

## Tips for photographing your own children

One of the most asked questions I get is 'how do I take a decent picture of my child?' With our children now at home full time I thought this is the perfect time for some top tips including - best light, angles and ways to interact with them when you have your camera in hand.

The world is a different place right now and although lots of us are worried about how we manage to home school and stay positive so that our kids aren't anxious and we also stay mentally strong, I believe documenting this time of their lives will create some amazing memories to look back on in years to come and I'm certainly keeping my camera out – you can follow our journey on [Facebook](#) page [Instagram](#)



I've always loved photography and I started studying it properly when my first child was born – I wanted more than just 'nice' snap shots. I wanted to capture moments that I could proudly display on our walls and add to our ever-growing photo streams. Originally it was just a hobby and passion but then friends started asking me for any pictures I'd taken during playdates and birthdays, then I started doing portfolio shoots, then I had bookings and the rest is history.

I've photographed hundreds of families and each one is unique – I love what I do and capturing these memories (even the tantrums!) is such an amazing job and one I feel truly lucky to do.

## NO POSING

The idea of 'documenting' is to snap those moments that capture this unprecedented time of our history. It's unlikely that we will have this opportunity to spend so much time as families so recording and capturing it will be so important to pass down to your kids and their kids too.

To really capture the essence of these times at home, no posing is my first top tip! If you have a child that likes to look at the camera then of course capture the cheesy smiles but keep snapping and also pull some funny faces (keep the camera in the same place and just move your head so your child can see you funny face!), make some funny sounds – you'll soon get that one portrait that is a genuine giggle or smile.



*My eldest always likes to look at the camera and I normally get the big 'cheese' smile, I kept snapping and talking to her and she then gave me one of her gorgeous genuine smiles.*

When they're doing their homework and you're able to pick up your camera – aim for capturing that 'face of concentration'. Maybe they stick their tongue out when concentrating, or they have a frown when working something out, capture these moments! If you have a child that is distracted by you and the camera – aim to capture it through an open doorway, even keep part of the door in shot which gives a real meaning to your portrait.



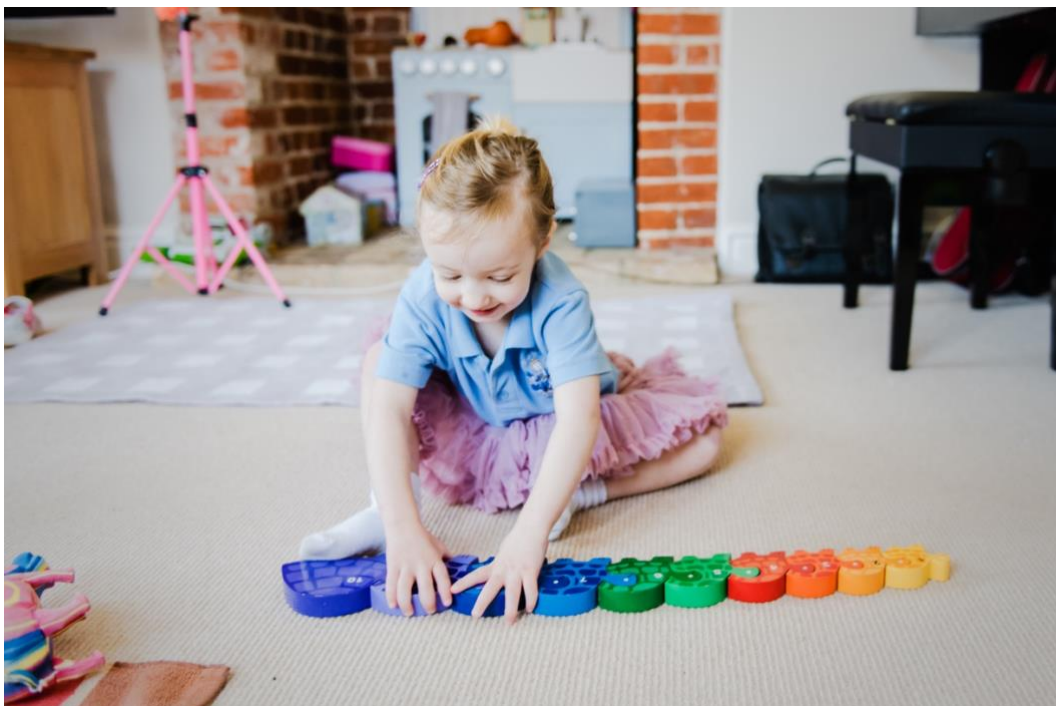
*My middle girl loves to write, and she was so deep in concentration she didn't even notice me taking this picture!*

Outside fun – weather permitting, you can capture the fun and joy of playing outside, keep reading for my top tips on light outside to ensure the best capture. You can also have lots of fun with running games and getting those action shots.



## GET DOWN TO THEIR LEVEL

Getting down to their eye level makes for a much better angle and you can have more fun at shooting past and through things in front of them, which can add to the documentary of their time of being home-schooled. Sometimes, a picture above a child, looking down and them looking up at you can be fantastic too but unless this is intentional, getting down to their eye level makes for the best portraits, especially when you're storytelling and documenting.



## FOCUS ON THE EYES

We are automatically drawn to the sharpest part of a photograph which is why it's so important that this is the eyes – in this instance we're talking about children but if you're photographing a pet or even a statue, you should still focus on the eyes. This is one of the fundamentals of portrait photography. If the head is at an angle, as a rule, focus on the eye nearest to you – the other eye may be slightly out of focus and that's fine, as long as the one closest is sharp



*You can see the focus is on the eye closest to the camera and this is where I focused the image.*

## LIGHT INSIDE

This is what can make an 'ok' portrait of your kids into a 'wow' portrait! In simple terms, when the camera has enough light to ensure a sharp clean image, with catch lights in the eyes (light reflecting in the eyes) you may get that one picture that you just know you will proudly display in the family home.

Try to stay away from the dreaded pop up flash – you get pin prick lights in the eyes which is an absolute give away for using a flash, it makes for harsh, flat light and tends to bleach all the colours in the image. Where possible, try to use window light, maybe you have a large window in your living room, or some French doors/patio doors leading to outside. As long as you have your back to the window and your child is facing towards the window, you should get enough light to get a decent portrait.



*This portrait was taken on a recent family shoot when we had a lot of rain! I had my back against some French doors which let lots of light in and we captured a wonderful sibling portrait.*

## **LIGHT OUTSIDE**

Even with grey clouds, the light outside is always going to be easier to take sharp pictures. If you do have sunlight however – be careful of harsh and strong light on your child, shade is always preferable! If there's no shade, face your child's back to the sun – it means you have no squinting eyes, the light on their face is softer and you get light behind their head (rim light) which not only looks gorgeous but also creates some separation between them and the background



**KEEP TAKING PICTURES**

My last top tip is to just keep snapping! You may only get a handful of images that you truly love from a week's worth of picture taking but if you don't even pick up your camera you won't capture anything at all. That's what photographs are for in the first place; creating memories.

**KEEP IN TOUCH!**

I'd love to see your photos from your time during home schooling so feel free to tag me in any social media posts or even send me any portraits that you love!

I'm planning on doing more top tips in the future and some that are more technical. If you have any specific questions or need help with any photography related queries, don't hesitate to get in touch  
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