

# Senior Girl - Style Guide



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A little preparation before your high school senior portrait session can make a huge difference. It can turn what might otherwise be a boring snapshot into an amazing senior picture!

That's why all of my senior portrait sessions include a personalized pre-session consultation. I'll spend as much time with you as we need to plan your perfect senior portrait session.

Inside, you'll find tips to help you prepare for your senior portrait session and ensure you end up with beautiful senior pictures that tell your story.

As always, if you have any questions, whether you are a current client or not, don't hesitate to connect with me through a call, text, or e-mail!



## Choose the Perfect Outfit

Choosing the perfect outfits for your high school senior portrait session is kind of a big deal. After all, what you wear is an expression of who you are. But, it's not as daunting as it might seem if you follow a few simple guidelines.

Your high school senior portraits should show off your unique personality and style. So take the time to find clothing for your portrait session that's comfortable, looks great, and reflects who you really are.

My senior portrait sessions come with unlimited outfit changes, so I always encourage my senior portrait clients to bring a variety of clothing options to their portrait session. We might not use all of the outfits you bring along, but we'll be able to mix and match and make adjustments so that your clothing matches the environment and background.

Choose outfits that show the many different sides of you —something dressy, something casual, and even something a bit in between. Bring a mix of dresses, shirts, and pants so that we aren't limited in the types of poses we can try.

## Outfit Tips and Tricks

Here are some things to keep in mind when choosing your outfits:

- As a general rule, it is best to avoid bright or bold colors, including solid white. Also, stay away from bold patterns (such as stripes or plaids). These colors and patterns tend to dominate the image and draw attention away from the faces in your portraits.
- For the opposite reason, avoid light shades that are similar to flesh tones such as taupe, pink, tan, beige, cream, or yellow. These colors leave so little contrast between your clothes and skin that the viewer won't be drawn directly to your face in the image.
- Darker colors are flattering to the face and slimming to the figure. Similarly, while horizontal lines and patterns are difficult to look at, subtle vertical lines in clothing can have a slimming effect.
- Wearing colors that match your eyes will help them stand out in a portrait (especially consider, for example, the colors in tops, scarves, earrings, and necklaces)
- For outdoor portraits, earth tones such as are almost always a safe choice.
- Do you remember the color wheel from elementary school? If not, do a quick google search for "color wheel." It will lead you to some great tools for selecting complementary and analogous colors that you can incorporate into your high school senior portrait outfits and accessories.
- Depending on the weather, consider wearing long sleeves so your arms do not pull attention away from your face in the final images.



Above all, choose outfits that make you feel great and that reflect your personality and sense of style. This is the most important consideration when choosing outfits for your senior portrait session.

Take some time to develop a vision for your shoot. I highly recommend flipping through fashion magazines, perusing Pinterest, and checking out clothing and style blogs for inspiration for your high school senior portraits session.

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## Add Accessories for Impact

And don't forget: from head to toe, details matter!

Tasteful shoes and jewelry can really compliment your clothing choices and will add polished detail to your senior portraits. You can also consider little embellishments like hats, scarves, and jackets. Small additions such as this can really elevate the look of your senior pictures and will increase the variety you'll see in your final images.

Dressing in layers can also be a great way to get the most out of the outfits you choose for your senior portrait session. This will help to give you a different look without having to do an entire outfit change. Adding a vest, jacket, or fashion scarf will effortlessly give you a whole new look.

But, keep it simple! Big, shiny jewelry or outfit additions that are too bold can be distracting. We want you to be the focus of your senior pictures, not your accessories. Just like clothing, bring along a lot of choices and we can mix and match during your portrait session.

Before your senior portrait session, go ahead and group your outfits and accessories as best as you can on hangers so you can find what you need quickly. Make sure everything is ironed because wrinkles *will* show in your senior pictures!

## You Can Have it All

What if you can't decide which outfits you like the best? No problem! Bring them all and we'll mix and match and figure it out together at your portrait session! Sometimes arriving on location will give you a whole new perspective about what colors and styles best fit the scene for your senior pictures.

Similarly, do you and your parents disagree about which outfits you should wear for your senior pictures? Bring them both! Choose the outfits that you love and agree to try the ones your parent's love as well. That way, everybody's happy! We'll have plenty of time to photograph you in both sets of outfits.

### Enhance Your Natural Beauty

For girls, professional makeup has the potential to elevate the look of your senior pictures by enhancing your natural beauty. But it's also really important to know that makeup is not necessary for great senior portraits.

If you don't normally wear makeup, don't feel pressured to do so for your senior portraits. Or at least know that you can keep it very minimal. Just as with clothing, the most important factor in choosing your makeup style is how it makes you feel in front of the camera.

Most senior girls do choose to wear makeup for their senior portraits because it can help to smooth out the skin and enhance your natural features. If you are interested, I have access to talented hair and makeup artists and I am happy to help you add a professional stylist to your senior portrait team.



If you are doing your own makeup, take care to keep your makeup as natural looking as possible and choose colors that are close to your natural skin tones. Your senior portraits are not a time for creative or overly glamorous makeup.

Regarding your hairstyle, avoid overly fancy hairstyles and don't make any drastic changes right before your senior portrait session. Chances are good that you'll regret your last minute decisions! Try to plan your portrait session for a time when you are comfortable with the length and style of your hair.

Be sure to bring hair spray, clips, pins and whatever other tools you might need to keep your hair out of your eyes, especially if we'll be outdoors and it might be windy.

And it's definitely okay to bring along a friend or family member to help you look your best. I look for out of place hairs and other distractions during your portrait session, but having an extra set of eyes and some helping hands can never hurt.

## Own Your Portrait Session

You have an opportunity to own your portrait session and make it all about you. By using props, you can add creativity and impact to your senior pictures.

Don't be afraid to bring some of your favorite things that show off your hobbies and interests.

Popular choices for props include musical instruments, items related to activities like dance or school clubs, sports uniforms and equipment like soccer balls, basketballs, volleyballs, and bats, hunting or other outdoor gear, family pets, or your car or truck.

Bring along anything that you feel speaks to who you are and what you want to remember about your last year of high school.

Just like clothing, I encourage you to bring as many props as you can to your senior portrait session. We might not use all of them, but the more props you bring the more options we'll have for creating senior pictures that are truly unique to you.



### Don't Worry, Be Healthy

This may seem like odd advice, but be sure to drink plenty of water the week of your portrait session. Many senior portrait sessions occur during the hot summer months, so hydration is key.

Good hydration has a surprising ability to keep your skin clear and smooth. And it will boost your energy and help prevent headaches that can come with standing and posing in the sun and hot weather.

Similarly, eat healthy foods. Fried and salty foods cause you to retain water in an unhealthy way, and might cause you to feel tired or bloated.

It's also important to take care of your skin. Be careful about how much time you spend in the sun the week before your senior portrait session. If you have red, sunburned, or peeling skin, it will likely show in your senior pictures. These issues are difficult and sometimes impossible to "fix" in photoshop, so it's best to avoid the problem altogether.

And don't forget about your hands! They're going to be in the photos too and sometimes close to your face. Make sure your nails are clean. If you wear nail polish, be sure that the polish is not chipped or apply fresh polish before your senior portrait session.



### Attitude is Everything

One last piece of advice: come to your senior portrait session prepared to have a ton of fun!

Forget about all of your other plans and worries for a few hours and let yourself just live in the moment. The emotions you are feeling on the day of your shoot are going to have a big impact on the expressions that you'll see in your pictures.

Don't stress about what you're going to look like or how you will pose! On the day of your portrait session, we'll teach you how to pose like a model and we'll work together to create beautiful, amazing photographs that you will love!



## Final Thoughts for Mom and Dad

Nobody knows your daughter better than you do. Most senior girls really appreciate having mom or dad come along for their senior portraits, but other's don't.

When it makes sense, a senior portrait session can be a fun and memorable experience to share with your teenager.

If you are unable to attend your daughter's senior portrait session, please know that I truly value your input. I encourage you to take a moment to share any requests you might have or send them with your senior to their portrait session.



I am a flexible and creative photographer, but I am not always a mind-reader. What one parent might appreciate in a senior portrait, might be completely unacceptable to another. Please tell me in advance about your expression preferences, concerns you might have, or if you are trying to match a previous senior's portrait.



Brian Pasko is a Certified Professional Photographer and owner of Brian Pasko Photography LLC based in the Portland Oregon metropolitan area. He is a portrait artist that specializes in high school senior, family, and fine art portraiture

Brian has been fortunate to play many roles in his life: husband, father, son, brother, uncle, dog-lover, cat-whisperer, camp counselor, community organizer, conservation advocate, recovering lawyer, and so much more. But it his passion for photography that wakes him up every morning with the hope of experiencing something new and creating something beautiful.

Learn more at <https://www.brianpasko.com>