundry behind them. So, on the days you clean up, consider clicking as a reward. After a spring cleaning may be the best time to do a "Day In The Life" project, for example.

4. The other thing that I found helps me is familiarising myself with the best places to snap my children. Some places, in and around the house for example, have more light and are more pleasing to the eye. After familiarising yourself with the best places to photograph within your home, you can start "strategically" placing your activities in these areas at the best time of the day.

share with others

Other than always keeping my camera close at hand, what keeps me clicking is the ability to share my work with others who are also clicking, as well as family members. If you haven't already, I highly recommend starting a blog or joining in on our facebook group, and sharing your favourite moments. Years ago, I began a photoblog called "JinkyArt". Jinky being my online name at the time, and Art was my husband's online name. This of course was back in the day where everyone had fake online handles. I began a blog and started to document the day to day of my children in a way that was raw and real. It was this journey that led me to becoming a professional photographer. This is the photographer that I seek out when I take my children's pictures even now. The photographer who shoots from the heart and isn't aware of rules or rights and wrongs.

For me, learning about shutter speed and aperture has always been important. However, it's just as important to shoot creatively and with a goal. To make sure we have covered both technical and creative aspects, this book is riddled with guides to help you along the way. My advice is to just enjoy the journey.





choose your way

pick one and continue on

This is where you make up your mind on how you'd like to proceed. There are many different tasks and helpful guides along the way, Here are a few ways to go:

1. "30-60 Day Inspirational Guide to Photographing your Children". With links to the "Quick Guide" section so that you can learn as you shoot.
2. "Other Adventures". With Interviews, projects and inspiration from other photographers.
3. "Quick Guide". A glossary Section, which guides you technically. It breaks down the technical jargon and puts it into simple terms.
4. "Displays and More". With tips and guides on what to do with the photographs after you have taken them.

60 DAYS

The rules:

1. If the thought of sixty days is daunting, then just aim to complete twenty days. If twenty days is too many then just do ten! If that is still too much, then pick out ones that inspire you to photograph. Or visit our “[Other Adventures](#)” page and find something that suits you. The main goal here is to shoot, print and share!
2. Over the years, and as I have grown as a photographer, I look back fondly on photos of the past. Even photos from my very first point and shoot. Please, never delete or worry about your work now. This isn’t about taking perfect photographs, it’s about documenting. Just enjoy.
3. Have fun.
4. Start today!
5. There really are no rules.



01

Photograph a routine activity such as breakfast, bath time, getting dressed or even putting on shoes. Try to think of a creative way to capture what is happening by way of composition. Rather than just going for a straight forward view point, tell a story via your

angles and composition. You may find the [Low Light Guide](#) helpful. If you are new to photography you may find that your photographs are not as light as those shown here, or perhaps your photographs might be more hazy. Check out our [“Top 10 Tips”](#) and [“Guide Area”](#).

*Sometimes it's the least
meaningful activities
that can yield the most
meaningful interactions...*





02

Take a photograph of your child without actually including your child in the frame.

This could be by way of photographing the end results of an activity, their half-eaten lunch, or even your child's favourite dress ups abandoned.

Use your imagination and capture their personality.



Take a photograph of your child having a quiet moment.

Use composition and perspective to make it appear like you are peeking in and stealing a moment.





Capture a close-up of your child's or children's faces. Get in really close and focus on their eyes. The Close-up Portrait Guide might help you.





Baby rolls, baby feet, baby hands, and baby bottoms are something that you simply must capture...



Capture a close-up of something about your child that is telling of their age. This could be by way of their sweet baby toes, the freckles on your child's nose, or the pigtails of a 7-year-old girl.

You may find the macro guide helpful; however, macro isn't the only way to photograph this. Just get in nice and close and tell the story of your child.



Capture a photograph of your child in complete hysterics. You may have to tickle them to do this or have someone else tell a funny joke. However, try to resist just taking a photograph of a pretty smile.



Capture a photograph of your child frustrated. This does not necessarily translate to crying. It could be simply struggling with an activity, capturing them focused or determined to complete a task.

Sometimes seeing other people's ideas can crush your creativity, yet other times it can be helpful. For this reason we are giving you two activities without photographic prompts. Two days of completely opposite emotions.



08

Take a photograph of your child in their room. Try to include the whole room. Fit as much as you can in. Try to depict your child's favourite spaces and activities in their room.



*“When your child looks back in 20 years
at photographs of their bedroom, they
will remember so much.”*



Sports and outdoor active play are challenging to capture at the best of times. For this task however, try to capture the scene in a way that immerses the viewer in the activity. This can be done in a number of ways such as playing with the late afternoon light (as shown in the examples) or using perspective to show the activity in an unusual way (such as having a ball be thrown at you and have it in the frame). You could also consider such things as lying on the ground and having your child jump over you whilst holding the football. Think creatively. Technically, be sure to watch your shutter speed, especially if the subject is moving. Read the moving subject guide for further help.



10

Capture a photograph of
a silhouette of your child
or your child's shadow.



1 1 Take a photograph of your child or children exploring in the garden. Try not to set anything up but document them in a moment that they actually would normally be in. Ideas might be: playing in the sandpit, playing on a swing, watering the garden, or simply running and

enjoying the grass and the warmth of a sunny afternoon. Try to include the environment and cut out things you would rather avoid by watching your angles and composition. Try shooting through leaves or long grass for example. Helpful guides are the Full Sun Guide, Afternoon Light Guide, In The Garden Guide.



*Try cutting out the clutter of a
COLORBOND fence, and unkempt
garden by getting in close....*

12
of 20

Capture a photograph of whatever it is that your child is doing at exactly 11:45 a.m. - today! Just being!





Photograph your child's favourite song. I realize this one is a tricky task. However it's one that will hopefully challenge you to think outside the box.

You could have them paint a part of the song, make crafts, simply have them singing it, or even using hand actions.

If you have a baby, you could simply document you child listening to the song.



Today, tell your child that you would like for them to choose the activity, place, or object that you are going to photograph. If your child is not yet old enough to communicate, try to imagine their answer if they could talk.

Be honest. If your child says he wants you to take a photograph him being superman, then a superhero it is.

*“Children have the best imaginations.
Sometimes it's just a matter of exploring
the world through their eyes or letting
them be the director.”*



15

Together time! Capture a moment where two or more of your family are spending time together. Consider yourself a fly on the wall. Your main purpose is to photograph interaction! If it's just you and your child, you might want to consider a remote cable release so that you can capture yourself in the photograph.



At the end of the day, interaction is everything. It's the glue that holds the family together. Those sweet moments will never cease to put a smile on our faces.



Explore expressions, and make a collage of your child's different facial expressions. Sad, happy, frustrated, pensive, sleepy!




Take a photograph of what your child is wearing today. This could be before the child pops the clothes on (so laid out on the bed for example), hung up in the cupboard, or whilst the child is wearing them.

Looking back at family photographs, I often find that it is the expressions that I didn't think I would like at the time, that I like the most. Those cute, sweet, or even frustrated looks are often so telling of their personality.

18

Take some close-up photographs of your child's lips, eyelashes, and hair. You may need to use a macro lens if you have one, or you may find that your zoom lens gets in close enough. Keep it simple by getting in very close and using a plain background. You may find our [macro guide](#) helpful.





Getting in close and capturing something that is 'just so your child at this very moment', is always going to be a family favourite...



19

Take a photograph of your partner or another loved one. They deserve some attention too. You might find the [Guide to flattering photographs of adults](#) a little helpful.



20

Hand the camera over to one of your older children and allow them to snap a photograph. The world can be quite amazing through a child's eyes. If you don't yet have older children, let a relative have a turn. This photograph of Ede was snapped by my daughter Penny.




2 1 Visit grandparents or relatives and capture your children with them. These are the moments that we all cherish the most when growing up. Make sure to capture it. Tips : Guide to Photographing Large Groups.



Take a photograph of your partner with your child. Try to depict them in a way that is just so “them” together. If you don’t have a partner or they are away, then think of a relative to do this with, or just the kids together. Use composition and perspective to draw us into their relationship.

You can do this without even showing their faces. Technical thoughts: use a wide aperture to depict softness, and draw in the relationship together. Keep the background uncluttered so that we are just looking at “them”. If you do include background make it a place that you would often find them together, such as in the lounge room, in the kitchen, or even walking the dog on the street.



*“The sweet simplicity of a
cuddle just can’t be beat.”*



Take a photograph of your child outside of your house. Make sure you fit a lot of the house in. You want to remember it forever. No matter how it looks from the outside, it is a must to capture. Technical tips: you may want to use a wide angle lens to get everything in. Think about elements to include such as the house number, the fence, and even blue sky.

What feeling or activity is important to you now that you might want to look back on? I wanted to make sure that I captured Ede playing in our garden, since she spends most of her time exploring it.



Consider taking photographs where your child isn't looking or doesn't need to look. Such as taking photographs of feet. At least on some days, and especially for a photo-a-day project. Not every child will respond well to having a camera in their face day in, and day out.



Take a photo of your child being comforted, comforting another, or self-comforting. This can produce some of the sweetest photographs.





Keep an eye out for childhood moments that we usually ignore.



Take a photograph of
your child learning- no matter the age, your
child is learning every single moment.





Out and about. Capture a family outing in one photograph. Be it at the shopping centre, catching a bus or train (such as this one), or even walking the dog.



Initiate a messy activity that your child has never participated in before and capture the moment your child is most engrossed in it.



Take a photograph of your child's name. This could be by way of actually writing their name, laying out blocks, or even taking photographs of objects that spell out their name.



20

Let the mess tell the story. Take a photograph of something your children left around and let that mess tell the story of what happened next. Of course, you probably want to take a photograph of the end result too (see over page).

After arriving at our holiday destination, the kids saw this bath and couldn't get in fast enough!



Tell a story via your photography, by having a start and a finish. You could create a series for your wall this way.



On your marks, get set... GO!

30

Capture a photograph of your child in active play; however, this time with an emphasis on joy or courage. Focus on moments of happiness or enjoyment in the activity. You might find the *Shooting In Full Sun* guide helpful.

This photograph was taken during a holiday in America.





Congrats, you did it. This is where you give yourself a pat on the back and head over to the [album and printing section](#) to make sure you that you do something with those wonderful photographs - today. Yes, TODAY! Today's task is to print and share.

If you want to continue on, hang in there for a whole new month of inspirational tasks.



Bath time. Let's face it, it's usually a favourite part of the day for children. Capture a series of photographs of your child bathing.



“Believe it or not, bathrooms are a great place for photographs - just be sure to turn off the downlights if you can.”



With paint or chalk, write a few words around your child that best describes them.

You could use a chalkboard, paper, cardboard, or whatever comes to mind. It goes without saying to be careful not to label or shame them, as this is their memory too. Think of uplifting sparks that really speak of who they are as little people.



Ede

cute
funny

likes bananas

First word: Hi



Capture a moment of absolute love. You may need to help this along a little and that's A-OK.




Introduce a new food - something sour. Place it in an exciting bowl, make sure it's colourful and exciting... Capture the element of surprise as your child tastes it.

Keep in mind when documenting certian situations, that there are areas in your house that have more light. Move to the light.



Take a photograph of one of your children's favourite pairs of shoes. You can do this a number of ways, either with the shoes off, or on. They could be clean, or mud covered. It's up to you.



A young child with brown hair is lying down, wearing a pink long-sleeved shirt and pink socks. The child is holding a pink sock up to their face. The sock has the word 'SOKES' printed vertically on it. The background is a patterned fabric with small figures. The overall scene is bright and colorful.

*Figure out what it is your child loves
and capture that many times over.*



37

Take a photograph of your child with you. If you have someone in the house with you, it's okay to have them take the photograph. If not, place the camera on a table and set the timer, or pop on a wide angle lens and simply hold the camera out so you are both in the photograph. Take photographs of you holding your child's

hand and hold the camera out to take a photo of your child kissing you, caring for you, or reading with you. Whatever it may be. Try to think of the softest moment that your heart longs to remember about your time with them today, and capture it.



Another day of close-ups.
This time, it's of your child's
feet. Make sure you capture
them with their shoes off - the
rest is up to you.



Capture a clean portrait of
your child today. Just your
child. No activity. Just as is.

40

Take a photograph of an unusual family tradition that involves your children. It doesn't have to be anything "big" like singing Christmas carols. Think of something more day to day, even something mundane like reading.





Grab a cardboard box and invite your child to help you make something of it. Let your child take the lead. If you have one, set up the tripod and take a photograph of you with your child making something with the box, and then a photo of your child in play with the box once it's done.

Take something from your child's room and photograph it elsewhere with your child. Somewhere that is a little representative of who you feel your child is.

Two creative tasks that require you to set up a little before the actual photograph. Just for fun...



During an outing today take a photograph that you normally wouldn't. It doesn't have to be of your child, it could be of the shopping cart, or the groceries on the shelf. Just a part of your day. Here I have photographed my children doing colour-ins in Starbucks.



Print out your favourite photographs and hang them up with string somewhere in the house. Take a photo of your child amongst the photographs. If this task seems too daunting, it's just one creative idea that involves photographs. Maybe take photographs of your child reading a family album or sorting through family photographs. I believe it's important for us to pass down how wonderful photographs are.

Take a photograph of your child and their favourite book. Be imaginative. Don't just take a photograph of your child reading it. Encourage imaginative play, or include someone else reading it. You, for example.

Books carry children away to other worlds and play a huge part in developing their imagination and learning. What are your child's favourite storytime books?

46

Capture a photograph of your child indulging in their favourite treat or a treat that they are not normally allowed.





Take a photograph
of your child outside.
Make sure to include the
sky and the clouds.






48

Photograph a new trick, one that your child just recently mastered or is practising. Such as learning to sit, stand, or walk. Here Ede is learning to grasp.

Technical thoughts on a digital SLR : Sometimes a wide lens can make things appear larger and more mighty than they really are - just simply by getting up close and getting that barrelling effect. Or get in close with a really wide aperture (as shown above).

A baby is lying on its back, wearing a white and pink and blue striped long-sleeved shirt. The baby's right arm is raised, with the hand open and fingers slightly spread, reaching towards a colorful mobile hanging above. The mobile consists of several green strings with various shapes and colors: a pink ring, a yellow circle, a black oval, a blue oval, a green oval, and a blue and yellow scalloped shape. The background is a soft, out-of-focus white surface, likely a crib or bed.


*There are certain activities,
expressions, and tasks that
children of certain ages do that
are really telling of that age.
It is, after all, only a few short
months that a baby finds interest
in reaching and grasping.*



49

Take a photograph that includes your child's favourite colour. Penny, shown in this photograph, has an unusual favourite colour, making it all the more fun to photograph. You can get really creative with this exercise or simply just document.

Technical thoughts: Colour casts can throw a photograph and cause discolouration. Keep that in mind when photographing your child next to a colour. For example, florescent green might look good on the wall, but it can throw a sickly cast on your child's face if you photograph them in front of it.



I am often drawn to taking photos of my children such as this simply because I know that grey is Penny's favourite colour.



An evening routine. Capture a routine that happens in your household every single evening.





Take a photograph of your love for your children. I'm not going to help you here. This one is for you to figure out.



Take something from your house that you LOVE. Match the colours of it to the colours you are having your child wear that day. Take the item and your child to an outdoor location nearby and photograph them together.

Styling is actually a consideration - and one you may be able to control a little bit. With documenting, it can be tricky, but you can still choose what is in your frame.



Take a photograph from above, depicting your child's world below or the whole scene around your child in that moment.



Make a fun activity and then make it even more fun by suggesting they do something a little crazy. Safety first!



Take a photograph whilst laying on the ground, depicting your child's feet only and what is around them at that time. Pick a time of day to do it, so it is real. Here's one.... 4:30 p.m.



Take a photograph that not only shows their head, but also the world around them, so frame them low. Include whatever it is that's above them, and make it about that as much as it is about your child.

“Two days of creatively exploring composition and perspective.”



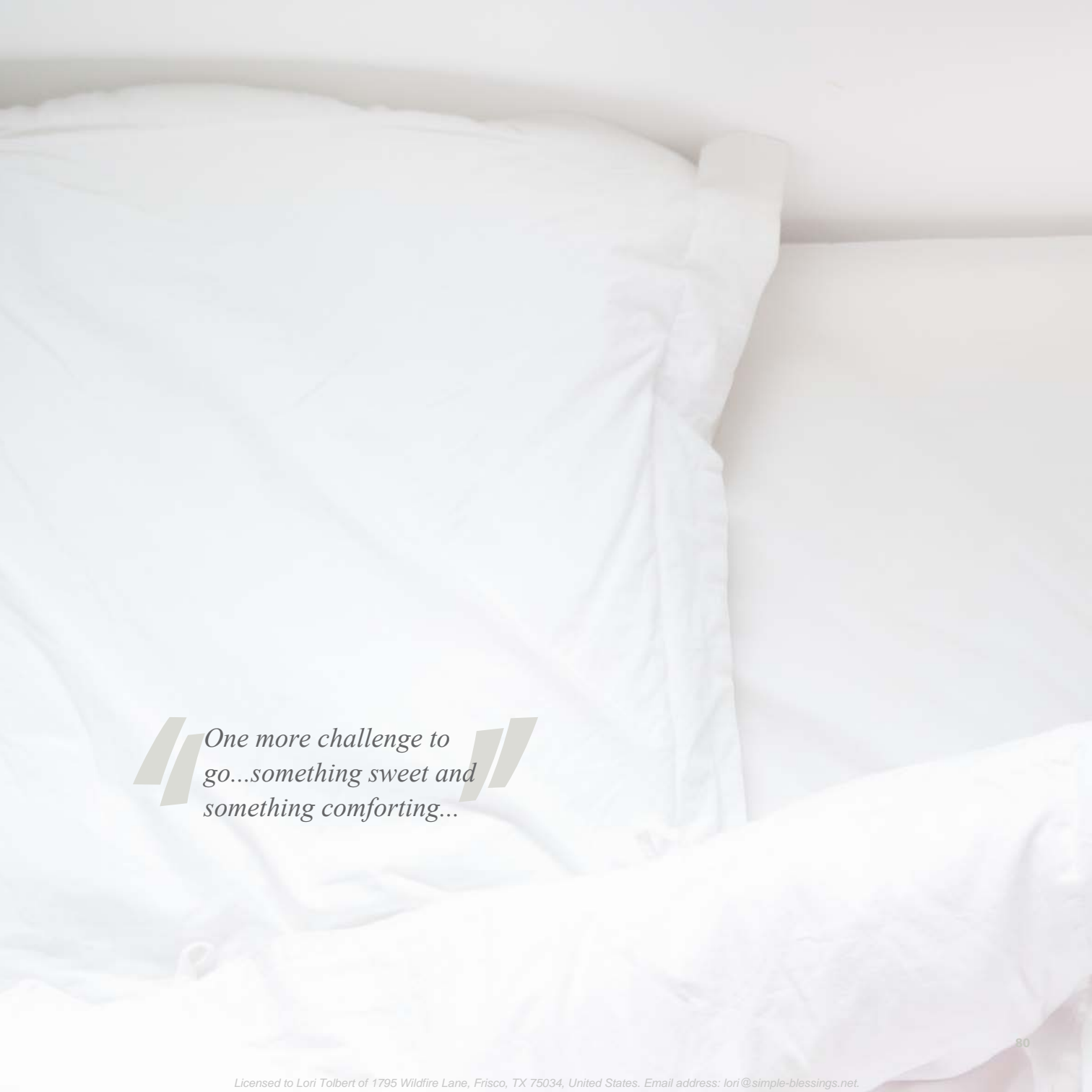
Best friends - if your child is old enough, make sure you take a photograph of your child and their best friend. Try to incorporate something that you often see them doing together and try to think of ways that you can depict them as you often find them. It could even be their brother, sister, or a favourite toy. Who is their best friend?



Take a photograph of something that reminds you of your own childhood; however, include your child in it.



Capture a moment where your child is playing with, or being comforted by their favourite toy.



*“One more challenge to
go...something sweet and
something comforting...”*



Tomorrow get up and photograph your child sleeping. Try to think of ways to really encourage the feel of their bed. The softness. The depth in which they sleep. The smells. The warmth. The contentedness.





If you made it this far, congrats!

I hope you have enjoyed the journey and will continue to
enjoy documenting your life from here on in.

For further inspiration, make sure you read on!

OTHER ADVENTURES

There are many other projects that you can do to document your family. In this section, we cover just some of those, and our guest photographers share their own adventures.

A young child with curly hair is captured in a candid moment in a bathroom. The child is shirtless and is washing their face in a white sink. They are looking into a mirror, and their reflection is visible. The child's mouth is open, and they appear to be blowing bubbles or water. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The overall mood is playful and candid.

A Day in the Life Project

(photographs by Stephanie Beaty)

A Day in the Life Project

A Day In the Life Project is a favourite. It is, as it says, a whole day of documenting your family, from dawn till dusk and all the tiny moments in between.

For this project, I recommend shooting in pure documentary style, where you simply become a fly on the wall and observe.

Things to look out for :

- » The feel of the morning as the house is waking up.
- » The pitter-patter of feet heading downstairs to breakfast.
- » Getting ready for the day, from getting dressed to brushing teeth.
- » Any meal times.
- » Daytime activities, such as going to school, or other outings.
- » The giggles and madness that is the time before bed.
- » And of course, lights out.

A Day in the Life with Stephanie Beaty.

American photographer Stephanie Beaty documents a Day in the Life of her children and shares her experience and photographs with us.

When capturing a “Day in the Life” of your family, what moments do you pick out as being important? Can you talk to us a little bit about your mindset?

“When I photograph my children, I often watch for moments where they are actively expressing themselves. All of mine are five and younger, so essentially anytime they are immersed in an activity -- whether that is play, exploration, engaging with each other, or simply just interacting with their environment. My mindset is different from my portrait or commercial work because my approach is more documentary -- although through an artistic viewpoint. I use the time to hone my photography skills and as a creative outlet, so I experiment a lot as well. My ultimate goal is to capture the essence of who they are, not necessarily a pretty photo of what they look like. I definitely don’t ever ask them to look at me and smile when I shoot this way. However, that doesn’t mean I am just an observer (although I often am).”

(all photographs in this Day in the life section are copyright of Stephanie Beaty)



A Day in the Life with Stephanie Beaty.



“I engage them naturally and pick up the camera as an extension of what is happening. Having a camera on all of the time can be intrusive, so many times I will just photograph them being themselves without making requests -- or even talking. They tolerate this kind of documentation nicely -- and aren't encumbered by my camera because of it. I will however manipulate the environment -- if there are distracting background objects or clutter, I remove them. If that's not possible, I work to frame the subject with the least amount of distraction -- unless the surrounding elements are important to the photo.”



It was a dark and rainy day yet you were still able to photograph. What considerations and techniques can you tell us about that helped you?

“From a technical perspective, I used high ISOs (3200 for some) and wide apertures (up to f/1.4). I also used available light -- even household lamps -- and adjusted my white balance accordingly. I could have used the flash, but it is distracting when trying to photograph children unobtrusively. While I likely wouldn’t shoot with these settings for client

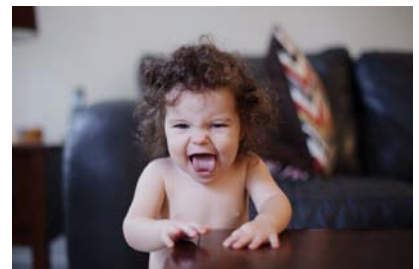
work, at home, capturing moments is more important to me than technical perfection. I also shoot in manual mode -- while I may occasionally switch to aperture priority, the light isn’t changing much so I prefer the control that manual offers. In general I try to keep my shutter speeds above 125 when shooting with a 50mm lens -- that’s not always possible in dark rooms or at night so I work with the limitations of my equipment--and don’t toss away images that aren’t tack sharp as long as the image is meaningful.”

A Day in the Life with Stephanie Beaty

Have you got any advice or thoughts for those of us who find it hard to spend a whole day photographing our families?

“Photographing a full day is actually quite challenging -- but it doesn’t necessarily mean photographing ALL day. Simply having your camera within reach for the day and waiting for moments to unfold is a great approach. If someone is having a difficult time choosing “photographable moments” - using everyday routines as a guide helps (wake up, breakfast, playtime etc). Beyond that, having an activity or two scheduled can help keep the kids engaged as well as provide inspiration for the photographer.

You can choose a purely documentary approach -- or subtly plan things like wardrobe, play activities and location etc. I also think limiting the expectations you have for your children can be helpful -- they won’t be engaged with a camera for a full day, so respecting their space is important too.”



A Day in the Life with Stephanie Beaty

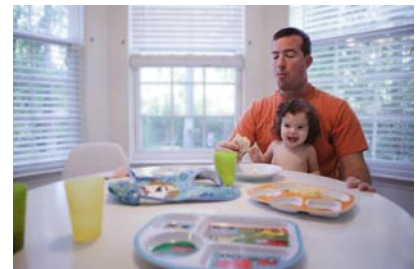


Any photography tips for photographing your family that you can pass on?

“First and foremost, make time to do it! Many photographers, myself included, began this journey because of a love of photographing their children. When schedules are booked and client sessions fill the calendar, it’s easy to stop documenting our own family because it is not a priority. Even non-professionals get caught up in the tyranny of the urgent and stop making time to photograph their little ones -- especially once baby two, three, or four arrives!”

A Day in the Life with Stephanie Beaty

“Beyond that, use the time to experiment, relax and improve your photography skills. These are your own photos and you can use them to master techniques or break the rules. Try various camera settings. Shoot with lenses you don’t use often. Most importantly, back up your images (again and again!) and get them off of your computer. Put them on your walls or in albums or boxes. Print them. My kids love to leaf through albums of their photos--they’re not just for me. Finally, make sure you are in images with your children too. This may mean handing the camera to your partner or having professional portraits taken -- but there is no better time than the present.”





Special thanks to Stephanie for sharing her photographs and opening up her home to share her life and and photographic journey with us.

You can visit more of her work at <http://www.lifeography.com>

What do you plan on doing with the photographs, or what have you done in the past with projects like this? Do you put them in an album? On the wall?

“Some of my favourite images are not portraits of my children but photographs of their everyday moments. My very favourites I hang large on my walls (see above), the rest I try to keep in albums. My current goal is to create annual family books. With three littles under five, a husband in

the military and a portrait business, sometimes my personal projects get pushed aside. I can’t emphasize enough how important having prints of these images is to me -- and that they don’t exist on just a hard drive (or four!). It is my personal goal to catalogue more of my family photos this year.”

by Stephanie Beaty : <http://www.lifeography.com>

A Photo a Day Project

(photographs by Kristen Cook)



A Photo A Day Project

The “Photo A Day” project has been around for a long time. Long before the internet, I am sure. Photo bloggers were participating in a very similar project many years ago, and it is this exact project that made me fall in love with photography from the start.

I began taking a photograph of my girls, once a day, every day, and shared that photograph on my blog with others who were part of the photo blogging community.

It became more than a 365 day event as I continued to be inspired and ended up posting for many years.

Your photo a day project can be as short or as long as you like. A month long one might be a nice start.

The key is to remember to take a photo a day.

A Month with Kristen Cook

Australian photographer Kristen Cook documents her family by photographing them once a day, every day, for the month of January.

Can you tell us a little about your project?

“For the last three years, every January I go about taking one photo a day of my children. As photographers, we know how time-poor we can be sometimes when it comes to taking consistent photos for ourselves, and this project commits me to this task. Life is beautiful – but it can be busy, crazy, and wonderful. I never want to lose sight of the beautiful reminders in front of me, and whilst I do take photos throughout the year, this project is a reminder for me of their time, in that moment, at the same time every year. I love nothing more than looking back on previous years and watching their growth. This project is shared with many of my other photographer friends and it’s such a lovely journey being able to take that time and treasure the imperfect in the every day. “

(photographs copyright of Kristen Cook)



A Month with Kristen Cook: days 5 to 12



Do you have any rules or do you just go ahead and take photographs?

“Although I strive for every image to be landscape, I suppose that is the only rule that I have and that is the real beauty of it. I try to see if I can capture something different every one of those 31 days because sometimes things that you take for granted, the moments in between, the things you consider to be the most mundane, are the most beautiful reminders of that time.”

A Month with Kristen Cook: days 12 to 16.

All of your photographs are in black and white, is there a reason for this?

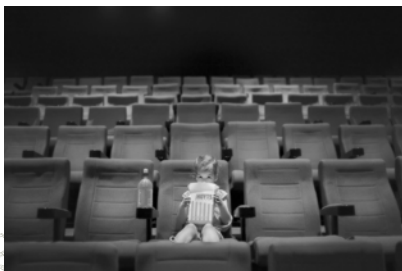
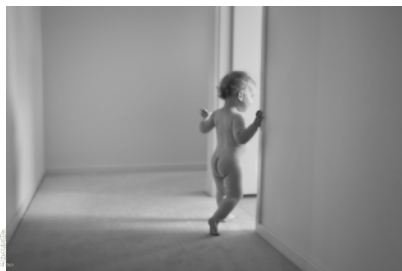
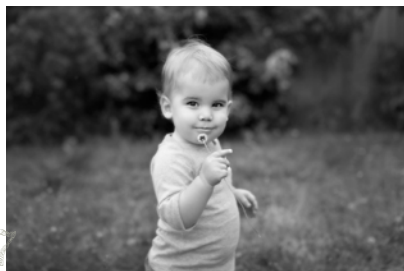
“One of my favourite photography quotes is, “When you photograph people in colour, you photograph their clothes. But when you photograph people in black and white you photograph their souls” - it was a deliberate and purposeful choice for me to begin and continue this project in black and white, and landscape format. I also began recording the time as well as the date that I had captured the images and I am so excited to see other photographers doing the same now – reminders of that moment, that time, and that place.”

What do you do with the photographs afterwards? Do you put them in an album? On the wall?

“An album! I have the same album for my project as I use for my clients, I’m that proud of them. Beautiful, timeless, matted images. Although I do have plans this year to take some of my favourites from the years and organise a photo wall of those in simple frames.”



A Month with Kristen Cook: days 17 to 24



Have you got any advice or thoughts for those of us who find it hard to keep at it for a whole month?

Push through it, I promise you that it is worth it. Don't concentrate on what results you think you should be getting, but rather on just representing the truth of that moment. Have your camera on you always – you never know when a moment might present itself, and things that you think of may never happen so don't beat yourself up about not finding things that are "perfect". It can get hard, especially if you are hard on yourself, but know that the results and the memories that you have as a result of that journey, far outweigh the pressure you may feel at the time. Go with the flow and shoot from the heart, and the results and motivation will follow.

A Month with Kristen Cook: days 25 to 31

Any photography tips for photographing your family that you can pass on?

Don't forget the little things, the little moments, and the every day – they are the parts that make up the beautiful whole of your existence, and every part is worth being treasured.

Special thanks to Kristen for sharing her photographs and taking the time to share her thoughts with us.

You can see more of her work at <http://www.kristencook.com.au>.



A photograph of a person walking on a beach. The person is in the upper right corner, wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants, walking away from the camera. The beach is sandy, and the ocean waves are breaking in the background. The water is a light blue color, and the sky is clear. The overall scene is peaceful and serene.

The Holiday Project

Photographs by <http://www.bellinipics.com>

On Holiday with Stephanie Piscitelli

Documenting holidays is so important, and you can read more about that in our [Travel Section](#). American photographer Stephanie Piscitelli kindly shares with us her recent holiday, and tells us about her experiences, her own creative blocks, and her desire to document her family more often.

Where did you go on holiday and for how long?

“Every year we travel to Naples, Florida. Typically we spend about 4-5 days there, but this time we extended it to 7 days. We stay at the Naples Grande Resort which is such a beautiful place with amazing amenities and, though at first it didn’t matter to us before children, the hotel is very family-friendly with a kids’ club, a beautiful pool with a twirly water slide, and a mangrove-covered half-mile boardwalk guides you to the white sand and shell-covered beach.”

(photographs copyright of Stephanie Piscitelli)





Your photographs certainly depict the description of your holiday. When capturing holiday photographs, can you tell us what you feel is important to document?

“For me it’s about capturing the little details, the quiet moments, their joy, and doing this all without getting too

snap-shotty. I like to spin a little creativity into every shot, whether it is the angle, the crop, or what exactly in that image I’m trying to encapsulate forever in that one moment.”

On Holiday with Stephanie Piscitelli



What challenges did you find you had?

“On a technical level, while the hotel suite was beautifully appointed and had seemingly ample light, I did find that I was shooting at higher ISOs than I typically like to shoot. Also, when you travel with kids you come with loads of STUFF! While I knew I needed to keep it “real”, I don’t like a lot of clutter in my images so I found that I was overthinking the shots and instead of just being in that moment I was moving my Daisy razor out of the background of the tub shots or fluffing the bed and removing crumpled pyjamas out of the frame.

On a personal level, I did feel that I was having a creative block. Wanting so much to bring the every day Bellini style into my own personal photos was becoming more of a task rather than a natural flow. Travelling during my busiest season may not be the easiest thing to do because, even though my body and brain need the break, in this time of physical and mental decompression, I knew I still needed to get out there and shoot for me and for my family.”

On Holiday with Stephanie Piscitelli

Looking back over the photographs, do you already have a sense of nostalgia about the holiday? What do you see as being the most important capture, and why?

“Leaving a vacation is never easy to do but on the flip side there is nothing better than coming home, right? I do feel a sense of nostalgia when I look back at my images; those butterflies I get anytime I’m flying anywhere, getting much needed time away with my family, my son’s excitement that oozes from his every pore, the energy, the happiness, and, at time, the calm. The most important captures that I’ve shared? Definitely the shots of my sons on the beach together. For one, it’s a shot of both boys together, something not always easy to do at this stage without one not smiling and the other screaming or running off. It also shows their personalities; Madden at 23 months is inquisitive, eager to explore and not very willing to give his momma any direct eye contact when I’ve got my camera in hand. And then there’s Grayson at 5 years old who started Kindergarten this year and is now cooler than cool, learning and growing in leaps and bounds, and knows how to give me some “good face” because, at this point, he’s pretty darn good in front of the camera!”



On Holiday with Stephanie Piscitelli

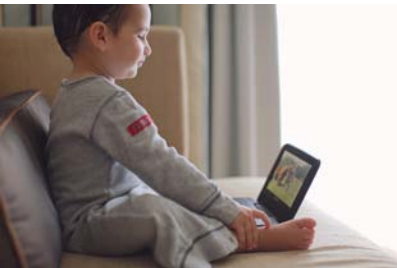


“The time that our children are sweet, young, innocent children is soooooo fleeting. A time we need to cherish. These boys will be so different next year when we visit Naples and these vacation photos have become a timeline of their youth and our times spent together.”



When taking holiday portraits are you aiming at your best work, or are you aiming at memories?

“That’s a great question! It’s hard not to think about shooting your best work even while you’re on vacation. Why? Well, now there’s Facebook, your blog, you’re friends and family who kind of expect to see the best of your work at all times. In the back of your head you may be thinking, ‘Ooooh, I can definitely blog this!’ or ‘I can post this on Facebook!’. Social media kind of keeps us on our toes creatively. It’s living up to an expectation for others and yourself. While I don’t really beat myself up to keep it up, I do think in the back of my mind that I can’t really shoot for mediocrity and that there will be something special about each image I take and that parallels with keeping pertinent, tangible, and beautiful memories that will last a lifetime.”



(photographs copyright Stephanie Piscitelli)



What do you plan on doing with the photographs, or what have you done in the past with projects like this?

“When I get some time after the holidays I have some major organizing and sorting to do. For about 5 years or so I was very good about having my film and digital prints printed and putting them in albums. Well, that stopped about 5 years ago--oh the shame! Now it’s be-

come sort of a daunting task to figure out how to handle all of the files and how to preserve them. I do plan on putting some books together, choosing the best photos from each year and also doing some large canvases for our living room. I will also make some slideshow DVDs that are not only wonderful for us as keepsakes, but they make fabulous presents for the grandparents!”

On Holiday with Stephanie Piscitelli

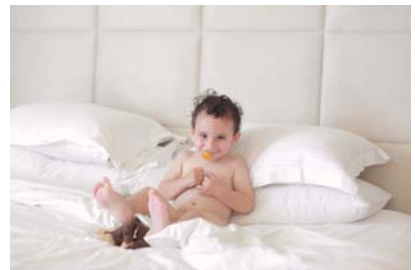
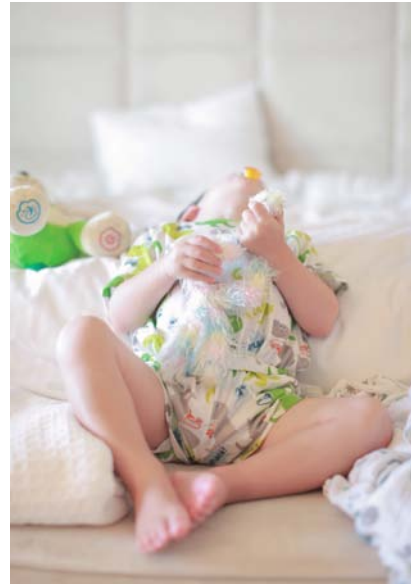
Have you got any advice or thoughts for those of us who find it hard to take time during our holiday to capture our families?

“Pass the camera off to the hubby. It’s nice to get a different perspective and guess what? You might even find that YOU actually exist and you’ll get some much needed photos of you and your children. This is something I think we women forget to do and we will regret in 10, 20, 30 years from now. To peek in and capture the pure essence of that moment without there being the pretence of your subjects knowing they are being photographed; when nerves perk up, insecurities fly, bodies stiffen the moment is lost forever.

And I will try to take my own advice more from this point forward...just keep shooting! Madden is experiencing the second child syndrome and he barely exists in photos....well in comparison to my first born. I vow from this point forward to shoot more for myself and for my family.”

Special thanks to Stephanie for sharing her photographs and her heart with us.

You can see more of her work at <http://www.bellanipics.com>



A QUICK GUIDE



the quick guide: introduction

What you will need:

Your camera manual, your camera, and, of course, your family.

The quick guide is a “how-to” of all things technical, plus all things that may require guidance.

Unfortunately, whilst I say it’s a “Quick Guide”, photography is one of those things that requires some understanding, much frustration, and even more practice.

If you are at the very beginning stages of photography and would dearly love to take better photographs of your family, then I would highly recommend that you spend time getting to know your camera.

The guides here are aimed at helping you, in a way that I wish I could have been helped from the very start. However, I am also realistic enough to know that it all takes time. And clicks of the shutter.

Most of all, I hope you enjoy the journey.

the quick guide: digital SLR, compact digital or iphone?

If you're in the market for a camera, and just starting out in this wonderful thing called photography, you may be finding it difficult to decide on what type of camera to purchase. There are many on the market, with many features, and at a range of prices.

You can either purchase a "compact digital" or a "digital SLR". Or you may choose to use your "iphone". We own all in fact. Why? Let me compare and explain.

compact digital

The point and shoot is used more for convenience than anything else. It does have its downfalls. Unfortunately, they tend to be slow, which isn't great when photographing children. They also don't allow you as much control. Then there is the fact that the results are simply not as good.

If you do purchase a point and shoot my advice is to purchase one that allows you to change the settings to manual modes. If you can, pick up one that allows you to use both **Aperture Priority** and **Shutter Priority**. You will find, however that most have automatic modes that are named after the function that you want. Such as landscape, portrait and **macro**. We will discuss those over the page. Many also have such things as movie functions, which can be fun. There are some functions

that you may never use or that could entice you, but, they really are pointless. Be careful of paying too much for gadgets you'll never use.

When I first started, I remember being enticed by the megapixel when really most of the cameras on the market these days have way more than you actually need for taking family photographs. In fact, it's the image sensor that is way more important. In case you're wondering, 5 to 10 mega pixels will be more than enough if you're an amateur photographer. Don't get hung up on the megapixels. Another thing to look out for is optical zoom. Some are x3, but you might want to look at one that has x10 optical zoom. Digital zoom isn't as good, and I don't recommend it. Look for optical zoom. Lastly, image stabilization helps stop your camera from producing blur. I like this feature.

There are many brands on the market and my advice is to go to a shop and pick them up and place them in your hands. Our compact is a Nikon, but all our professional gear is Canon. Just go with whatever makes you comfortable. Before going over DSLRs let's talk about the functions on a compact digital.

If we are talking convenience, than nothing beats the iphone. Plus it has some nifty aps, that are fun to use. If in doubt, pull out the iphone!

the quick guide: get to know your compact digital

All you'll need for this section is:

1. Your manual.
2. A little bit of time.

There are many different settings on a compact digital, all of which help you to take a better photograph - or are suppose to, since they decide for you.

compact digital auto modes

Depending on your brand of camera you will find it has different modes. Ours (a compact Nikon) has Portrait, Landscape, Night portrait, Party/indoor, Beach, Snow, Sunset, Dusk/dawn, Night landscape, Close-up, Food, Museum, Fireworks, Black and White, Backlighting, Panorama assist and Pet portrait.

Even that is overwhelming on its own! However, getting to know what some of these modes do will help you later on if you decide to upgrade to a digital SLR and shoot in manual. We will get to that later.

First things first, find out how to control your flash, as you will find you will want to be able to turn this off and on as per your liking.

- » Full Automatic Mode (or “A”): In this mode the camera decides absolutely everything for you. This isn't always the best mode to use as you can't always control if the flash will fire, or even what the end result will be.
- » Program Mode (or “P”): A more suitable automatic mode as it usually allows you to control the flash (on or off), the ISO, and the white balance. It also allows for such things as exposure bracketing, which we cover later. However everything else is decided for you.
- » Portrait (or usually an icon of a face): A mode for taking a close up portrait of someone's face or a group of faces. Usually set to a wide aperture for a wider depth of field. Such as f/5.0. The camera's these days are getting very clever. Some even have smile recognition - which will click the shutter when the subject smiles. Whilst others have facial recognition and will determine its focus function if you simply hold up the camera. When using the portrait feature just remember to get in close.
- » Landscape (or usually an icon of mountains): For taking landscapes or photographs where everything needs to be tack sharp or in focus. This setting usually sets itself to have an aperture that has wide depth of field, such as f/16 or f/22.

the quick guide: why choose a digital SLR?

the digital SLR

So why choose a digital SLR over a compact camera?

Simply because it gives you complete control and better results. If you're serious about your photography then the digital SLR is something you might want to look into. Of course, its more expensive. However, these days, you can pick up quite a good digital SLR for half the price of 5 years ago. And technology is only getting better and cheaper.

Then there is, of course, the fact that you will need to invest in a lens too, as they are sold separate from the body.

There are, of course, other downsides, but the only one that really speaks to me is that the digital SLR is big and heavy. Which is why we have both a compact and a digital SLR.

All our digital SLRs are Canon systems. When you first purchase a digital SLR you may find it comes with a kit lens. Usually a zoom lens. It will likely do as a start; however, if you are on the market for a solid portrait lens with your digital SLR then you really need to go no further than the 50mm. That also has a downside in that it has no zoom. However, the results are beautiful.

Just as compact cameras have modes, so do digital SLRs. Some of which we have already covered in the [compact](#) section.

Digital SLRs also have many automatic modes that help you; however, the more professional, and expensive the camera, the less automatic modes you will find.

Keep that in mind when purchasing your camera. Just because you spend a lot of money does not mean you don't have to think. Quite the opposite in fact.

However, in saying that, we have purchased many compact cameras, and many digital SLRs over the years, and it has only ever been the compact cameras that have broken down. Touch wood!

the quick guide: digital slr modes

the digital SLR camera modes

The digital SLR cameras have very similar modes to the compact flash; however, as discussed earlier, the more professional the camera, the less modes available to you.

The modes on the digital SLR that we find helpful are :

Aperture Priority (“A” or “AP” or “AV”): this mode allows you to set your aperture, and then the shutter speed will be automatic. Under aperture priority you can also choose your ISO, and all the other settings such as white balance.

Shutter Priority (“S” or “TV”): this mode allows you to set your shutter speed, and then the aperture will be automatic. As with the Aperture priority, you still have control over all the other settings.

Manual (“M”): this gives you complete and full control over your shutter speed and aperture, as well as all other aspects. This mode isn’t as scary as it sounds, just keep following along with this guide and you will understand.

Using a digital SLR isn’t as hard as it sounds. It’s simply a matter of understanding exposure. And that’s why we have a complete guide that will get you there. The key, and the biggest key, is knowing that you have complete control over the outcome. It’s just knowledge.

the quick guide : the exposure triangle

What is exposure? Well it's the brightness (or lack thereof) of the photograph. And you control it. Photography is all about light and how we manipulate the camera to capture the image.

Exposure is made up of three elements, ISO, Aperture and Shutter Speed. To help you understand exposure, keep the 'exposure triangle' in mind. It's important to learn how to manually change these settings. However, in order to change them, you must understand what each does, and the role that each plays in exposing a photograph.



the quick guide: ISO

ISO (the big fancy proper name for this is International Organization for Standardization) is your camera's setting for sensitivity to light. It is the part of the triangle equation that tells your camera how quickly to capture light exposed to the sensor.

There is a simpler way of looking at it;

The lower your ISO, for example 100, the slower the exposure of light on the image sensor. And the result, less grainy images.

Whilst grain is not a bad thing, most photographers these days prefer to have a lower ISO and less grain.

The faster the setting, such as 1200, the faster the exposure of light on the sensor will be. And in turn, the photograph will have a lot of grain.

These days you can push your camera's ISO to well above 1000 and still produce a lovely photograph. However, I prefer to have my ISO below 800.

So, here are the ISOs that I start with for different settings :

(see illustration over the page):

Outside in full sun: 100 ISO

In the shade outside: 400 ISO

Indoors: 800 ISO

Remember the higher the ISO number, the more light it lets in, but the more grain it produces on your photograph.

the quick guide: which ISO



400 ISO

800 ISO

100 ISO

the quick guide: aperture

Think of Aperture (f/stop) like the iris of our eyes. When we walk outside into bright light, the iris actually shrinks to restrict the amount of light coming in. If we were to walk back inside into a darkroom our iris will dilate to allow more light in.

Depending on the lenses you have, apertures can typically go from f/1.2 to f/22. These numbers refer to how “open” or “closed” your lens is.

There is one point to the Aperture story that always confuses at first: The lower the number the larger the “iris”, the larger the number the smaller the “iris”.

Having a large opening (smaller number/larger iris) will let in the greatest amount of light and will provide you with shallow depth of field (blurry background) depending on your lens lowest aperture.

There is also a semi-auto mode called : Aperture priority. For Canon users, this is AV mode and on Nikons, its is the A on your dial. Using the aperture priority mode will allow you to pick your preferred aperture and the camera will choose the shutter speed.

The key, and the biggest key, with using Aperture priority is to make sure you use “exposure compensation”. Exposure compensation allows

you to add in or reduce the light at the flick of a dial. Different makes of cameras have this set in different places. It is really important that you look up your make of camera and find out how to change the exposure compensation. I have found that cameras generally underexpose just slightly in auto modes, so without exposure compensation, you will likely become frustrated.

the quick guide : aperture

So remember, the smaller the number (2 for example), the larger the lens opening. This is important because the larger the opening, the more light it lets in. However it also changes the depth of field (see over page).



the quick guide: aperture: depth of field

Depth of field (DOF) is the term used to explain the difference between the point in focus, and the areas out of focus.

There are many ways of explaining depth of field, and most of them are too complex.

A large depth of field indicates that there is a lot within the photograph that is in focus. If you require a large depth of field consider using an aperture that is a high number, such as $f/8.0$.

A small depth of field indicates that a lot is out of focus around one small area that is sharp. Such as the image to the right. If you require a small depth of field, consider using an aperture which is wide such as $f/2.8$.

As to what apertures I recommend, that really depends on the situation. However, there is an old rule about aperture that seems to work fairly well. Go up one stop per person in your photograph. A stop is an aperture level.

The guide:

1 subject: $f/2.8$ ap, 2 subjects: $f/3.2$ ap,

3 subjects: $f/4.0$ ap, 4 subjects: $f/5.6$ ap



The above photographs show the spinning top on the left, as $f/10$. However the spinning top on the right is $f/1.2$. You can see that $f/10$ shows a lot more detail, whereas $f/1.2$, is blurry and softer.

When photographing a landscape, I go for an aperture that is above $f/8.0$, and up to $f/22$.

the quick guide: shutter speed

Shutter speed determines the speed of the Aperture opening. (How long the lens stays open). For the shutter speed, think in terms of how long you are leaving your aperture open. Or your eyes open to make the scene.

Shutter speed numbers represent a fraction of a second that the shutter stays open. Opening the shutter determines how long the light is passing through the lens to the sensor.

When the shutter speed is set to 200, light comes into the camera for 1/200th of a second.

When the shutter speed is set to 4, light enters in for ¼ of a second.

The higher your shutter speed the quicker the shutter, the lower your shutter speed the longer it stays open.

The slower the shutter speed, the more likely you will experience camera shake due to it being open for so long, and it being nearly impossible to hold your camera perfectly still.

Shutter speed plays a really important role. For example, when photographing moving objects (a person riding a bike) the shutter speed you choose can make a huge difference on the end result. You need your shutter to be at least 500ss if the subject is moving fast. I'd even suggest 800ss

or higher if you really want complete focus.

I recommend keeping your shutter speed above 100ss for still subjects. However for children anything above 200ss is your best bet.

So to recap, as per the illustration over page:

Still subjects such as a sleeping baby: 100ss

Moving subjects: 800ss

Subjects sitting together: 200ss

the quick guide: which shutter speed



the quick guide: are you exposed correctly?

There are a few tips and tricks to understanding if you are correctly exposing your photographs. First, there is such a thing as your exposure bar. If you look through your viewfinder you will find it and depending on the make of your camera, it's likely on the top.

The exposure bar tells you how much light your letting into the camera, and if it's on 0, then according to the camera, you are correctly exposing.

I tend to overexpose just slightly. As per the yellow heart on the exposure bar below. Be careful of this, however, because overexposing can cause blow-outs which means that there is loss of detail in the highlights. Just as this can happen with overexposure, it can also happen when you underexpose, in the shadows. If the shadows are too dark you will likely find that there is no detail there. I recommend correctly exposing for skin tones and then adding just a touch of light in, even 1/3 of a stop. Practically, if you look at

your exposure bar and it's in the minus then you will need to decide how you are going to let more light in. There are three ways of doing this:

1. Slow down your shutter speed. For example if your shutter speed is on 500, reduce the number till the exposure bar is showing the photograph is exposing correctly.
2. Raise the ISO. As you know the higher the ISO, the more light you let in.
3. Reduce the number of your aperture. Opening up your aperture from say $f/5.6$ to $f/2.8$ will allow more light to come in.

And this works vice versa for when your exposure bar is showing there is too much light. Just do the opposite.



the quick guide: histogram

Let's get down to the nitty gritty of exposure - for me anyway. If you're unsure if you're correctly exposing, the best way to tell is to check your histogram. You will need to consult your manual to find where it is hidden in your camera's menu however every photograph you take will produce a histogram.

On my Canon camera I just press the info button twice and it brings it up. The histogram is important. However, there are long and short ways of explaining what it does and I think it's best to keep it simple.

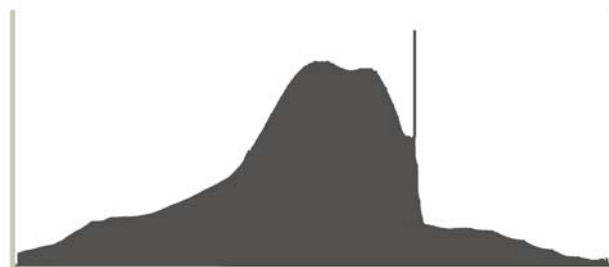
On your histogram you will see a mountain. If the mountain hits either end (to the right or left), then you may be over- or underexposing. The right side means overexposed. The left side means underexposed. Personally I like my mountain to be in the middle and more to the right.

If your mountain hits either the left or right wall completely then you will have loss of detail within those areas. The best exposure is when there is no loss of detail; however, using natural light means at times that can be difficult. Just be aware of where in your photograph the overexposed areas are. As long as you're aware, then you're OK. Remember there is no right or wrong, in my book anyway. There is only knowledge.

shadows----- tonal range -----highlights



could be underexposed



no loss of detail



could be overexposed

the quick guide: white balance

White balance is your camera's way of deciding how to show the world in the colour in which we see. It has, actually, quite a difficult job. And that is why you can usually change the white balance settings on your camera if you are seeing the colour as being a little "off". That being said, the auto white balance on high-end cameras is usually quite good, and even on point and shoots it is still helpful. However, it's important to know how to change it and what to change if it's not looking great. Each camera has a different way of changing the white balance and you will need to consult your manual for your specific model of camera. It is likely to have auto modes as per the circles below.

Once you know how to change your white balance, it's quite simple. If your photograph is looking too blue, you might want to pop it on Cloudy or Shade. Both of these add warmth. If your photograph is looking too warm you might want to pop it onto Sunny. If inside under tungsten lighting, then obviously tungsten.

That being said, auto usually works just fine and if you shoot in raw you can change it later anyway.



the quick guide: which lens?

You can pick up some fairly cheap lenses that will give you great results. One of which I have already mentioned - the trusted 50mm f/1.8.

However, there are a few things that we look for when purchasing lenses.

1. Make sure the aperture is to your pleasing, i.e., some lenses will only allow you to go to 5.6 aperture and not below, which renders that lens useless in low light. Consider purchasing a lens with an aperture that is as wide as you can afford. That being said, it truly is the widest apertures that seem to be the most expensive.

2. We usually prefer a prime lens over a zoom lens. Prime lenses are sharper and render better results. Zoom lenses do give you the option of changing your perspective quickly.

3. If you do purchase a zoom lens consider paying extra for image stabilization. It helps keep the image in focus.

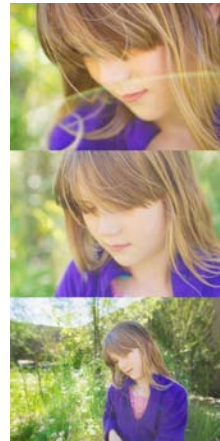
One of the biggest questions we get asked is “What lens would you purchase first if you had to start all over again?”

It would be the 50mm. On a full frame sensor it will give you eyes view perspective. Which means it will not distort. This lens is also tack sharp.

Keep in mind that anything under 50mm will distort, so things will start to appear barrelled as per the example below.

If you are looking to blur out the background you might want to consider a lens such as the 85mm or above which gives you beautiful depth of field.

If you’re still uncertain, you might want to consider renting one before you buy since they all give different results.



70mm

50mm

24mm

the quick guide: memory and other gadgets

With digital photography comes many other gadget requirements. Most of which, unfortunately, can be costly. However, having them can be helpful. This is a list of my top 5 gadgets that I wish I had a better understanding of from the start:

1. Memory Cards. Where your camera stores the photographs. It is easy to get carried away and want the biggest amount of space on your memory card. However, I recommend purchasing a card size that is one or two steps back from “the latest release”. Usually, the latest release is just so much bigger then we actually need for our camera’s storage.

2. A card reader. A card reader is required to upload your photographs to your computer. If that is what you wish to do. Make sure you get a good quality one. We have purchased so many and they fail due to the pins bending. Research before you purchase.

3. A card pouch. Something that took me a few good years to see the value in. A card pouch carries all your memory cards and is extremely

handy especially if you are prone to losing things. I have lost many a photograph simply because I couldn’t remember where I put my card. A card pouch has become an essential to me.

4. Back up batteries. It seems silly to purchase two batteries but you will kick yourself one day when you discover your child doing the most wonderful thing and your battery is dead. This is one of the best things I have ever done.

5. Last but not least, a good sturdy camera bag. For everyday use, we use **Crumplers**. However, purchase one that you like because if you don’t “like” it then you simply won’t use it. So what’s the point? Make sure the bag is comfortable more than anything. You will be more likely to take your camera on a family vacation if you’re comfortable carrying it.

the quick guide: top 10 tips

1. Try to have even exposure on the subjects' faces. I used to make this mistake all the time where I would have half the face in the sun, half the face in the shade. Or, when there would be dappled light on their faces, causing the sun to have “hot” spots on their skin. Now this can be creative when handling it well. However, when I was starting, it really helped my photographs when I ensured this wasn't happening. And if you do have subjects facing the sun, be aware they are likely squinting - unless it's at sunset or sunrise.
2. Likewise, attempt even exposure within the whole photograph. If you're not sure of how to do that you might want to dip into our [exposure section](#). Photos that have contrasted hot spots and shadows in the background can draw your attention away from the subject.
3. Try to anticipate what is about to happen. There are a number of reasons for this. First, some cameras take a while to click even after you have pressed the shutter. The cheaper the camera the more likely this is to happen. If you have a point and shoot camera this is an essential. However, the other important point is that if you have in mind what you think might be about to happen, you are more likely to be focused on capturing it.
4. Move in close and remove the background. Often a photograph can go from drab to wow, by just getting in close and making the photograph about the subject.



“In the photograph above there is examples of blow-outs or hot spots on her foot. If they were on her face, then I personally would not use the photograph. Watch out for that.”

the quick guide: top 10 tips

5. Keep your lines straight unless you are after a dramatic angle. Watch what lines are doing in your photograph, as it helps square things off, such as doorways, edges of tables, or anything that happens to be a line that's in your photograph. Even the horizon. Try to keep lines straight.

6. Be aware of the colours within a photograph - do they match? Or do they clash? You will enjoy the results so much more if the colours within the photograph are cohesive.

7. Watch things sticking out of peoples' heads, such as trees! Nobody wants a tree or a pole head.

8. Get down on the child's level and tell yourself not to centre the subject in the frame. Try another composition.

9. Make sure your shutter speed is fast enough. I used to find that I had a lot of camera shake and out of focus photographs. The biggest thing that has helped me is to be aware that if I move the camera whilst I click, things will be out of focus. And if my shutter speed is anything below 200, then there is a chance that there will be blur. For me, a shutter speed below 100 is really out of the question.

10. The truth is that you can get cleaner photographs out of more professional lenses and cameras. What's more important is that we all have a different creative eye and style. And it's the eye that a photographer has that makes them different. There is a time and place to hire a professional, whether you're a photographer or not - make sure you invest in good quality photography every once in a while. After all, you can't always be behind the camera.

And make sure you choose a photographer for their unique eye!

the quick guide: in full sun

We all prefer to shoot in the early morning or late afternoon and I absolutely recommend that. However, if you do need to shoot in full sun, these tricks will help you. Be aware that the harsher the light (the closer to midday it is with no clouds), the brighter the blow-outs in the overexposed areas.

That being said, if you would like to capture your child playing in the park, kicking a football, or having their first trip to the zoo, whatever you do, don't leave your camera at home. Full sun scares everyone, but with a few tricks and tips you can shoot at just about any time of day if you have to.

So here are some tips on shooting in full sun:



- » Spot metering. In full sun you are going to blow some areas of your image. Spot metering on the subject's face will ensure the face is correctly exposed and blown areas will be kept to the background.
- » Expose for the face. That means make sure the skin of the subject is not underexposed. I think you're better off blowing out the background than having the subject's face be underexposed.
- » If documenting your family's trip to a beach or football match, you will have to manoeuvre yourself not the subjects. Make sure the sun is behind the subjects or slightly to the side. If there is sun hitting the subjects' faces you will find those areas will blow out. These are called hot spots. So avoid it at all costs.
- » If it is late afternoon or early morning, you can have the sun directly on the subjects' faces. However, watch where the light falls and look for shadows. If the subject is facing the light they might have a hard time looking at you. Try to get the subjects to close their eyes for 1....2.....3....open and CLICK.
- » Look around...it might be best to shoot in open shade.

the quick guide: afternoon sunshine

The late afternoon sunshine is called “The Golden Hour” purely because it’s ability to produce beautiful golden light that falls softly and makes it easier to photograph. However, there are a few factors to consider when photographing at this time.

- » The sun is usually low, which means that it might end up streaming into your lens and causing your photographs to look hazy. You might want to consider popping on a lens hood or using the natural environment to block the sun from coming into the lens.
- » The light disappears quickly, so realize this time is brief.
- » All the considerations mentioned in the “Full Sun Guide” apply here too.



the quick guide: in low light

Once in a while you are faced with having to photograph in dark areas - such as indoors in a dark bedroom. There are a couple of things you can do here to ensure good results without turning your camera flash on.

The first thing to consider is raising your ISO. If you're using a digital SLR, chances are that your camera can go quite high and still get good results. Long gone are the days of having to worry about going above 400 ISO.

Another trick to photographing in dark areas is to ensure that your subject is facing the light. Simply turning your subject around slightly to face the light can make a world of difference. Watch the light fall on their face.

If you are finding that you have to raise your ISO up high and your shutter speed is still slow, I would pick a wide aperture over a shutter speed under 60. An aperture such as f/1.2ap is wide, but you can still get great results. A shutter speed below 60ss is risking getting anything in focus at all. Children move, and the chances of them not being blurry are slim if you go below 60ss.

So if you do have a DSLR, then you might want to consider purchasing a lens that will allow you to shoot with a wide aperture just for this reason.

Another trick is actually using your flash. If you

are stuck, turn your flash on and go for it. If you are able to turn the head of your flash then attempt to bounce it from the ceiling or the wall behind you. However, using flash really isn't the end of the world, I would consider it a last resort.

And last but not least, if you are using a DSLR pop on a lens that has an image stabilizer, as that will reduce camera shake which happens more often in low light.



the quick guide: when it rains

When the rain decides to appear and mess up your plans, there are a few things you can do to ensure that you can still take photographs.

First things first, make sure you read the low light guide.

When it's raining or stormy, open up all curtains and blinds to let as much natural light in as possible. Leave all interior doors open as well. After doing this, you will notice the house feels a little less gloomy.

More than ever this is the time to set up your photographs and guide the activities into an area where there is light.

The other thing you might want to consider is leaving the lights on inside. You will find that the photographs may be orange, so pop your white balance to tungsten. The other thing to consider is that downlights can cast horrible shadows. Try to counter balance that by having whoever it is your photographing face the window light.

The other thing that I tend to embrace even more when it's raining is digital grain. A grainy black and white photograph is a good choice.

Last but not least, don't not shoot, you still can!



the quick guide: a close up

A favourite shot for everyone. A really nice close-up of your child or sweet baby.

Below are some tips:

- » Use a lens or focal length that doesn't distort the face. On a full frame sensor, anything above 50mm should be fine; however, if you want a focal length with absolutely no distortion at all then pop on an 85mm lens or above.
- » Get in nice and close. This is absolutely a time to consider the rule of thirds and your composition. Try to frame just the face.
- » Watch the light on your child's face and in your child's eyes. If you put your child in open shade such as under a porch and have them look out, then you may get better catch lights. Catch lights are when there are sparkles in the subject's eyes. You can do this also by having them face a window or door when photographing them inside. If you're not sure, place your subject in the shade and rotate them and watch how the light falls on their face. At one point you will see the catch lights and the light falling on them. You want nice soft even light. Avoid harsh shadows.
- » Photograph them from just slightly above. It's more flattering.
- » I tend to overexpose just slightly to bring out

the light in their eyes.

- » An aperture that I am fond of for close-up's is anything below $f/2.0$. I focus on the eyes and this makes their skin soft due to the shallow depth of field. Be aware that you will likely have just an eyelash in focus. Its not about focus here, its about capturing your child's gorgeous face. You don't need everything from their hairline to their nose in focus.
- » If you do have problems with camera shake or focus, then make sure you place your focal point on the eye as per the example below.



the quick guide: moving subjects

If you ever have a child running, on a swing, or even on a horse, you may have noticed that at times it's hard to get them in focus. The biggest tip to capturing moving subjects is to look in your camera's manual for "automatic focus tracking". It comes under many other names, for example for my Canon cameras it's called "AI Servo".

What it does is just that it tracks the subjects as they move. All you need to do is hold your shutter half way down and it will focus on whatever is moving in front of it.

You also need to watch the shutter speed. Have a look and make sure your shutter is at least 250. However, it's even better if it can be above 500. The higher the shutter speed the more likely you will get a photograph in focus.

- » Lets Play: Panning is when you blur the background and keep the subject in focus - making the subject appear to be moving really fast - try it. Pop your shutter speed on 40. Then put your camera on the automatic focus tracking and hold the shutter half way down. Once it's focused on the moving subject, press and move your camera in the direction that the subject is going.



the quick guide: macro photography

Macro photography is when we get in really close to the subject and capture something that previously was very small to the eye. There is a whole world of amazing examples of this on the internet with bugs on leaves and flowers.

We can use macro photography to capture the tiny details of our children that we normally would miss.

Tiny toes, the mouth, eyes, hair, freckles, and even the wrinkles of a giggling nose.

If you are using a compact camera, you will likely have an automatic mode for this - usually the flower symbol.

For Digital SLRs you might require a macro lens. We use the 100mm.

Either way, make sure you zoom right in on your subject and get in as close as you can. If you find you are unable to get in close enough, you might want to consider looking up a macro filter which is screwed onto the end of your lens.

Macro photography requires a nice even amount of light in order to get crisp results. I would consider using a lower ISO to get detail, rather than the grain of the higher ISO.



the quick guide: composition & perspective

One of the biggest considerations - I believe in anyway, is composition and perspective.

Composition is all about leading the viewer's eye to whatever it is you want them to see. How does your composition do that? Well there are a number of ways.

Leading lines: At times composition is added by directional lines within a photograph that lead us to the subject. This could be by way of a doorway, or pathway for example.

Rule of thirds : The old trick of the rule of thirds is important for a photograph, be it of a landscape or a close-up. It can help composition if you place whatever it is that is important to you on a line of third. Such as the child's eye, or the child themselves.

Negative space: You can use space around the subject to draw attention if that space is decluttered. This is shown in the photographic example to the right. This helps composition enormously.

Declutter and move in close: This leads me to another old trick. Move in close. No, even closer than that. Remove clutter and avoid things in your frame that don't belong there. Really look hard at what you are putting in the frame prior to clicking.



the quick guide: better shots of adults

Quick tips to getting better photographs of adults:

Shoot higher than eye level. This is one of the best and oldest tricks of the trade and it really does have a huge effect on the overall image. If you shoot from a slightly higher angle than usual, you will find that the subject will be lifting their head a little and the angle is more flattering. Double chin? What double chin?.

Likewise, avoid shooting an adult from below at all costs, such as shooting from an angle where you can see up their nose.

If shooting front on, get the subject to lean forward slightly and lift the chin just a touch.

Also watch the light as it falls on the face of your subject. I try to avoid harsh light as it makes shadows that can be unflattering. Soft light that falls evenly works best. I even tend to slightly overexpose the face to give it a fresh feel.

If you are photographing an adult who really doesn't like being in front of the camera, the best thing to do is to have them engage in an activity with one of the children, and then focus on that activity, not the adult. Or you could try photographing them having a nap, which is one trick I use often!



the quick guide: where in the house

Believe it or not, there are actually areas within your house that are more prone to “better photographs”.

The fact is, that some rooms and areas within your house have better light at certain times of the day. The light that you seek is when it is simply “lighter” inside that room.

Being aware of when to shoot will help you immensely. It doesn't mean you can never shoot in those places when it's darker; however, you will simply like the results better if there is more light.

Aside from the light, there are certain areas within a house that produce fantastic memories.

The obvious place is the hub of the house, the kitchen. When I look back on my own childhood, I think fondly of the times spent around the kitchen table.

Be sure to capture photographs in areas that you consider to be the family hubs. For us, it's the BBQ area outside where we spend our summer evenings, the kitchen, the dining room, and the garden. Oh and maybe the morning time on our bed when everyone jumps in.

What are the hub areas for your family?



the quick guide : all your family

Photographing a large group of people, especially your own family, can be rather daunting. However, if prepared, you will be able to capture a relaxed and real family portrait.

My very first tip of all should be to ensure that you have your aperture set so that you will be able to get everyone in focus.

However, that won't be my first.

My first is to ensure that you have your aperture set to tell the story that you want to tell. That is, if you want a dynamic warm photograph that tells the tale of a child and his family, then pop your aperture onto $f/2.8$. However, if you would prefer to capture a son and his dad, in full focus, then consider $f/5.0$ as your aperture.

As for focus, place your focal point on the person who is closest to you.

And you should be set to go. If you use a lens that is below 50mm you might find that there is a bit of distortion if you close in, so I recommend using a lens that is 50mm or above, even for family shots.

Don't forget that you are part of the family. Place your camera on the tripod (or on the table on a stack of books) and pop the timer on. You can be part of this one too.

The other option is to purchase a cable release and hold that in your lap whilst you set your camera on a table or tripod. Either way, you can be in the frame.

the quick guide: change

Life changes on a daily basis, and if there is any way to capture that in the middle of it happening, make sure you do. For example, haircuts, makeup for the first time, graduation, the before and afters of a new house, and even the first day of school.

Change is usually something that requires courage, and is a big deal - so putting that in your family album will always lead to great memories.

A great way to capture change is to do before and after shots. Such as “before cleaning her room” and “after cleaning her room”. You could even do one in the middle - whilst it is happening.



the quick guide: travel

Let's face it, when looking back at our childhood, the family trip to the beach brings back fond memories. Well for me anyway.

When travelling, we often find that its easier to carry around our point and shoot. Which is partly why we have it. The big digital SLR can be tiresome to carry around the world, and these days the point and shoot camera can do wonders.

However, whichever camera you decide to bring, make sure you use it. Often we find we are too tired, or too distracted to take photographs. If you're anything like me, you might feel like your holiday is one that gives you a break from the camera. However, make sure you do take some photographs at least.

Over in our [Other Adventures](#) section, be sure to check out [Stephanie's](#) account of her recent family holiday for more ideas.



the quick guide: celebrations



Birthdays, holidays, and celebrations of any kind are absolutely a must to capture.

Birthdays: Capture present opening, the cake, fingers on the cake, cutting the cake, and all the joy that comes with blowing out the candles. You could even document the making of the cake. Our kids love looking back on their birthday party photographs, so make sure you capture that too.

Holiday events such as Christmas: It's the sound of the pitter-pattering of feet running down the stairs towards the Christmas tree that does me in each year. It warms my heart. I would love to get up on Christmas morning and capture those feet. What is it about your holiday morning that warms your heart? Capture it. The present opening, the sharing of gifts, the joy, the giggles, the food, and the love.

I must admit, I love looking back on photographs from the 70s of me as a little one standing under the Christmas tree.



the quick guide: new beginnings

A new baby. The joy of the house. That sweet soft time in life that is full of whispers, cuddles, and warmth.

If you are fortunate enough to be celebrating a new baby into the arms of your family - first, congratulations.

There really is no sweeter time.

Make sure you have your camera on hand, no matter how tired you are, or how busy your household is. This time goes so fast. In fact, the true newborn stage is gone with the blink of an eye.

Capture your little one under two weeks old. And if you are finding it hard, this really is one of those times when you may want to consider hiring a professional or, if you are one already, someone else.

Make sure you capture the softness and stillness of your new baby sleeping. The colours around your baby, the warmth, and your family cherishing this new addition to the family.

When Ede was born we did a photo a day for the first two weeks, and we enjoy nothing more than looking back on those memories.



the quick guide: in the garden



The garden is just about the best place to take photographs of your children. And it doesn't even need to be a fabulous garden. In the eyes of your child, your garden is ten times as big, ten times as magical, and has one hundred more corners to explore than we can even imagine. Simply following them around will produce the greatest memories ever. Children have the best imaginations, we just have to be there to capture it.

Tips for outside in the garden:

Pick the right time of day: Early morning or late afternoon will yield the best results. However, if you do need to photograph outside of these times, make sure your child is in full shade. That means that there is no sun falling on your child.

Watch sun spots on your child's face. If you're finding there is a sun spot just move yourself around. A sun spot is when there are brighter areas on the face due to dappled light or the child is facing the sun.

Try to embrace the environment and include it. Shoot through leaves to create a sense of the garden.

Get down at ground level or take photographs from way above. This helps change the perspective.

the quick guide: personality

I have yet to photograph a child who isn't brim full of personality. And that is exactly what it is I believe you should capture in your child.

Personality covers the whole range of emotions: happy, sad, angry, distracted, distant, loving, and even not so loving. I am not at all saying that you should have your camera in the face of a child who is upset. I am just saying there is also something very sweet about a baby who has a tear in his eye, or a long wistful look into the distance.

Personality can also come across in attitude. It is something that all older kids have and I just love photographing my oldest two showing a little bit of attitude. It is, after all, their age.

However, more than anything, I think it's important to capture the true essence of your child's nature, be it quiet, mischievous or even rebellious.

You can even capture it by simply photographing an action or a deed, such as Ede taking the fruit loops from her sister's breakfast bowl (p.66).

Make sure you capture it. Personality can sometimes change with age, and boy is it funny to look back on.



the quick guide: make it fun



I have a rule with my children - if they don't want to have their photograph taken, they don't have to. It's not a certainty that this works by the way. It's just something that we have instilled in our household. There have been times when I have had to help them want to have their photograph taken by means of making it fun, and or making sure they are rewarded.

We home school our girls on occasion and during this time we have picked up a system that teachers use on a regular basis. We give them rewards for completing work.

My suggestion is that you never bribe them with candy, as tempting as it is. Although, I have resorted to this, so I certainly won't judge you if you do. This style of photography shouldn't really require it as they are not expected to do anything other than be themselves. However, if you find you pick up the camera and they constantly say "No", then try making it so fun that they cannot resist, and give them a reward at the end. A reward might be:

Choose an outdoor activity such as walking the dog, or skateboarding. Choose his/her afternoon snack (give 3 choices). Be allowed to have friends over for lunch. Choose a craft activity. Visit the bookstore and pick one book. Make "shapes" out of sandwiches for lunch (such as heart-shaped). Be in charge of the family pets for one day. Choose which flowers to plant in the garden. Use paper plates for dinner and have him/her draw everyone's faces on the plates prior to serving up the meal.

Be imaginative. In fact, these rewards can actually "be" the photo shoot.

the quick guide: still lost?

When I started out in photography, I attended a Camera Basics course. They explained all things technical to me. However, I didn't catch on. I will be honest. It took me a long while to finally understand. My advice to you, if you are feeling this way, is to:

1. Make sure you have a camera that can operate in full manual mode. That means that you can change the exposure triangle (ISO, Shutter, Aperture)..
2. Read your camera manual and understand how it is that you can change these settings and start to try to understand them. Understanding the exposure triangle will help you so much. By being in control of your exposure triangle, you can become aware of the choices that you make. For example, if you choose an ISO that is high, you are letting in more light. Which means that you might have room to have a higher shutter speed.
3. Please keep at it. There is a reason that a professional photographer's work looks like it does - it's because they have worked hard.
4. Everybody on this planet has a different view point, and a different way of seeing. Try not to compare your work too much. Enjoy your journey and embrace the results you get.

SELECT AND PRINT

The rules:

1. You must print your photographs!
2. There are no other rules.

the quick guide: from the camera to the pc

OK, so you have the pictures on your camera, now what? Well, most importantly, you need to have them printed. In order to do that, you need to upload them to your computer. If you're not sure how to do that yet, you will need to consult your manual. Some you can just plug into the USB, others require you to remove the card and place it into a card reader.

Not only that, some cameras come with sorting and editing software.

If you want to skip all that and just print the photographs, you can simply take your card to your local print lab and print the photographs. However, I don't recommend that. Make sure you upload them to your computer, sort through them, and then back them up. For editing and sorting, here's some tips on what software I recommend :

If you're an amateur photographer I recommend just using whatever is provided with your camera if there is one. If not, you can download *Photoshop Elements*. Elements allows you to sort and edit your photographs. It does cost money, but it is everything you need as an amateur.

I use *Lightroom* to select my photographs and then *Photoshop* to edit them. You can, however, do editing and sorting in just *Lightroom*. It all depends on how much work you would like to do.

In fact you don't have to edit your photographs at

all. It's completely up to you. The most important part, I feel, is making sure that you print them and keep them forever.

Sorting photographs can often be the hard part. I use the rating system that is part of *Adobe Lightroom*, and you will find that most programs have something similar. The rating system allows you to select your favourite photographs with the click of a button.

As for sorting, I have some quick tips :

1. Try not to select any photographs where they are completely blurry and out of focus, unless you're going for that look.
2. Unless you are thinking of printing photographs as a series, you might want to consider picking your favourite out of the ones where you have taken more than five clicks of the same expression. You really only need one.
3. If you are in the photograph, keep it. You don't have to print it, but it's often the photographer who is the most brutal in selecting and deleting photographs. Keep them.

the quick guide: editing

If you are still looking for software to use, you could try Adobe's online editor.

I use Lightroom and Photoshop.

Editing is really a personal process and one thing that most professionals do quite well and have likely spent hours practicing. However, for photographs at home, and if you're an amateur, you might only want to do some light editing.

If you already have Photoshop CS4 and above, you might want to check out our automated actions that can help spark up photographs for you, <http://www.ittybittyactions.com>.

Here are my top tips on making a photograph look better.

1. If you can, have your monitor calibrated - as this ensures the correct results.
2. Make sure your skin tones are even and correct. You can do this in Lightroom fairly quickly using the white balance picker or use the colour balance tool in Photoshop.
3. Remove any pimples or spots using the spot remover.
4. You might want to add a little bit of saturation. However, be careful not to add too much.

5. If you are finding your photograph is too dark, you can lighten it, but be careful as the shadows will likely be pixelated.

6. Cropping may help your photograph enormously, play with crops.

7. Always try to get the photograph as evenly exposed as possible before you edit. This will help enormously.

the quick guide: prints and labs

There are many options for prints.

Loose prints can be put in albums or boxes. If you do some loose prints you might want to consider using a professional lab to ensure the best results. Now, before you start, make sure your monitor is calibrated, at least as best you can. If not, don't let that stop you, especially if you're an amateur - family pictures are much better printed than left on the computer.

Many professional labs offer print services to amateur photographers, such as:

Australia: <http://www.digitalworks.net.au>

Australia Canvas: <http://www.canvasphotosdirect.com.au>

America: <http://www.mpix.com>

America: <http://www.shutterfly.com>

the quick guide: albums and books

My favourite option for creating keepsakes is albums. There are so many out there, and so many options. We prefer to purchase them during our travels, and use different ones each year. We have pink, brown leather, black, and even blue. And over the years we have built quite a colourful collection of albums and digital books with the girls' photographs in them.

The links below are the digital book and album companies that we have used in the past for our personal keepsakes. These companies offer albums to amateurs.

Digital Album: <http://www.mpix.com/>

Albums: <http://www.pepespaperie.com.au>

Digital Albums: <http://www.shutterfly.com>

Calendar: <http://www.momento.com.au/pages/calendars>

Albums: <http://www.perannum.com/>

DISPLAY AND MORE

Following this are example of what we have done with our photographs to hopefully inspire you to create something at home as keepsakes for your family.

Displaying your photographs is the fun part, and an excellent way to enjoy the moments you have captured.

There are so many products on the market, and what we use is just a small portion of those.

Some of the print labs mentioned previously have a large variety to choose from, such as canvases, prints, acrylics, and more. No matter who you print via, you are likely to find they have extra products.

Whatever you decide to do, make at least some of those decisions based on items you can pass on to your children, even after they have been stored in your garage for 15 years.

You also might want to consider the items longevity in regards to trends - which is why we always tend to keep it simple with white frames.

From time to time we love making crafts with our photographs, and we discuss some of those as well.

And if you're after even more inspiration, pop over to our [Pinterest](#) to see our favourite pins to give you further inspiration.



*9 5x7 prints in matts
and white 10x10
wooden frames.*

We love photographs, so we have them all over our house; however, we tend to place them in rooms like clusters. So that some rooms are full of photographs, whereas others simply will have one or two. Our bedroom is absolutely covered in them, and we just love waking up to our children's faces every day.

When we do wall displays, such as the above, we simply select our favourites. However, you might want to consider the colours within those photographs, and the colours of your interiors. You need to make sure they match.



40x20 print in a mat and white frame.





Wallpaper from
aussiemurals.com.au



Prints are in recycled frames found in thrift shops and painted.

AVE



Calendars make perfect gifts, for yourself or others. We make one every single year using Momento.com.au

*Holiday decorations
are always fun, and
the kids love making
them.*



Each year is different, but this year we have already made some holiday decorations out of felt for the tree.

What we used: Felt, glue, 3 different colours of ribbon, cardboard, white paint, and, of course, 2 photographs.

We simply cut out a piece of stiff cardboard in a circle shape (you could do other shapes), and cut the felt to match.

With glue, we stuck the 3 together (the felt on the outside). Then simply cut the photographs in a smaller circle size and glue them on both sides. We braided ribbon for the handle and stitched the ribbon on. You can make one for both sides if you wish. The kids painted the date, however you could use a pen.

*Whilst we are talking
holidays: swing tags
are always a treat.*

*Here we just cut
out the sepia photos
and then attached
some braided twine.*





*Painting the world
to document our
travels.*

Anyone who knows us is familiar with our craft habits. We tend to try out crazy things, and this is one of them. Well, one that I actually like. We travel as a family quite a lot, and wanted to show the children where on the world map we had been. So together, we painted a world map mural, and use twine to mark out where we have been and where we

are going. And then, we add photographs to signify some of the places. We hope to add many more as our trips continue. This is just one of the many fun ways that we combine crafts and photographs to document our life.

Of course, this is a work in progress.....



Corinne Delis of Delis Photography in the Netherlands shares her artwork.

Thanks for sharing your work with us Corinne. Can you please tell us about your project, and share with us who the subject is of your work?

“I made this for my husband as it reflects us as a family, and it holds a message I would like to give to him. The saying on the side is: “Live in the moment and make it so beautiful that it will be worth remembering.” The flowers are me and the kids by his side. The text on the canvas says “Love you” multiple times.

“With the locks and keys I am offering him the keys to my heart, secrets, and love forever. But most of all I would love him to have more colour in his life and colour equals happiness for me.

For me, each photo holds a soul and a memory, especially the photos of my own loved ones. I like to combine that with a story and this can be with words (in my scrapbooking layouts or on my blog) but also with non-spoken words like I did here with mixed media supplies.”

Made with: Canvas, spray inks, scissors (used as a blade), stamps, lace, and metal pieces.



Nisa Fiin of Shooting Star Portraits shares her artwork.

Thanks for sharing your work with us Nisa. How did you make these, and what do they represent to you?

“I just wanted to do something a little bit different to mark every six months. I take an insane number of photos of this kid so I’m not lacking for images documenting his growth. However, when you strip his likeness down to just his profile, silhouetted and stark like this, you really see how he’s changed. And there’s something timeless and silhouettes.

But I like to add a bit of bright and fun color (with the backgrounds) to keep it funky and current, too.

“To make them, I have him sit on my husband’s lap/knee, so they’re eye to eye and facing 90 degrees from my camera. I shoot them in our upstairs landing (lights off) with a window behind him. I meter to blow out the background a bit, and leave him in shadow. Then I play with the photo in Photoshop a bit to up the contrast and get rid of all detail but the outline of his little head...”

THANK YOU

If you have come this far, my hope is that you are inspired to go out and photograph your family more often. To share those photographs, and to be proud of them. No matter how technically correct they are. The reason for photographing is pure - to document memories for your family.

I hope to see you on our [facebook group](#).

xoxo

Barb Uil

