

Top Photography tips for Families and Fur-Families



Written by Ross Davis

Tip #1 – Clouds and Evenings are your best friends

“Don't cry over the shots you've missed; weep over the ones you've not taken at all. The bitterest regrets are for things planned but left undone!”

Israelmore Ayivor (Photographer)



- These lovely girls all have something in common ..
.. their photos weren't taken in the middle of a bright sunny day!
- If the weather is **cloudy** (ok not so common here in Melbourne), *or*
.. taken just **before sunset** – then you're on to a winner, because:
 - It makes skin colour seem less bleached-out, so more true-to-life
 - There are no shadow lines around their eyes, so their cute little faces “pop” 😊
 - There less squinting due to bright sun-glare!

Tip #2 - Get close and personal

“For me, the subject of the Photo is more important than the Picture”

Diane Arbus (Photographer)

- Don't be afraid to get ***in-close*** – these little toes look so much better in detail .. most smartphones can focus just 5cm few centimetres from their subject!



Tip #3 - Clear the clutter

"You don't take a Photograph - You make it !"

Ansel Adams (Photographer)

- Keep things simple .. **really** simple in the background
- Avoid 'messy' or distracting backgrounds – there were trees behind this red-haired girl picking flowers, but they were some distance away .. its like they're not there at all!

This little boy was on a plain dark sofa .. but you can hardly tell!

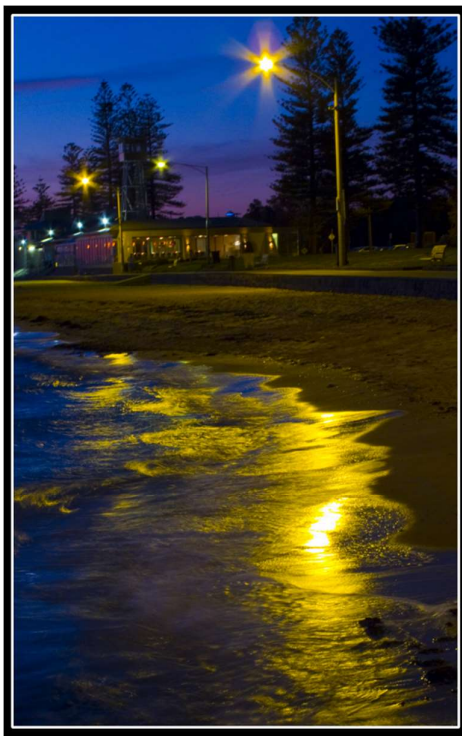


Tip #4- Rule of Thirds

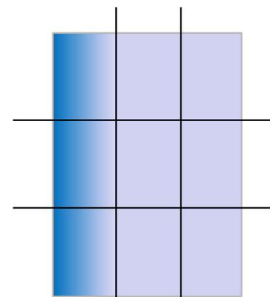
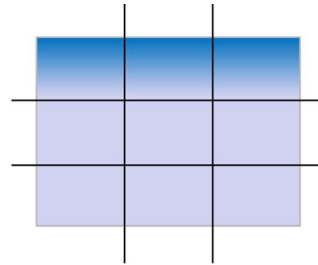
“Progress isn’t always a straight line!”

Julie Wiebe

- The so-called **“Rule of Thirds”** creates ‘space’ to focus on an interesting subject – i.e. for reflections in the water, or places the subject - like this cute toddler; in context with their surroundings. Placing the toddler in the center looks ... a little dull perhaps. It doesn’t have to be the left or right, just not too close to the centre
- The ‘thirds’ are approximate, and can also be diagonal, such as waves lapping up this beach from the left



Horizontal thirds



Vertical thirds

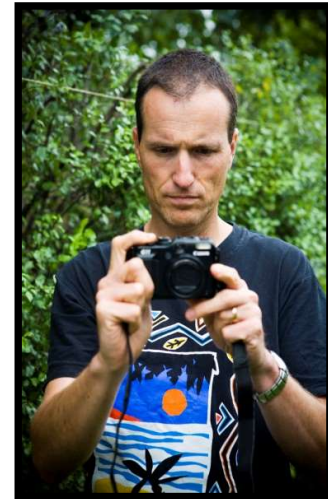


Tip #5 – Breathe out and “click”

“To photograph is to hold one’s breath!”

Henri Cartier-Bresson (Photographer)

- Nobody likes a blurry shot. Whether it’s a smartphone, a compact Camera, a Go-Pro or an SLR, keep it **close** to you while you click. This is one of many reasons why tablets take terrible pictures by the way!
- Lock in those elbows to the body, breathe in, and then **breathe-out**.. CLICK! Trust me, you will have less blur in the photo just after you have exhaled. This is great for when the light is poor, and the shutter speed automatically slows as a result.
- How many hands do we have ? Exactly! .. try to use **both** of them whenever you can. Built-in Image stabilisation works better when the right hand is counteracting the left hand movement



Tip #6 – Keep it “plane” simple

“Photography takes an instant out of time, altering life by holding it still”
Dorothy Lea (Photographic Commentator)

Any camera will **always** focus a **certain** distance from the lens. In technical jargon, this is called the focal-*plane*; but the simple tip for pleasing family groups is to put faces (more or less) the same distance from the lens. Even our furry friend in here is within that same range. They’re family too! 😊



Some final thoughts about having your family photographs taken

Duet Images is a friendly Family and Pet Photography Studio, based in Wheelers Hill, near Glen Waverley. Vanessa is the Studio Photographer, and has been portraying Melbourne families and fur-families since 2005. Vanessa has been a FULL member of the Australian Institute of Professional Photography (the AIPP) for over ten years and counting. To guarantee the very best Family Art Work will be displayed in your home, you may want to consider some final thoughts below ..



1. When was the last time you were included in photographs of your children, parents, siblings or fur-family members? Even if your honest answer is “not that long ago”, was this a annual event, or are there some lengthy ‘gaps’ between major events when all of you were last brought together ? This is the essence of professional family photography - allowing all of your family - including **you**, to relax and enjoy the whole experience, so that you won't just have the images you need in your home .. you will also remember how you all ‘felt’ as you shared that day. Something our clients excitedly tell us is how much they enjoyed the whole shared experience .. just bring yourselves, and we will make everything else ‘happen’ 😊

2. When you look at our work in our Portfolio, do you notice something ? Is it the vivid colours? .. the interaction between everyone ? This isn't an accident .., we carefully choose the right time of day to ensure that the colours of our scene come to life in the right lighting. We also allow plenty of time for everyone to ‘warm up’. A lot of our favourite images are some of the last ones taken - why ? Because everyone forgets there is a camera out there somewhere. All of our clients are everyday people like you and me; everyone relaxes and interacts as a family normally does, we just encourage and capture this for you all to enjoy in the years to come

3. Back to our point above, did you notice something else about our Portfolio ? Of course its all about seeing us together with our loved ones (human and animal), but did you also notice the natural scenes? Living and working in this area since 2002, Ross and I have noticed how genuine people here actually are. We aren't a naturally ‘showy’ bunch; we all live, work and play in this beautiful area, and as part of the “story” and “emotion” we want our photographs to portray, we find that most of us like to choose a natural setting that not only sets off our images, but also makes us feel ‘naturally at ease’. This can be a local park, or our home, or somewhere else that is familiar. Again, I can help you with some great ideas on where to capture these important moments of your families life

4. Any idea what you will do with your images when you have them ? Don't worry, hardly anyone knows the answer to this question at this early stage. When our clients have their photography session, we typically allow 2-3 weeks for post-production, and then you can relax in our home-based Studio where you can view your images, and we can help you find your favourite collection. We have a number of ideas for you to ‘see and feel’, and there is definitely no hard-sell, we are simply here to help you choose your favourites, and present them in the best way possible in your home





5. Ever wondered what 'triggers' a decision to have professional photographs? We find that there are two key reasons to take this exciting step. For some people, there is a special family event – a visit from afar, the arrival of a new family member .. For others, there may be a need to make up for lost-time, and bring everyone home for those 'hard to get together' images. This is a way of rewarding ourselves.

Life can be a little dull or complicated at times, so we need to celebrate being together when we can 😊

If you would like to ask me any questions about having a professional photography experience with us at Duet Images, just give us a call on 9562 5003, or drop *Vanessa* an email at enquiries@duetimages.com

Cheers

Ross 😊