

POSING FOR PORTRAIT AND GLAMOUR PHOTOGRAPHY

JOE FARACE

TECHNIQUES FOR DIGITAL
PHOTOGRAPHERS

Amherst Media®
PUBLISHER OF PHOTOGRAPHY BOOKS

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to Jay Perskie of Perskie Photographics (www.perskie.com), who started me on this journey. It was Jay who took an amateur photographer, introduced me to the concepts of lighting and posing, and set me out on the path of becoming a professional photographer. Thanks, Jay!

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A big thank you goes out to Barbara A. Lynch-Johnt for designing the four “before and after” posing sequences (“The Polished Portrait”) that appear in the book. Barbara’s design was implemented by Mary Farace, who directed all of the actual poses during the four different shoots that produced the images that you see. Big thanks also to the wonderful Pam Simpson for posing for these sessions. I merely set up the background and lighting and clicked the shutter; these talented ladies did all the hard work.

I wanted this book to feature some images made by other photographers to show that there’s more than one approach to posing, and I would like to thank the following people who contributed photographs, making this book more comprehensive than it would have otherwise been. This includes my wife, Mary Farace, who not only made some of the portraits in this

book but was kind enough to pose for a few of them as well, and WKH Photography’s (www.wkhphotography.com) Kent Hepburn, whose glamour photography exudes a wholesome sensuality. I would also like to thank Kevin Elliott of DigitalMD (www.digitalmd.net) for bailing me out of technical and creative problems during the time this book was in progress and for his assistance over the many years that I have known him. An especially big thank you goes out to all of the different people who posed for the photographs that appear in this book. Photographing people is a shared endeavor, and I owe a huge debt of gratitude to all of them.

Lastly, I would like to again thank my wonderful wife Mary, who is an outstanding people photographer in her own right and who, over the years, has taught me a lot about posing and lighting. Mary is as much responsible for all of the good stuff that’s in this book as anyone, and I’m grateful for her love and support. I alone am responsible for all the mistakes and goofs.

About the Author

Joe Farace's interest in digital imaging combines an engineering education from Johns Hopkins University with photography training he acquired at the Maryland Institute, College of Art. Joe is the author of thirty-three other books about photography, digital imaging, and the business of photography. He is Contributing Writer and Photographer to *Shutterbug* magazine, which publishes his monthly "Digital Innovations" and "Web Profiles" columns. His writing occasionally appears in several other domestic and foreign magazines and blogs. Joe's honors include the

Photographic Craftsman's Award presented by the Professional Photographers of America and Honorary Membership from the Independent Photographers of Colorado for "dedication and service to the photographic community."

Please visit his how-to blog (www.joefaraceblogs.com) where he posts daily, providing a photographic tip, tool, or technique. Joe also hosts an automobile photography site (www.joefaraceshootscars.com). You can also follow Joe on Twitter at www.twitter.com/joefarace or on Facebook.



Ideas for poses can come from many different sources. This photo was made after a birthday dinner in Lafayette, Colorado. It had just stopped raining, and as I walked past this lamppost, I thought of Gene Kelly in *Singing in the Rain* and struck this pose. This image was taken with a Canon Powershot SD10. The EXIF data for the image shows an exposure of $\frac{1}{50}$ second at f/2.8 and ISO 400. Nik Software's (www.niksoftware.com) Silver Efex Pro was used to convert the image to black & white in order to downplay the distracting background. ©2012 Mary Farace.

Introduction

“A photographic portrait is a picture of someone who knows he is being photographed.”

—Richard Avedon

The above quote shows that the late Richard Avedon was not only a genius behind a camera but was unusually perceptive about his photographs and what they represented. The truth is, a portrait seldom represents reality. Instead, it's a snapshot of a point in time and, with retouching and posing, presents an idealized version of someone who knows they are being photographed. The point of any pose is not just to look natural (that's a lofty objective) but to tell a story—and there are many ways you can pursue that goal. Some like to keep their posing subtle (that's my preferred way of working), while others are not so restrained. Yousef Karsh's

famous portrait of Winston Churchill was made during a two-minute session in which Karsh gently and politely removed the ever-present cigar from Churchill's mouth to produce the determined look you see in the photograph. No matter how you achieve the pose, it all starts with observation, communication, and experience.

Here's a quick introduction to two of my favorite posing tips: (1) If there's something that your subject can lean on, have them do it. It gives them something to do with their hands. In this case, the subject angled her body, making the pose more dynamic than it would have been if she were standing straight. (2) When shooting a glamour-style image, I sometimes ask the subject to act as if she's ripping her clothes off. I'm never more specific than that. I let the model interpret the suggestion in her own way and almost always refine the pose that she comes up with in subsequent shots. Here, that wasn't necessary. This image was made with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 28-105mm lens. The program mode exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/5 and ISO 200. A 550EX Speedlite provided fill.



I can help you with the first two, but the third is up to you because, as the punchline to an old joke says, the best way to get to Carnegie Hall is “practice, man, practice.”

In my book *Studio Lighting Anywhere* (Amherst Media®), I quoted Richard Avedon who said, “I think all art is about control—the encounter between control and the uncontrollable.” That’s what a dedicated studio, no matter what size it may be or where it may be located, provides a photographer. Your own shooting space becomes a safe haven from the real world where, like the *Outer Limits* voice says, you can control the lighting, background, and subject. When working in this kind of environment, I control everything—from the subject’s pose to the clothing and makeup—and the resulting photographs tend to be as much a portrait of me as they are of my subjects. What often emerges from all that control is a style.

Photographic style is not something I’m always conscious about when shooting, but the truth is that over time we all develop a signature way of shooting. The danger, of course, is that we keep shooting that same way or create different versions of the same shot for the rest of our lives. Any style you develop must grow and change as you learn.

HOW THE BOOK IS ORGANIZED

The book is divided into three parts: Part 1 is called “The Basics” because it deals with the basics of body, hand, and head posing, including corrective posing. We’ll also take a look at how lenses affect posing and the final look of the portrait. Part 2 is called “Working in the Studio” because for the average shooter or aspiring pro, photographing a model means positioning her in front of a seamless background and clicking

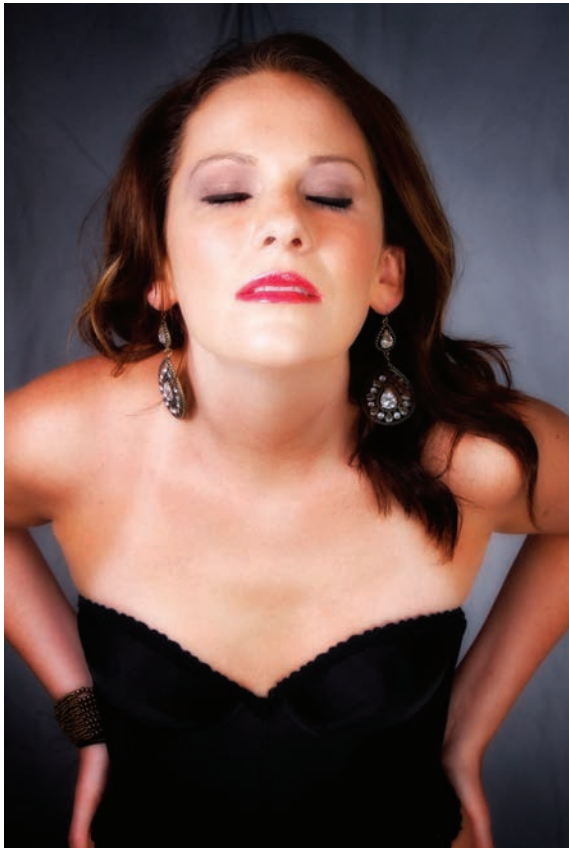
the shutter. In fact, there’s an entire chapter on seamless posing. In Part 3, “Shooting on Location,” we’ll look at how you can improve a pose by using elements of your environment. Next, look into some of the opportunities that shooting in your own home might afford. I’ll give you a Martha Stewart-style tour of images made in my own home that will inspire you to shoot in yours. Finally, you’ll find out why I think outdoor portraiture is easier than shooting in a studio—especially where posing is concerned.

WHAT’S IN THE BOOK?

It was my goal in writing this book to make it more than a posing guide with pose one, followed by pose two, et cetera, et cetera. I opted to present a real-world look at posing for portraits that is sprinkled with tips that relate to other aspects of photographing people, with an emphasis on improving your total approach to portraiture. I’ve tried to keep all of the methods used to make the images in this book as transparent as possible. Nothing was held back. You don’t have to attend a seminar or buy a DVD to learn any of my secrets. All of the portrait posing “secrets” that I’ve learned over the years are right here on these pages for you to see and absorb. Unless otherwise noted in the caption information, all of the photographs are ©2012 Joe Farace, All Rights Reserved.

I will also show you some failed poses. Most of these images fall into the “What was I thinking?” category. In most situations, I eventually came up with something better and maybe completely different—and in many cases, I’ll show you the improved photos too. I’ll also call myself out when a pose is not quite what I wanted.

The subjects who appeared in front of my camera for this book’s photographs represent



LEFT—I made this shot from a high angle and used a relatively wide-angle lens—an EF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 II at 55mm. The pose was simple. I asked the subject to place her hands on her hips, lean back, and look up. I was standing on a step stool and shooting down on her with a Canon EOS T3. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/14 and ISO 100. **RIGHT**—I had a beautiful subject, a beautiful background, and I made just one image. What was I thinking? One of the things I often ask subjects to do is to run their fingers through their hair, and that’s what this subject did. I didn’t refine the pose, I didn’t try something else because I was more concerned about the lighting than the portrait and changed locations. (You can see the final shot made in a different spot in chapter 2.) *Tip:* When you find a great location, don’t let concerns for technical details distract you from making a great portrait. I should have shot more images at this location and then tried something new. My bad.

many different looks and ethnicities and range in age from 18 to late 40s. I’ve tried to use their photographs to enhance the ideas and concepts explained in each chapter, not just to show you a cool photo, although I hope that’s part of the deal. No images were made during workshops conducted by other photographers, but some were made at group shoots or events sponsored

by regional photographer/model associations. Some were made for commercial shoots for clients, but all of the photographs were captured when working one-on-one with the subject and never when there was somebody else setting up the shot. All of the shots, as successful or unsuccessful as they may be, are strictly the result of collaboration between the subject and me. If

REAL PEOPLE

Occasionally, people ask me why I use my wife so much as a model for lighting tests in *Shutterbug* magazine and indeed in my series of Amherst Media® books. One photographer went so far as to criticize me for doing so. Recently, however, a lighting equipment manufacturer specifically wanted me to use Mary as a model when reviewing their equipment for *Shutterbug*. He said, “It’s better to have a real person than a model who might distract from the point. And it’s real people the readers are usually shooting.” That is really the point of this book. A few—not many—of the subjects in this book are full-time models (can you spot which ones?) and some are aspiring models, while others are “real people.” I often use Mary for test shots before a model arrives to make sure my exposure is correct. Occasionally, I like the test shots so much I submit them for publication, as is sometimes the case here.



The exposure of this portrait of Mary was $1/100$ second at f/16 and ISO 100. Lighting was from the two Elinchrom (www.manfrottdistribution.com) BX500Ri monolights with 25.5-inch square Portalite lightbanks mounted. The main light was close by at camera right. The fill light was placed as far to camera left as my small camera room would allow. The fill flash was set at minimum power.

you don't like the photograph, it's my fault, not theirs.

The cameras and lenses listed in the captions are gear that I own and paid for with my own money. Occasionally images were made while testing photo equipment for product reviews for *Shutterbug*, but that is the only exception. You may be surprised to learn that after reviewing this equipment I have to return it to the manufacturer. There are no freebies. Since I pay for all of my own gear, you'll probably notice that some of the cameras used to make these photos seem old, which only goes to prove that you don't always need the very latest gear to pose and capture portraits. In fact, many of my cameras were purchased as used or "refurbs" for less than the retail price of new gear. I think it's a good idea to be a thrifty shopper, and you should consider buying used lenses and cameras from camera stores, eBay, or friends upgrading to newer, more expensive gear.

You should also know that I am not employed, under contract, or sponsored by any camera company. The mention of any equipment used to make any of the photographs in this book does not constitute an endorsement of any brand or model of camera, lens, or equipment. This is just the gear that I use, and you may prefer to shoot with something else. Most of the illustrations

One of the things that I like about outdoor portraiture—including intimate portraits such as this one—is that there's always something for the subject to interact with. On this porch at CJS studio, I told Tomiko to grab the column and lean back; the rest of the pose was her interpretation. For any portrait, it's a good idea to give a general posing instruction, watch what happens, and then improve upon what you see. This book will provide lots of tips on what to say or do to get the ball rolling.

were made with a Canon EOS camera because that's what I use. If you use Nikon, Olympus, Pentax, Sony, or even an old Topcon, that's okay with me. My philosophy is that you should use the equipment that you're comfortable shooting with. I mention the gear used to make each shot because photographers like to know this kind of information, but ultimately you should use this data only as a guide. I believe that the attitude that you bring to a shoot is more important than the equipment. By the way, I think that's also true of your subject. You can only make as good a portrait as they will let you. Sometimes this requires patience and gentle guidance, other times you're just going to get what you get.

When mentioning specific gear in the text or caption, I'll try to provide a link to the company's





LEFT—Natali, the model shown here, is also a photographer. I think that having an understanding of what looks good from the camera position helps her strike effective poses. *Tip:* From time to time, have one of your photographer friends make your portrait so you can see what it feels like to be in front of the camera. This kind of hands-on experience can help you more than you might imagine when posing subjects. **ABOVE**— This image shows me at work in my home studio. This is the actual lighting setup used for my “monochrome with pink” session shown in chapter 1, but here, Mary Farace was a stand-in. I used a Flashpoint monolight with a Westcott (www.fjwestcott.com) 7-foot white/black parabolic umbrella at camera right and another Flashpoint monolight with a snoot at camera left. Most of the time the snooted monolight was useless because I had difficulty aiming it. The Westcott parabolic umbrella, on the other hand, was impossible to point in the wrong direction.

web site so you can check its price and availability. In most cases, the captions provide details about the camera, lens, and exposure used to make the image. Since I’m often asked, “How did you do that?” the information that’s provided is my answer. I’ll occasionally mention where an image was made, and some of those locations may surprise you. For photographs contributed by guest photographers, I’ll provide as complete a caption detail as possible.

While exploring these pages, be sure to enjoy yourself. For me, having fun is the single most important component of photography—and I hope it will be for you as well.

—Joe Farace
Daisy Hill, Colorado 2012

WHY I'M NOT SWITCHING CAMERA SYSTEMS

What follows is my personal opinion on the topic of switching camera systems. It is offered here as a “second opinion” in case you have been considering using a different camera system. It works for me, but it might not work for you. Everybody photographs different kinds of subjects and each photographer has their own goals for their images—be they stock, weddings, or portraiture.

New digital SLRs with bountiful megapixels and all the latest, greatest features generate lots of excitement, especially when compared to a competing company’s maybe not-so-up-to-date or raved-about-on-the-Internet product. Because some people always want to have “what’s best” (even if that’s a constantly moving target), the introduction of a new camera can make a photographer want to abandon their current model. Well, if your dream camera is part of the system you are currently using, it’ll just be an upgrade, so save your money and get one. If your dream camera is made by another manufacturer, however, switching brands is a different ball game. If you’ve been wondering if you should switch, I’d like to present three points for you to consider before you melt that gold card in a roman orgy of camera and lens purchasing—and if you’ve watched the *Spartacus: Blood and Sand* TV series, you know it’s a lot of fun.

1. I know how to use the system I own. I test lots of different cameras for *Shutterbug*, and no company does the same thing the same way. Switching means that I would have to remember that the lens mount rotates counterclockwise, not clockwise, and the exposure compensation control (and darn near everything else) is somewhere other than where I expect to find it. Maybe I’m a geezer and too lazy to learn something new (I’m not afraid to admit it), but while even new models from the same camera company don’t always place controls on different models in the same places, they’re not changing the way the lens mounts to the body or changing the placement of major controls.
2. I can’t afford it. When I wrote this, I owned five SLR bodies (two converted for IR-only capture) and a lot of lenses. I’m not exactly sure how many lenses I actually own. Maybe it’s a dozen or so, maybe more—and some of these lenses cost more than a thousand dollars. So what am I going to do? Trade them in for new Brand X gear and get 10 cents on a dollar if I’m lucky, or put them on eBay and deal with all that craziness? No way. Been there, done that.
3. Switching to a new system won’t make a difference for the kind of photographs I make. There are some photographers who work in highly specialized image-capture situations, but I’m not one of them. If a new camera from another manufacturer makes your life easier, helps you make more money, and you can afford to make the transition, then go for it. Recently I watched two guys go through this process and it scared the hell out of me, mainly because I’m such a cheapskate and can’t imagine throwing that kind of money around. But both of the guys are pros who make a living with their gear and one of the shooters kept part of his old gear. Why? He had some high end-lenses (see reason 2, above).



PART 1

POSING BASICS



1. Posing the Body

“The camera looks both ways.”—Rick Sammon

Whether you’re working with a beautiful model or a subject who hasn’t been in front of a lens in years, you owe it to your subjects to cultivate a solid understanding of posing. After

all, even a beautiful subject won’t look their best when posed awkwardly—and when subjects don’t feel that they look great, your print sales will suffer.

FACING PAGE—This basic glamour pose is my first pose in a session. I ask the subject to put her weight on the foot that’s away from the camera, placing her in a three-quarter pose. Once I have a pose I like, I refine it by having the model tilt her head or move her hands and arms slightly. I change my camera angle while zooming (or walking around) to create a tighter or looser composition. For this image, the main light was a Dynalite head fired through Booth Photographic’s (www.boothphoto.com) 75-inch white umbrella in shoot-through mode. There was no light on the background. The hair light added very little light to the shot. I’ll bet I could have made the same image with just the umbrella. The shot was made with a Canon EOS 1D Mark II N camera and an EF 135mm f/2.8 SF lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/7.1 and ISO 100. **RIGHT**—One of the most challenging parts of working in the studio is that there’s nothing for the subject to interact with or do with her hands. To remedy this, I talk to the subject while moving my hands around my face and head and watch how she mimics me. I really like what Noelle did here. The image was lit with two Portalite lightbanks, one at camera left and behind me and the other at camera right and close behind Noelle. The image was shot with a Canon EOS 5D camera and an EF 135mm f/2.8 SF lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/16 and ISO 125.



THE POLISHED PORTRAIT: POSING “RULES”

What follows is a series of before and after shots that show a “bad” pose followed by a “good” pose. Keep in mind that these are relative terms and are highly subjective. As Señor Wences once said: “Is easy for you . . . is difficult for me.” And so it is with these examples. Not everyone, especially when dealing with a typical portrait subject, is comfortable in some of these “good” poses, and this will show in their demeanor. A good pose must first be comfortable for the subject; if not, this discomfort will show in their faces, and that’s what portraits are really all about. Remember that everybody’s bodies are different and some cannot physically—or comfortably—be put in a specific pose, so don’t force it.

Please note that all of these examples are “unfinished” portraits. While a bit of tweaking has been done, no retouching was done to create a finished product. The emphasis is on posing. To make sure

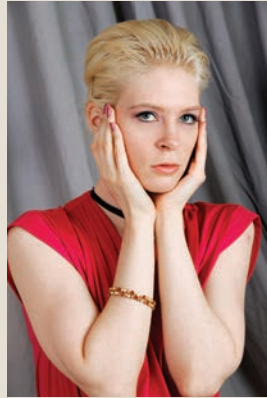


LEFT—It’s not atypical to have a subject walk onto a set and just stand there. This is an example of a non-pose, one in which the subject’s body is aimed straight to camera. Even though this model is very trim, her presentation makes her look heavier. **RIGHT**—Here, the subject turned her body to a slight angle to the camera and placed all of her weight on the foot farthest from the camera. This simple change offered a big improvement; the effects are especially profound for heavier models.



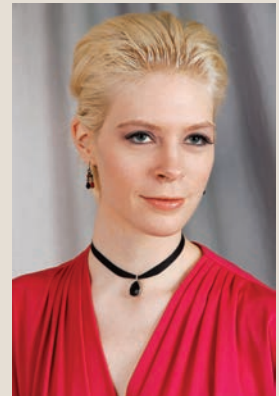
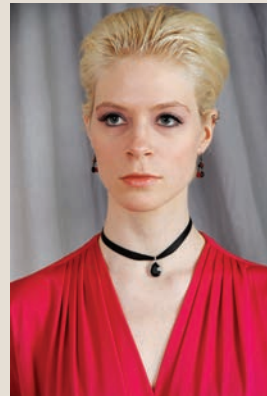
LEFT—Here’s an example of poor shoulder posing. One of the subject’s shoulders is too high. **RIGHT**—The subject is still square to the camera—something that your more slender subjects can pull off—but her shoulders are slightly angled. This helped create a better pose.

that the lighting does not distract from the poses being shown, I've used the same simple lighting setup for all of the images in the four "The Polished Portrait" sections that appear in the book. The main light is a 300 watt-second Flashpoint monolight that's placed at camera left with a 28x28-inch PZ softbox mounted. Fill was provided by another 300 watt-second Flashpoint monolight with 60-inch white Adorama parabolic umbrella attached. The images were shot with a Canon EOS 60D camera with an EF-S 15-85mm lens and a nominal exposure of $1/125$ second at f/8 and ISO 100.



LEFT—Here's an example of bad hand posing—with fingers spread too far apart—but a natural-looking body pose. **RIGHT**—Here's a more pleasing hand pose, with the subject's hands posed around her face.

LEFT—Here's another bad hand pose example. The hands are posed like claws. The body is posed naturally. **RIGHT**—Even though the subject's hands are flat to the camera (showing the edge of the hands is preferred), the fingers were positioned to prevent the "claw" look.



LEFT—Here's a full-length shot with the subject just standing there. This is the way a subject will walk onto a set. **RIGHT**—A good place to start making the pose better is a weight shift to their foot that's farthest from the camera. From there, try making a change in the arm and hand position. Finally, request a slight turn of the head, with the eyes turned back to look at the camera.

LEFT—This is a bad pose. The subject is square to the camera and has no expression. **RIGHT**—For this image, the model was asked to slightly turn her head away from the camera. It's a good basic headshot. Remember that communication with subject equals expression!

POSING CATEGORIES

The following guidelines should serve you well for posing subjects for intimate portraiture, boudoir, or glamour photography. No matter what you call it, your goal is to create a sensual image—but maybe not so sensuous Momma can't look at it.

The subject of glamour images is almost always female and, because of the nature of the images, the entire portrait process will be different.

Establish Rapport. Your working relationship with a subject begins the moment you meet them, but having good rapport with your subject is never more important than it is when she steps in front of the camera. Your personality, working style, and communication skills must help the

subject feel comfortable and confident. Before starting the session, tell the model about the kind of photographs you have in mind. Describe the kind of shot you are looking for, tell her what type of attitude you want her to express, and share any other information that will help her do a good job. If you have done a similar image with another subject in the past, show her a print from that session.

Respect Her Privacy. When doing this kind of portrait, you should always respect a model's privacy. Start by giving her a private place to change and do her makeup. If she's nervous, give her some additional time to warm up by shooting a few test shots. You might even use this opportunity to refine your lighting for the

A bathtub is probably one of the most cliché glamour sets, but this subject told me she'd never had so much fun on a shoot. There isn't a lot of room in a typical bathroom, and your posing options may depend on the size of the subject and the size of the bathtub. My main goal was to make her comfortable so we could capture a range of shots for her portfolio—from PG-13 shots like this to R-rated images. This image was captured with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 28-105mm lens. The available light exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/4 and ISO 400. A 550EX was fitted with a Sto-fen (www.stofen.com) flash diffuser to keep the light soft. It was the sole light source.





LEFT—There is no reason why a pregnant subject can't be photographed for a glamour image or even a nude portrait. (That's coming up.) This image was made using the available light coming through the back door of my home. The session was something she did for herself because she felt that such images are natural. **RIGHT**—The main question about this pair of images is this: eyes open or eyes closed? I think the eyes closed works better due to the intimate nature of the image, but your subject or client may feel differently. The pose almost doesn't matter with close-ups like this, but having the subject's hand in the frame and having her look down seems to make more sense than not showing her hand in the frame. The light for this shot came from the back door of my home. This image was made with a EOS 50D camera and an EF 28-105mm lens. The available light exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/4.5 and ISO 400.

shot, check the exposure, and be sure to show the subject some of the images. Don't worry about the pose initially. You might be surprised how good a pose you might find by accident, while helping her relax at the same time. Talk her

through the steps as you are shooting, and once she gets the idea of what you want, you can easily repeat the series again with different garments.

Don't Touch! Another important rule is that you should not touch a subject—not just to

respect her space but also to keep those Lexus-driving lawyers from upgrading to a Bentley. And you know what? It's the right thing to do. Some photographers—particularly wedding shooters—are used to touching portrait subjects to place them in a pose. They get into this habit because of the high pressure and time crunches under which most weddings are photographed, where there is never enough time to talk people into poses. If you want a specific pose, demonstrate it so she can see what it looks like. If it's absolutely necessary for you to touch the model, ask first.

Posing the Nude. If you are doing a shoot in which the model is wearing lingerie or is nude, respect her privacy by offering a “closed set” environment where only the minimum number of people are watching her. Work quickly and

professionally to minimize the time she spends waiting for you to get ready. If you are fiddling with lights and seem disorganized or clumsy, the model will lose her enthusiasm for the shoot and become bored. This boredom will show in the photographs, and the session will be a waste of time. With experience, every photographer will develop his or her own personal style of working and communicating, but let common sense be your guide and treat each and every one of your subjects politely, professionally, and with respect.

The main thing to keep in mind when posing a nude subject is to avoid poses that look pornographic. For beginning photographers, it can often be difficult to determine where intimate portraiture ends and pornography begins. You might want to review some current magazines for ideas about the difference. A quick look at *Playboy* and *Hustler* should be all the education you need on this subject. A Supreme Court Justice once remarked when writing an opinion about pornography, “I know it when I see it,” and it's important that you can tell the difference too. Nothing will turn a beautiful glamour photograph into pornography faster than a sexually explicit or tasteless pose. One married photographer I know uses the following rule to determine when he's crossed the line: “If I feel comfortable showing the photo to my wife, it's a glamour shot. If not, it's probably porn.”

Because it is seen as more artistic, this kind of portrait is often delivered to the customer as a monochrome image. Here the original color photo was converted to black & white. I added a light copper tone using Nik Software's (www.niksoftware.com) Silver Efex Pro to keep the image on the warm side. Finally, I applied the Glamour Glow filter that's part of the Complete edition of Nik Software's Color Efex Pro.





The subject appears to be lying on a bed, but she's not. It's a quilt spread out on the carpet outside my former home office. There was daylight coming in to act as a backlight. She is topless, and while some might call it an "implied nude," a purist would say it's not because she's wearing panties. A pose like this is almost natural when you ask a model to lay on her stomach. She placed her hand like this, and while I may have tweaked the pose slightly, it was natural and comfortable for her—something's that important in any pose that you use. This image was captured with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/4 and ISO 400.

The Implied Nude. All nude shoots are a challenge for the photographer. If you look at a *Playboy* centerfold, you'll see that even when nude, the models are often posed in such a way as to cover part of their body. Sometimes they clutch a clothing item to add visual interest in the image. Other times, a carefully positioned prop can help ensure the desired level of modesty.

Some subjects aren't willing to pose fully nude but aren't opposed to an implied nude portrait. I once asked a model to help me understand this attitude, and she explained it this way: She wasn't concerned about *me* seeing her nude, she was

worried about the photographs leaving a lasting impression (as the 2009 Miss USA discovered when nude photos of her were released after she received her crown).

The Anonymous Nude. Another category of nude is the "anonymous nude" where the model is willing to pose nude but doesn't want her face to appear in the photographs. This is more often the case for fine-art nude photography than when shooting glamour, but that doesn't mean you can't give it a try and see if the images work for you and the model.



FACING PAGE—This is a true implied nude. The subject isn't wearing anything, but the pose was designed to cover any areas that might embarrass her later. Her position also created diagonal lines that lend an aesthetically pleasing effect. This was not the first shot in the session, but we worked together through a series of poses to come to this refined shot in which she is not looking at the camera. This portrait was shot in my old home office in the same Queen Anne chair that's in my office. This image was shot with a Canon EOS D60 camera and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The natural light exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/2 and ISO 1000. **TOP**—I like the pose and the cropping in this image, but the watch is distracting, even in black & white. **BOTTOM**—Paying attention to details before and during the session will save postproduction time later on. I didn't see the hair band on the model's wrist until I finished the headshot portion of the shoot. A 7-foot Westcott white/black parabolic umbrella was attached to a Flashpoint 620M monolight. A Flashpoint 320 was placed at camera left and slightly behind the subject. The shot was made with a Pentax K-5 camera and an SMC DA 50–200mm f/4–5.6 ED WR lens at 87mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/7.1 and ISO 100. Nik Software's (www.niksoftware.com) Silver Efex Pro 2 was used to convert the image to monochrome.

TIPS FOR A SEAMLESS SHOOT

Communication is the most important aspect of posing. To make the best-possible portrait, you should ensure that your client knows what to expect before they even arrive for the session. Here are a few simple tips that will make your subjects look their best. Feel free to send them to a client before the shoot or post them on your web site.

- Keep jewelry to a minimum—unless the subject is a jeweler or sells jewelry. In that case, the jewelry helps to tell their story. Otherwise, seeing the same necklace in different shots and with different outfits will





If the subject is wearing jewelry, like these long pearls, make them part of the pose. Have her interact with the jewelry, don't let it hang there. Okay, this works best with inexpensive jewelry—but nobody will be able to tell the difference in a photograph anyway. The main light was a Flashpoint II (www.adorama.com) monolight at camera right with a Westcott Halo (www.fjwestcott.com) lightbank mounted. The fill light, placed at camera left, was a flash with a 32-inch Westcott satin optical white umbrella. A third light with the standard reflector attached was placed behind the model and at camera left. The image was made with a Canon EOS 5D camera and an EF 135mm f/2.8 SF lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{50}$ second at f/9 and ISO 100.

detract from the impact of the images. If the subject thinks of a piece of jewelry as a good luck charm or it was given to her by a beloved family member, I ask that she use it for just one series of images.

- Wear solid colors. Nothing detracts from a subject's face more than clothes covered in busy patterns and prints.
- Make sure the clothes fit. While this might seem obvious, many subjects will arrive for their session wearing ill-fitting clothes that do nothing but draw the viewer's attention away from the subject. Sometimes this can be fixed in postproduction using Photoshop's versatile Liquify tool, but it's best to err on the side of caution and make sure the clothes fit. It's a good idea to keep pins, clothespins, and clamps on hand to help a model snug up a too-loose garment.
- Ensure the subject's skin is in good condition. The camera shows reality. If the subject's skin is peeling from a sunburn or the clothing they're planning to wear will reveal tan lines, I suggest that they call to reschedule. Makeup, camera filters, and digital tricks (I'll mention a few later on) can correct minor problems but are not miracle cures.

- Suggest that the subject style their hair slightly differently for each change of clothing during a shoot. When trying to create a variety of looks, short hair can present a challenge. For variety, try a wig! Wigs can be expensive, but the subject may be able to borrow one. You can also consider asking a makeup artist who works with wigs if you can

set up a shoot where all three of you work together to create sample images.

One of the best pieces of advice that I ever got from another photographer was provided by the late Leon Kennamer. When he began a portrait session, the first thing he would do is make a Polaroid test shot of the subject, hand her the print, and ask “How do you like



LEFT—Although you might prefer a portrait subject bring solid colors to a shoot, that doesn't always happen. I got in close and suggested this hands-on-face pose that draws attention to Kimber's lovely smile. A 620M monolight with 64-inch FlashPoint umbrella was placed at camera right. Another Flashpoint monolight with a 28x28-inch PZ softbox was used as a sidelight and placed at camera left and slightly to the rear of the subject. The image was made with a Canon EOS 5D camera and an EF 85mm f/1.8 USM lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/5.6 and ISO 100. **RIGHT**—Cropping tightly won't always minimize the impact of a busy pattern on a subject's clothing. This image was made with a Canon EOS 5D camera in monochrome mode. The lens was an EF 85mm f/1.8. Shooting in monochrome and changing the pose allowed me to create a totally different look using an almost identical lighting setup. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/5.6 and ISO 100.





FACING PAGE—Does the American flag bikini detract from the subject’s face? I keep changing my mind on this one, and this image is presented as food for thought. I like the pose. The way the model’s legs are crossed adds diagonal lines to the composition. The shot was made with a Canon EOS 10D and an EF 50mm f/1.8 lens. The available light exposure was $\frac{1}{15}$ second at f/4 and ISO 400. **LEFT**—In the first pose, the subject was seated square to the camera with her arms out. This pose made her trim body look larger than it really is. **CENTER**—I asked her to rotate her body in a three-quarter pose to the camera. I had her turn her head in the opposite direction to create a more dynamic feel in the pose. In moving around, she placed her hands in the position you see here, so I said “Hold it, don’t move.” When I see the subject do something that feels natural to them, I often use that pose, making only simple refinements. I made twenty-seven posing adjustments to get this shot. When posing, you need to be patient. In the old days, we used to say “film is cheap,” but digital is even cheaper—so go ahead and shoot until you’re happy with the result. **RIGHT**—The final image was a slightly cropped version of the above image, converted to black & white using Nik Software’s (www.niksoftware.com) Silver Efex Pro. I didn’t like the color mismatch between the ivory bustier and white panties and hose. In monochrome, they’re all white. That helped to create a retro look that I like.

your hair?” The truth is, if a subject doesn’t like her hair, she won’t like the portrait—no matter how skillful the lighting or pose. If a subject doesn’t love her hair, consider having her wear a hat. Look for fun and interesting hats in thrift and discount stores. By adding a hat, you can change the overall feel of an image.

- Capture a great expression. In photographic terms, ESP means “expression sells portraits.” Expression is the most important part of the pose. It tells the story of who the subject is.

If a model’s expression is unchanging from one image to the next, their portfolio will be monotonous. Be sure to look at both sides of the subject’s face. Most people—even supermodels—have one side of their face that photographs better than the other side—but don’t let that stop you from posing them one way or another.

- Large tattoos and multiple piercings, while stylish today, ultimately detract from a portrait and future sales opportunities. Talk about it.



Eyes open or closed? This was the first of a sequence of nine images made with the subject. I tried several variations with smiles, but her expression was best when her eyes were closed. One Elinchrom monolight with a Portalite lightbank was placed at camera right and close to the subject. A second Elinchrom monolight with a Portalite mounted was placed at camera left and at the very back of my smallish camera room. The shot was made with a Canon EOS 5D camera and an EF 135mm f/2.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/14 and ISO 125.

- Suggest that the model change her makeup when changing hairstyles or outfits to make every image from the session look different.

I made some suggestions to one client about the type of lipstick she should wear. She liked the resulting photographs better, and her husband liked the way she looked too.

- Wearing the right shoes can make as much a difference as the right makeup. Ask a subject to bring the highest heels they have—or can borrow—even if the shoes won't show in the portrait. High heels change the way the subject stands, and the added height can add drama to the image.

THE THREE PHOTOGRAPHIC PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT

While learning and refining their skills, most photographers progress through three distinct phases in their development.

Phase one occurs immediately after they purchase their first “good” camera and discover photography’s potential for fun and creativity. During this time, novice shooters are fearless and enthusiastically explore their world. Each and every memory card is chock full of files that contains images that look so much better than they could have ever imagined. Unfortunately, this blissful period doesn’t last long and is quickly replaced by the next phase.

During phase two, the photographer’s level of enthusiasm is still high, but it is somewhat diminished when they review their latest images only to discover that they are much worse than they had expected. Unfortunately, this phase can last a long time. To improve their skills during this phase, photographers should read magazines like *Shutterbug*, turn to books written by industry pros (go to www.amherstmedia.com), and visit blogs like mine, all the while practicing the art and craft of photography until they eventually reach the third and final phase.

During phase three, the images the photographer sees in their viewfinder and what they actually capture are exactly what they expected. There are no surprises. While reaching this phase can be fulfilling, some of the magic is understandably lost. The upside is that fewer images are made because there's no "shoot and hope for the best." The biggest challenge faced in this phase is that a photographer can end up shooting the same images over and over for years

and years. So it's up to you to break free from your comfort zone and do something to make sure that doesn't happen.

One of the things I like to do to get out of a creative rut is to shoot the session in direct monochrome mode. You might think, Why would he do that? What if he later decided he wanted the image in color? Well, many digital SLRs have a RAW+JPEG option that lets you capture a monochrome (JPEG) and color (RAW)

LEFT—A combination of two good props adds something extra to this portrait. The subject was relaxed because she was leaning on a split-rail fence. I asked her to bring her hand under her chin. I had her make a fist so there were no fingers dangling near her face. Yes, the fingers of her other hand were dangling, but I used Photoshop's Burn tool to darken the tones a bit to make the fingers less distracting. The shot was made with a Canon EOS 5D. The exposure was $1/200$ second at f/5.7 and ISO 500. A 550EX Speedlite was used to add light under the hat brim. Otherwise, part of her face would have been in shadow.

RIGHT—This portrait, shot with a Contax 167 MT and black & white film, was made in phase one of my development. The pose was dictated by what was there. The chair gave her a place to rest her left hand. The other hand was placed on her hip. (I like to get the subject to slide her hand down her hip until I like the angle her arm creates.) The pose, dress, and the model's retro looks evoke a kind of "Paris Left Bank" look.





LEFT—My phase-two photograph was made during a group shoot on a movie set in Arizona.

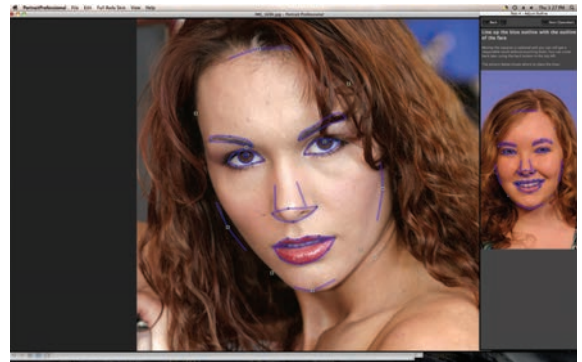
There were lots of great props available. I had the model lean on this potbelly stove. Those saw teeth on top don't look all that comfortable, but the subject's expression doesn't show it. I had the model hook her thumb into the waist of her jeans and curve her dangling, unposed fingers (competition print judges hate dangling fingers!). The shot was made with a Canon EOS 30D and an EF 135mm f/2.8 SF lens (not in soft focus mode, more later on this). The available light exposure was $\frac{1}{250}$ second at f/4 and ISO 200. **FACING PAGE**—

The color-and-monochrome portrait has become cliché, but in some areas it's a big seller for high school senior portraits. I had the subject place both hands on her hips, then I had her slide her hands down until I liked the angles presented in her arms. I also asked her to shift her weight to one of her hips to create a more dynamic pose. This image was shot in my new in-home studio with a Pentax K-5 camera and an SMC DA 50-200mm f/4-5.6 ED WR lens at 87mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/7.1 and ISO 100. The lighting came from a single Flashpoint (www.adorama.com) monolight with a 7-foot white/black Westcott (www.fjwestcott.com) parabolic umbrella.

file simultaneously. With a dual-slot camera, you may even be able to save each file type to a different card. If you prefer to capture in color

and convert to monochrome in postproduction, that's not a bad idea either. Doing the conversion in post capture allows me to use my favorite





LEFT—Here a very pregnant Tia Stoneman used the window to anchor her right hand. For this one shot, she struck the cliché hand-behind-the-neck pose. It turned out to be a lot of fun. The image was shot in monochrome mode with a Samsung Pro 815 camera. The exposure was $1/40$ second at $f/8$ and ISO 400. The built-in flash provided fill. **TOP RIGHT**—Imagenomic's Portraiture is a Photoshop-compatible plug-in that eliminates the boring task of selective masking and pixel-by-pixel treatments to achieve smooth, natural, or glamour retouching effects. Its useful presets smooth and remove imperfections while preserving skin texture and other important details such as hair, eyebrows, and eyelashes. **BOTTOM RIGHT**—Anthropics Technology's Portrait Professional can be used to re-create natural-looking skin in areas affected by overexposure. It can also be a big help when you've had to retouch out problems over large areas of the skin.

retouching tools—Imagenomic's Portraiture (www.imagenomic.com) and Anthropics' (www.portraitprofessional.com) Portrait Professional.

Another great idea to prevent your photography from becoming stagnant is to make a new photograph each day. I created an online gallery where you can take a look at my daily photos. Go to <http://farace.smugmug.com>

[.com/Photography/2011-Photo-of-the-Day/13757423_ocGwz](http://farace.smugmug.com/Photography/2011-Photo-of-the-Day/13757423_ocGwz).

Many photographers seem to prefer to let the models do all of their own posing work. Unfortunately, this is not something that all models are capable of. That's because there are two basic types of photo subjects: inner-directed and outer-directed.

Inner-directed people are the Energizer bunnies of photo subjects. You tell them “stand over there,” point the camera at them, and they will change poses as fast as you can click the shutter. You will get lots of good poses, some great ones, and a few that are not so good because the subject is not getting any feedback, except from themselves. When you’re working with an inner-directed subject, you will shoot more photos, which will require more editing time and bigger memory cards. Unfortunately, only about 20 percent of the subjects that you’ll get to photograph fall into this category.

Outer-directed subjects represent the other 80 percent of photo subjects. These subjects expect you to tell them what to do. Shooting this type of subject takes longer, but if you take the time to communicate what you want the subject to do, everything will go smoothly. The best subjects

will respond better if you show them what the photograph looks like on the LCD screen (big screens really help). The bottom line is that it’s up to you to tell them how to pose. In order to do that, you need to know what you want, but you should be sure that any direction you give is gentle and allows them to be who they really are.

THE ART OF THE POSE

One way to learn about posing is to look through a variety of magazines. In doing so, you’ll see how the poses that appear in a typical fashion magazine such as *Vogue* vary from those seen in an a magazine like *Playboy*. While models in both magazines are beautiful and often very sexy, the poses in a fashion magazine are usually less suggestive or sexual in nature.

A portrait subject’s pose is really a form of body language. It can contribute to the style

POSING IS A JOINT EFFORT

When I was learning the professional photography business, I asked my mentor, to whom this book is dedicated, “What’s the worst mistake I can make when photographing a wedding?” His answer surprised me. “The worst thing you can do,” he told me, “is not talk to the people.”

Photographing people is not just about the equipment; it is mostly about interaction with your subjects. One of the most important aspects of communicating with your subject is getting them to trust you and relax. Any portrait shoot is a team effort, so be sure to discuss what you and they would like to accomplish before and during a shoot. Let them feel free to make suggestions about posing and makeup, but avoid letting them take over the shoot.

Let me tell you a story: My wife was doing a bread-and-butter headshot for an employee of an established client, and the subject refused to smile. No biggie; it happens. When I looked at the images, I thought, “Lucy, you got some ‘splainin’ to do.” Sure enough, the client asked for and received a re-shoot, this time telling the employee to cooperate. Some subjects have such presence that photographers tend to defer to them and while the resulting images can be interesting, that’s rarely the case. In order to achieve the best-possible images, the subject and photographer need to work together. Only when you communicate and cooperate will you be able to create great portraits.



LEFT—Anna Lieb (www.annalieb.com) is one of the best professional models that I've ever photographed. If you want to improve your posing skills, working with an inner-directed subject can help because it's impossible to make a bad photograph of them. Watch what they do and remember the poses! You can always tweak any pose the model presents. Portraiture is a collaborative effort, and together you can come up with the perfect pose. This image was made with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 28–105mm lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{80}$ second at f/4 and ISO 200. An 550EX Speedlite provided fill. **RIGHT**—This image is from a first shoot with an aspiring model. Her shyness is apparent when you look at the pose she assumed when I asked her to lean against the tree, but her natural charm shines through. **BOTTOM**—Some models just “get it.” When asked to fold her arms, Kimber threw this pose at me. After eleven minor tweaks, I had the image you see here. The main light, a flash with a 28x28-inch lightbank mounted, was at camera right. Fill light came from a 60-inch umbrella placed at camera left and at the back of my small studio. The shot was made with a Canon EOS 5D camera and an EF 85mm f/1.8 USM lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/8 and ISO 100.



and character of your photograph as much as the expression on the model's face.

An awkward pose will hurt your portrait sales—no matter who the model or the image recipient may be. Keep your poses elegant and natural. If your subject can't easily put her body into a pose that you're suggesting, then it's probably not a very good pose. Poses should flow naturally; the subject should look natural, at ease, and most importantly comfortable. That's not to say that a pose can't be dramatic or exciting but, in general, when anybody looks at

the photograph and is thinking more about the pose than the subject, it's probably not a great pose.

Avoid tacky poses. Lighting techniques and trends vary over time, and so do poses. Just take a look at magazines from the '50s or '60s and you'll find examples of what not to do—unless you're going for a retro pinup or cheesecake look (in that case, embrace the clichés). Current portrait styles are much more *natural*, a word that should be stuck in your head when posing a subject.



LEFT—Here is a photographer shooting an outdoor glamour image during a group shoot on a movie set in Arizona. When he was finished with the model, it was my turn. I didn't want to copy his pose—which is a good one—so I changed my camera position and used the wall to the subject's right as a backdrop.

CENTER—If there's a wall handy, have your subject lean against it—and puhleeze don't let them stand with their arms hanging down like they just don't know what to do with them. Placing them behind her head is a good pose—if she is comfortable doing it. And that goes for all the poses here. You just can't place every subject in your favorite pose; we're all different, and what looks perfect for one subject won't always work with another. **RIGHT**—The subject's eyes don't always have to be open. When I asked the subject to close her eyes, her entire expression changed. I love the look on her face—but who's to say which is the better or more saleable image? I like this one best, but if there's one thing that I've learned from my many years in this field, it's that your subject's tastes often differ from your own. (See "Eye of the Beholder" in chapter 2.)

Nothing is harder for a portrait subject than standing in one place and trying a variety of poses. Look around the studio or session location and see if your model has something to lean or sit on. If you're outdoors, let her lean against a rock, tree, car, bench—anything! If you're shooting indoors, nothing will bring out

a more natural look than having your subject sit in a comfortable armchair or on a couch. You'd be surprised how quickly a portrait that looks and feels awkward while the subject is standing becomes elegant and natural if they are given a comfortable prop to work with.



LEFT—Put your hands in the air. Sometimes a pose works; sometimes it doesn't. Despite the gorgeous subject and beautiful setting, this shot (and I only made one) falls into the "What was I thinking?" category and comes dangerously close to the infamous pose that the late Leon Kenamer called "blessing the leaves." The main thing to keep in mind is that any failed pose is the fault of the photographer, never the subject. **RIGHT**—This image, shot in my new home studio, expresses joy and fun. I would like to take credit for this one, but Mary popped in to shoot some production shots and she came up with it. Mary put herself in the pose and encouraged the subject, which resulted in the natural smile you see here.

2. Corrective Posing Basics

“I just think it’s important to be direct and honest with people about why you’re photographing them and what you’re doing. After all, you are taking some of their soul.”—*Mary Ellen Mark*

STRIVE FOR A PERFECT CAPTURE

Nobody’s perfect. Supermodel Cindy Crawford once famously said “Even I don’t look like Cindy Crawford when I get up in the morning.” The easiest way to reduce the time spent on retouching in postproduction is to apply makeup. Having a makeup artist available to your portrait subjects before a shoot will make the subject feel special, and she’ll begin the session with more confidence and excitement than she otherwise might.

Another way to minimize retouching is to very slightly overexpose the portrait, making it just a little lighter and brighter than your meter says is “correct.” You can also consider adding a soft-focus effect. This can be done in-camera or in postproduction. To create the soft-focus effect in-camera, you’ll need to use a soft-focus filter or a special soft-focus lens. The hands-down best soft-focus filter is the Zeiss Softar (www.schneideroptics.com/filters), which incorporates tiny lens-shaped structures in the glass to create

This available light portrait was made at a group shoot in Arizona. The image was captured with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 135mm f/2.8 SF lens. The exposure was $1/250$ second at f/4.0 and ISO 200.

the soft-focus effect. Despite softening the highlights, the basic focus remains sharp up to the edges with this classic soft-focus accessory, an advantage that makes focusing easy. When using the Softar, your AF will probably go crazy, so you’ll need to focus manually. B+W offers the



Softar in two strengths: I (mild) and II (stronger). The degree of softening is not affected by the selected aperture.

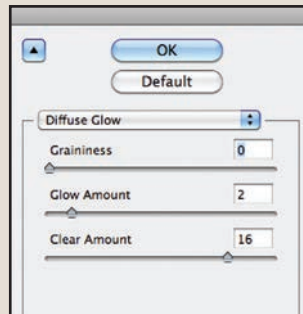
A soft-focus lens such as Canon's (www.usa.canon.com) EF 135mm f/2.8 has some advantages over using filters. You can create razor-sharp images as well as soft-focus shots that do not look blurry. The lens offers two soft-

focus settings, and each setting is affected by the selected aperture. Using the "1" setting and a small aperture will provide a mild soft-focus effect. The "2" setting produces a strong soft-focus effect. When using a soft-focus lens, rather than filters, you can use your camera's AF feature to quickly and easily ensure sharp focus.

SOFT FOCUS IN THE DIGITAL DARKROOM

One of the classic ways to soften and retouch glamour photographs is to use Adobe Photoshop's built-in Diffuse Glow filter (Filter>Distort>Diffuse Glow). Diffuse Glow renders an image as though it were viewed through a traditional soft focus or diffusion filter. The filter adds see-through white noise with the glow fading from the center to the edges of a selection. At moderate slide settings of Graininess 5, Glow Amount 10, Clear Amount 10, the Diffuse Glow filter adds a layer of grain that spreads the highlights and creates a soft-focus look.

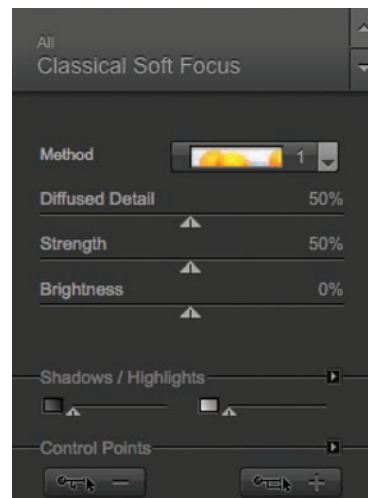
Using a dedicated Photoshop-compatible plug-in like Nik Software's (www.niksoftware.com) Classical Soft Focus filter (found in the Complete and Select editions) is the fastest and easiest way to apply a soft-focus effect. Classical Soft Focus introduces a traditional photographic effect that stylizes an image and softens unwanted and often unneeded detail. This filter simulates traditional, soft-focus filters and diffusion techniques. Believe me, this is the closest that you will get to a Zeiss Softar in digital form.



FAR LEFT—A bed makes a great posing tool. Here, the model leaned back and rested on her arms, creating a double triangle composition. The original photograph was captured on a movie set using a combination of window light and fill from an 550EX Speedlite. The image was made with a Canon 50D camera and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The program-

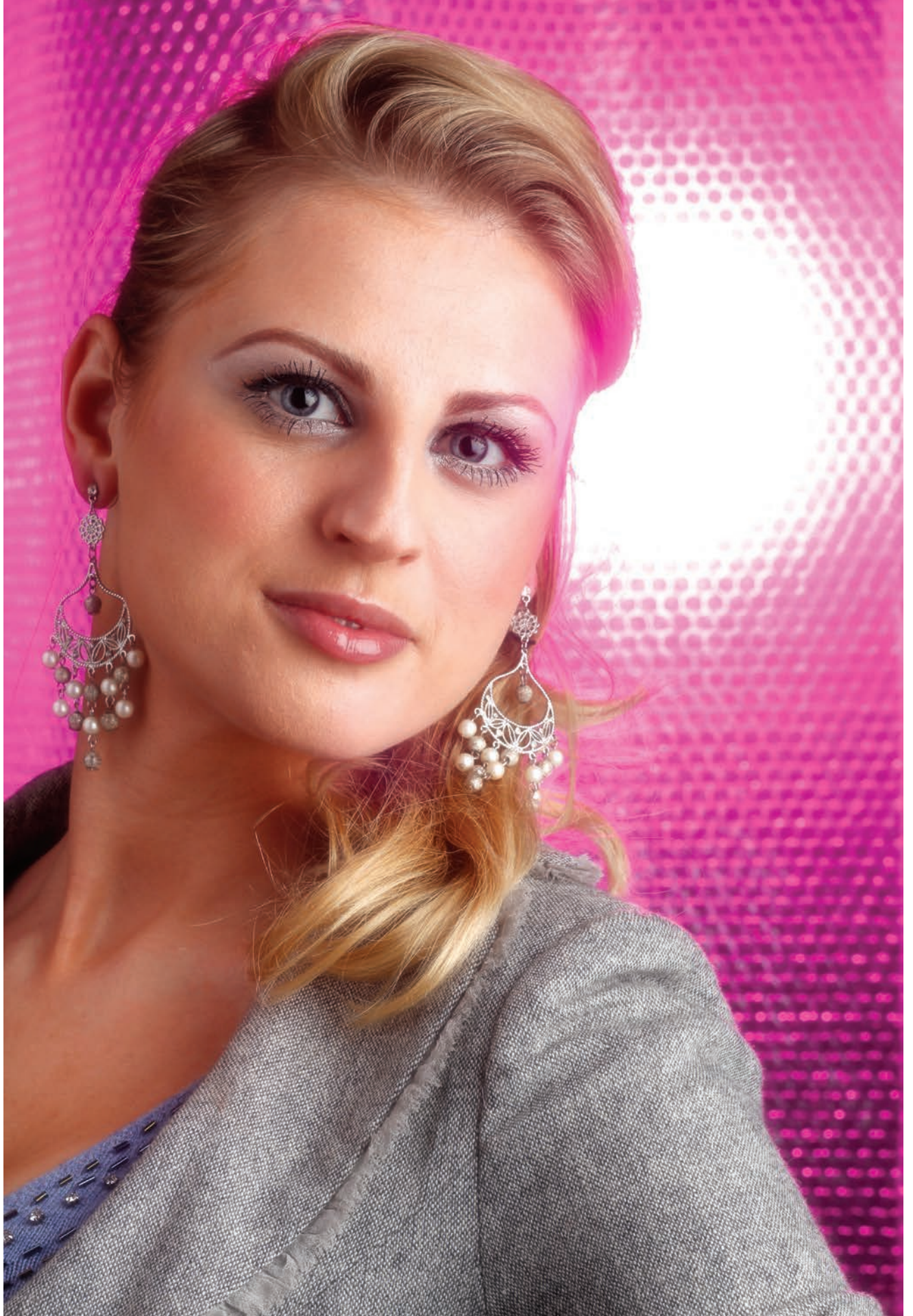
mode exposure was $1/80$ second at f/7.1 and ISO 800. **LEFT**—When using Photoshop's Diffuse Glow filter, I like to back off the Graininess slider, set the Clear Amount to a high setting, and experiment with the Glow Amount slider to find an effect that suits the look that I'm trying to achieve. Don't be afraid to "amp it up," but if you do, apply the effect to a duplicate layer. **FACING PAGE**—Here's the final result of applying Photoshop's Diffuse Glow filter to a separate layer. Once you've created a layer and applied the filter, you can use the Eraser tool to remove the Diffuse Glow layer around the subject's eyes and mouth, and then vary the layer's opacity to suit your tastes. A little selective burning and dodging completed the image.





LEFT—Proving that anything can be used as a background, bubble packing material was used here. The lighting was comprised of a flash head with a red gel from the back and a large Chimera lightbank at camera right. The image was shot with a Canon EOS 60D camera and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/11 and ISO 100. ©2011 Mary Farace.

ABOVE—Nik Software's Classical Soft Focus filter is found in the Complete and Select editions of Nik Software's Color Efex Pro, a comprehensive toolkit of digital enhancement tools that are useful for all kinds of photography. ©2012 Mary Farace. **FACING PAGE**—Here's the final result of applying Nik Software's Classic Soft Focus filter. A little selective erasing was done around the eyes and mouth on the filter layer that the software automatically adds. ©2012 Mary Farace.



THE POLISHED PORTRAIT: CORRECTIVE POSING

Nobody is perfect. Even though I've lost fifty pounds since the photograph of me in the Introduction was shot, I'm still human, warts and all. And while our collective vision of what physical beauty really is has become somewhat distorted by over-Photoshopped versions of models that often appear in magazines—especially print ads—there are a few posing tips that you can use during a portrait session to minimize and, if you're lucky, eliminate any perceived flaws in your subjects.

In the following series of before-and-after images, I've attempted with help from Barbara A. Lynch-Johnt, who edited this book, and my wife Mary Farace who actually created the poses that you see, to show a few corrective posing tips. I would be less than honest if I didn't tell you that this was the most difficult series of portraits I had to make for this book because every potential model that I approached to pose for this section tuned me down once I told them I wanted them to pose for a series of images showing their flaws and how the right pose would correct or minimize that imperfection. Only the wonderful Pam Simpson (who, as a professional model, may just be flawless) agreed to make these photos and be presented in unretouched form out of the kindness of her heart.



LEFT—Even subjects without a double chin may appear to have one in a photo because of the way they are posed. Also, low camera angles can exaggerate the appearance of a double chin. **RIGHT**—To avoid or improve the appearance of a double chin, have the subject raise her chin slightly and shoot with the camera at or slightly above her eye level. This was shot with the EF-S 15–85mm f/3.5–5.6 IS USM lens at 85mm. Shorter focal lengths can create distortion and create flaws that don't really exist.

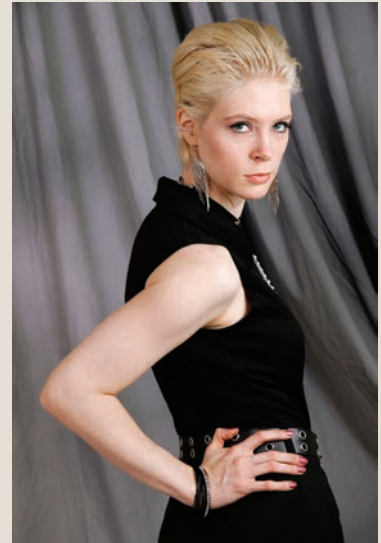


LEFT—When a subject's arms are pressed too firmly against their body, they can look fat, even if they're not. **RIGHT**—A better, more slimming pose is created by moving the arms slightly out and away from her body.

LEFT—Here, the subject's stomach is pressed forward, creating an unattractive stomach "pooch." **RIGHT**—To eliminate the problem of a prominent stomach, have the subject tuck her pelvis with her hips back.



LEFT—A pose with the subject's arm coming out straight-on to the camera is not flattering. **RIGHT**—Here's a quick fix. Have the subject's arm angled back and away from you. It's a more dynamic angle that helps produce a better, more salable pose.



LEFT—Here's an example of bad hand posing. The fingers look like claws. **RIGHT**—A better hand pose is achieved with the subject's fingers placed closer together.



HIDING A SUBJECT'S FLAWS

Few portrait subjects are perfect. Even many top models have imperfections, from gaps in their teeth to tattoos, so you'll need to keep any flaws in mind as you have your model pose. Tattoos are easy to work with as long as they are small. Just turn your model so they don't show, or

have her cover them with a piece of clothing or a hand. Obviously, if they are attractive, feel free to include them in some of your photos, but ultimately it's up to the subject. A tattoo may be okay for a portrait given to a significant other, but Mom and Dad might not be as accepting.



TOP—The small tattoo on the subject's leg didn't bother me—or her. This image was made outdoors with a Canon 50D camera and an EF 28-105mm lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{200}$ second at f/9 and ISO 200. A 550EX Speedlite provided fill. **BOTTOM**—If the subject wants the tattoo digitally removed, you'll find that Photoshop's Clone Stamp tool makes the job a snap. Here, I started by increasing the view magnification until the tattoo filled the monitor. I slowly sampled parts of the edge of the dress (when doing this, set the opacity to 50% or less). After the dress' edge was clean, I did the same for the tattoo, sampling from both sides of the tattoo to get the varying skin tones. Once the tattoo was removed, I used a large Clone Stamp brush and, with the Opacity set to 20%, I stamped over the area, sampling generously from surrounding areas on the subject's leg. The instructions might make the task sound time-consuming, but removing the tattoo will take you less time than reading this caption. **FACING PAGE**—After a tiny bit of retouching, the portrait—sans tattoo—was finished.



THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

We all have flaws—we're only human after all—but some of them, even the imagined ones, become hot buttons for subjects when they're viewing their images. I recently had a trim portrait subject tell me she had a big butt (that was her boyfriend's opinion). In a situation like this, you'll find that the subject will choose a pose that hides their "flaw" even if her face—the real subject of any portrait—doesn't have the best expression or best angle. It's maddening for photographers, but even if the subject doesn't select the best-possible photograph of herself, you will have great portraits that you can use as samples.

Sure, you should minimize whatever it is that your subject considers a flaw, but go a step farther: look for her strong points and accentuate those. This is something we'll go over in more detail later in this chapter.

I once did a shoot with two famous glamour photographers. I was struck by the differences in the way the three of us worked and our approach to working with the model during the session. One guy talked to the model before he did anything, but once he started shooting he never said another word. Since he had already told her what he wanted, after each exposure, he made a small grunting sound that was her signal to move to the next pose they'd planned. The other photographer was a medium-format shooter who gave the model specific directions to the quarter-of-an-inch of a pinkie pose and wouldn't make any image until he thought his composition and her pose were perfect. Everybody's different, and you should work with the subject in a manner that's comfortable for you.

FACING PAGE—The model is demonstrating a pose that women who are not self-conscious about their derrières might want consider when creating images for their significant others. The wall gave her something to lean on and something to do with her hands, but it also served as a reflector, kicking light back into the subject's face to fill shadows. The image was made with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 28-105mm lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{160}$ second at f/5.6 and ISO 200.





LEFT—This is one of the photographs that I made during a session with two glamour gurus. The lighting was from a Chimera (www.chimeralighting.com) Super PRO Plus lightbank on camera right and a 42-inch umbrella on the left for fill. The color negative shot was made with a Contax 167MT and 85mm f/1.8 Carl Zeiss lens. No exposure data was recorded. **RIGHT**—If your subject has long, attractive legs, why not show them off? Instead of having the model just stand there in this archway, I asked her to place her right leg on the wall. This added two more diagonal lines to the composition, directing attention to the subject's face, but at the same time emphasizing her long legs. This image was made with all natural light using a Canon EOS 10D camera and an EF 28-105mm lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/5 and ISO 200.

POSING RULES, GUIDELINES, AND SUGGESTIONS

When I was a younger photographer, I attended a workshop on posing. The speaker, a respected gentleman who was well known for his portraits, showed us how to pose a subject. It was basically pose A, then pose B, then pose C. After a few minutes, he asked me to show the group how to pose the model we were working with, and

I didn't remember a darn thing. His approach entailed far too many details, and it was too much for my brain to handle.

As you gain experience in posing, you won't have to think about the rules. In the meantime, though, here are some helpful guidelines:

Angle the Average Subject Slightly Away from the Camera. Don't pose heavier subjects square to the camera. If you do so, the pose

will look stagnant and the subject will just look bigger. Instead, have the subject stand in a three-quarter presentation to the camera and ask her to put her weight on the foot/leg farthest from the camera. This is a relaxed pose, but keep in mind that posing in a studio environment may not *feel* relaxing to your subject. Posing in an

outdoor setting is easier for clients—the clouds, trees, etc., seem to evoke more of a feeling of calm.

Pose a Slender Subject Square to the Camera. You can get away with posing slender subjects square to the camera. At the time I made the fantasy photograph of Tia Stoneman (shown

RIGHT—This subject wanted a photograph to show off what she considered her greatest asset—her legs. This is a purely available light shot made with a Canon EOS 50D camera and EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/1.8 and ISO 200. I added a plus one-half stop of exposure compensation because of the backlighting

BELOW—The subject struck this initial pose after I directed her to place her hands on her legs. She positioned her hands in a nice, delicate manner but blocked the view of her legs. I refined this initial pose over eight frames. I made one image after I shot what I thought was the “keeper,” and as it turned out, I liked that shot best.





RIGHT—Is there a bigger cliché than an attractive woman on a motorcycle? I don’t think so. Even though this subject is fit, her shoulder and waist are square to the camera, making her look a lot larger than she really is. No portrait subject would like this pose, so I kept shooting. **LEFT**—Here, the subject’s shoulders are still square to the camera, but the tilt created a diagonal line. Her waist is twisted away from the angle of her shoulders. Her face is also slightly pointed away from the direction her shoulders are pointed—always a good idea. Looser cropping helps place her body in context. Both shots were made with a Canon 5D camera and a 135mm f/2.8 SF lens. An identical exposure was used for both images: $\frac{1}{200}$ second at f/5.6 and ISO 200. A Canon 550EX Speedlite added fill.

on the facing page) in a friend’s studio, I didn’t know that she would become my muse and that I would photograph her more than any other model over the next ten years. You’ll likely see images of Tia in every chapter.

Putting the Best Face Forward. When a person has a portrait made, they often ask the photographer to make sure they “get their good side.” The asymmetrical nature of faces means there really is a “good” side, and it’s the portrait



LEFT—This is from my first shoot with Tia. I'm pretty sure I instructed her to put all of her weight on the foot/leg farthest from the camera, but this is how she interpreted my directive. The image was shot with a Canon EOS 20D camera and an EF 28-105mm lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/3.5 and ISO 800 (yes it's noisy). The image was captured in monochrome mode. **ABOVE**—My second shoot with Tia was outdoors at a bird sanctuary. She was once again wearing white, and I had the good sense to photograph her in color. Here she's seated on a bench overlooking an observation area, and she's completely relaxed. As an actress, she was open to my suggestions for dramatic poses, and this was the eleventh shot in a sequence of similar poses. I went on to make fifteen more images, but this was the best. You should always work through a pose until you have something you like. This shot was made with an Olympus E-300 and their Zuiko Digital ED 150mm f/2.0 lens. The available light exposure was $\frac{1}{500}$ second at f/4 and ISO 200.

photographer’s job to emphasize it. Capturing the “good side” and doing a little retouching can make your client look even better in their images than they do in person—but few clients will complain about that!

When your subject arrives for the session, identify their good side, then experiment with your lighting to create the most flattering look possible. Remember, the overall look and feel of the pose may be lighting dependent; what looks good under directional lighting may look completely different under soft or flat lighting.

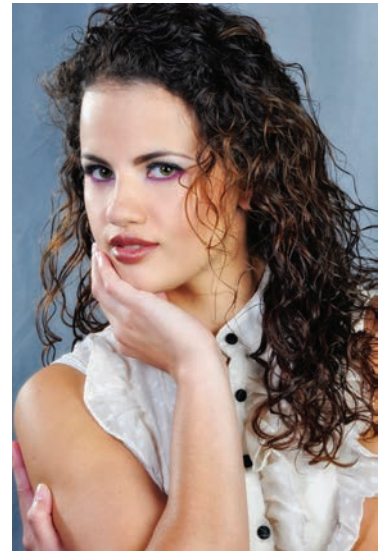
Accentuate Her Assets. When you’re seeking to minimize any flaws your model might have, remember to accent her strongest features. Are her eyes beautiful? Then you should shoot headshots and close-ups. Does a female subject have long, shapely legs? Shoot several images from a low angle, and don’t be afraid to use slightly wide-angle lenses to accent them.

THE RIGHT LOOK

Beginning portrait photographers often overlook the importance of styling an image. As this is a



Here’s the subject before makeup (left) and after makeup (right). A better pose helped too. During the session, I’ll often ask a female subject, “What happens when your hair gets wet?” Whether she says “It goes straight” or “It gets curly” my response to either one is “That’s great!” I keep a spray bottle handy to wet her hair down. That always gives me a completely different look.



LEFT—During this session, I photographed both sides of the model’s face. It doesn’t hurt that she is beautiful—no matter which way you photograph her—but you will see the difference between the left and right side of her face. In this image she is posed with her face and shoulders at the same angle. That’s not usually the most appealing approach, but it works here. **CENTER**—Here’s a cropped version of the original image. I wanted you to compare apples to apples—so this image and the next are now roughly the same size. Both shots were made with a Nikon D90 camera and an AF-S Nikkor 18–105mm f/3.5–5.6 VR lens (the 35mm equivalent is 27–157.5mm). The exposure was $1/50$ second at f/13 and ISO 200. **RIGHT**—With her head turned in the opposite direction, the model is still beautiful, but she looks slightly different. I asked her to bring her hand up to her face and she did so delicately. If she had applied pressure with her hand, unattractive distortions could have resulted.

book about posing, I’ll provide just a little bit of help on the topic here, but for more information, check out *Joe Farace’s Glamour Photography* (Amherst Media®), which has a chapter on makeup and wardrobe as well as lots of retouching tips. You can use a professional hair and makeup artist or have the subject do it herself. There are benefits and drawbacks to both approaches.

For many sessions, particularly when you don’t plan to shoot tight headshots, the subject may be capable of doing her own hair and makeup. In this case, go over your makeup guidelines before she begins to apply it and keep an eye on her as the application progresses. Unless you are specifically looking for a dramatic effect, the makeup should look clean and simple (think “daytime look”);

heavy makeup can look dated and may hurt sales. Similarly, hairstyles should be kept simple and classic.

Once the hair and makeup is done and it’s time to begin shooting, be sure to give your subject time to warm up. When working with subjects who haven’t had a portrait made since high school, don’t expect them to walk in front of your camera and move effortlessly from pose to pose. Give instructions clearly and stay calm and relaxed if the subject is having trouble following them. After all, you have more experience than your model does, so go with the flow. The better you are at expressing your ideas and making your model feel at ease, the better your photos will be.



3. How Lens Choice Affects Pose Selection

“In a photograph a person’s eyes tell much, sometimes they tell all.”—*Alfred Eisenstaedt*

Since this is a chapter that’s as much about hardware as it is posing, I wanted to share my favorite Alfred Eisenstaedt story with you. Eisenstaedt worked as a photographer for *Life* magazine from 1936 to 1972, and his photographs of the great and near great appeared on ninety *Life* covers. Once, while making an executive portrait for the magazine, the CEO said, “I see you use a Rolleiflex; so do I.” Without blinking, Eisenstaedt replied “I see your secretary uses an Underwood typewriter; so does Ernest Hemingway.”

A BASIC LENS KIT

My basic lens kit is simple, and the specific lens I choose depends on whether I’m shooting indoors or out.

When you’re shooting indoors, space and light are in short supply. I often find myself pressed up against the opposite wall, so I use a shorter lens than I might otherwise use.



FACING PAGE—While nobody would call the Zeiss 50mm f/1.7 for my Contax film SLR an inexpensive lens, it’s a focal length that has remarkable versatility. I used it to make this headshot of a model with her hair in front of her face. If you opt to take the same approach, keep in mind that the model’s eyes should be showing. The eyes are typically the key part of any portrait. The model was illuminated only by window light (at camera left) and a reflector. The exposure was not recorded. **TOP**—What was I thinking here? Anytime you sit somebody down on a floor or another flat surface, have them roll onto one hip to create a more natural pose. This image was captured using a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 85mm lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/2 and ISO 400. **BOTTOM**—I never got the previous pose right, but I did work with the subject to come up with something completely different. The new pose was aggressive and sexy at the same time, perfect for this type of intimate portrait. This photo was captured with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 28–155mm IS lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{30}$ second at f/4 and ISO 800. Two different lenses, two different poses.

Because the light levels tend to be low indoors, you may need to add fill. However, I feel that portraiture is about soft light, and there's nothing softer than window light. The problem is, windows don't always provide enough light. This means you'll need a fast lens. Indoors, I prefer using an 85 or 135mm lens, but don't discount the so-called normal, 50mm lens that may be bundled with your camera. Even a normal cheapie lens that sells for \$80 can make great shots.

Which lenses do I use where? It depends on the multiplication factor of a particular camera. If I was making that same shot in my kitchen (below left) with a camera with a full-frame sensor, I might have used an 85mm lens instead of a 50mm. Either way, the perspective provided by any 85mm lens, especially a fast one, makes it ideal for indoor glamour images, no matter what kind of digital SLR you use. Depending on your SLR's multiplication factor, a 135mm lens can be a tight fit for some indoor locations, but if you

LEFT—One of my posing “tricks” is to ask the subject to hug herself and then watch what happens. This image was the third of an eight-shot sequence. The north-facing bay window in my kitchen provided the light. The shot was made with a Canon 50D camera and an EF 28-105mm lens at 105mm. The program mode exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/4.5 and 400 ISO. A Canon 550EX Speedlite with a Sto-fen diffuser provided fill. **RIGHT**—Canon's EF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS lens covers a range of 29 to 216mm when used with APS-C (25.1x16.7mm sensor size) cameras. The lens features high-quality ultra-low dispersion (UD) optics and image stabilization that lets you handhold the camera using a shutter that's four stops slower than you might otherwise be able to use. Photo courtesy of Canon USA.





LEFT—This shot of Mary was made in my in-home studio. The lighting consisted of a Flashpoint 620M monolight with a Westcott 7-foot white/black parabolic umbrella at camera right. A Flashpoint 320 with a snoot was placed at camera left. The color image was converted to monochrome using Nik Software’s (www.niksoftware.com) Silver Efex Pro 2. The image was shot with a Canon EOS Rebel T3i camera and an EF-S 18–135mm f/3.5–5.6 IS lens at 57mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/6.3 and ISO 100. **RIGHT**—Dawn Clifford and I set out to create a 1950s-style portrait. Here she’s doing her Doris Day impression. The image was shot with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an 85mm f/1.2 L II lens. The exposure was f/3.2 and $\frac{1}{60}$ second at ISO 200. The camera’s built-in flash was softened with a LumiQuest (www.lumiquest.com) Soft Screen. After looking at the histogram for my test shots, I added a $+1\frac{1}{3}$ stop exposure compensation to achieve a high-key look. Applying Canon’s Nostalgia picture style in-camera gave this image the look of a faded print from the ’50s. Nostalgia was downloaded from Canon’s web site and installed on the camera.

have the space, you will love the perspective this lens produces.

FAST LENSES

When it comes to sports cars, computer processors, bullet trains, Internet connections, and even lenses, faster is better. It’s much easier to take

photographs in low light with an f/2.0 or f/2.8 lens than with an f/4.5 or f/5.6 lens. Camera companies don’t bury us with choices like the car manufacturers do. They usually sell just two or three lenses in the same focal length range, and this section will help you understand your options.



FACING PAGE—Canon’s EF 85mm f/1.2 L II USM lens has an integrated high-speed CPU and uses a ring-type ultrasonic motor (USM) for fast and near-silent autofocus—something wedding photographers will appreciate when capturing quiet moments. The USM in the lens focuses approximately 1.8X faster than its predecessor. Focus is crisp, and a grippy focusing ring offers seamless manual override, something that’s especially useful when you’re shooting wide open and you want to shift focus by a silly millimeter or two. At f/1.2 you can keep a model’s eye sharp while blurring the ends of her eyelashes. The shallow depth of field possible at the lens’s widest aperture makes it ideal for use in the studio or on location. **RIGHT**—Here, I used an EF 28–105mm lens at 60mm. Since the Canon EOS 50D camera that I used to make the photograph has a 1.6X multiplication factor, the 60mm lens setting produced the angle of view of a 96mm lens. Exposure was $\frac{1}{100}$ second at f/5.6 and ISO 200. A 550EX Speedlite provided fill. I asked Tomiko to “rip her clothes off,” and this was her reaction. Her body language created an active and fun composition.



THE LENS MULTIPLICATION FACTOR

Not every digital SLR has a full-frame image sensor (one that’s the same 24x36mm format used in 35mm film cameras). When you’re using a camera with a smaller sensor, you’ll need to determine the lens’s effective focal length. For example, the Four-Thirds and Micro Four-Thirds system that Olympus and Panasonic uses produces a multiplication factor of 2.0X. That means that when you attach a 50mm lens to an E-5, the angle of view will be that of a 100mm lens. Other cameras have different multiplication factors—1.3X, 1.5X, and 1.6X—so be sure to consult your User’s Guide and do the math to determine what you’ll see when you push the shutter button *before* you start the shoot.

SPECIAL-PURPOSE LENSES

If you like distortion and soft focus, you probably know about Lensbabies (www.lensbaby.com). There are now three Lensbaby lenses on the market—Composer, Muse, and Control Freak. The Composer is relatively new, while the Muse replaces the Original and Lensbaby 2.0. The Control Freak replaces the Lensbaby 3G.

BELOW—Despite its 50mm focal length rating, portraits are natural for the Composer. Because the EOS-1D Mark II N camera has a multiplication factor of 1.3X, the lens's cropping is close to that of a 65mm lens, which worked fine for this photo of Mary standing under the apple tree in our front yard. The aperture priority mode exposure was $1/125$ at ISO 200.



ABOVE—The Composer is a completely new kind of lens that has a ball and socket configuration to deliver smooth selective focus photography with the least amount of hassle. All Lensbaby lenses are designed to bring part of a photo into sharp focus with that “sweet spot” surrounded by gradually increasing blur. By moving and shifting a Lensbaby (which is a lot simpler with the Composer than previous offerings) you can move that sharp area around in the photo for creative effect. The big news is that Composer stays in the desired position without requiring a locking mechanism, making results both easier to achieve and repeatable. You no longer have to squeeze the lens to focus but can simply tilt the lens to the desired angle and then focus with a traditional barrel focusing ring that is as wide and as easy to use as the one on your “normal” lenses.

True, it's possible to select a low ISO speed and choose a long shutter speed to ensure a proper exposure. After all, the pioneers in the field did this. Their portraits show stiff, stoic, nonmoving folks. If you look closely, you may see the blur that resulted when people couldn't sit still for long exposures. Stopping athletic action, an animated speaker, or even the dancing at a wedding reception wasn't possible. In a low-light scenario, you can't rely on a fast shutter

speed alone to capture action. You'll need a wide aperture and a high ISO to get acceptable images.

Outdoors, you almost always have both more light and more room than you're afforded indoors, so that's when I start using longer lenses and zoom lenses. There's almost always enough room to do full-length poses outdoors, and longer focal lengths allow shallower depth of field and consequently softer-looking backgrounds.



ABOVE—The Canon EF 70-300mm f/4-5.6L IS USM telephoto zoom lens features two ultra-low dispersion elements for improved image quality and reduced chromatic aberration. The lens incorporates a floating focusing mechanism for sharpness from close up to infinity, plus an image stabilization system that increases the ability of the photographer to handhold at shutter speeds that are up to four times slower than normal.

RIGHT—The 70mm end of Canon's EF 70-300mm f/4-5.6L IS USM lens is wonderful for making full-length shots in the studio. It delivers a much better perspective than using a wide-angle lens. The backdrop used here is "Carbonite—Inspired by Joe Farace" from Silverlake Photo.



For openers, I start with zoom lenses in the slightly wide-angle to mild-telephoto range. A lens in the 28–135mm range provides flexibility for choosing high or low camera positions. You might consider a 80–200 or 75–300mm zoom lens. The 75–300mm focal length range allows for the shallow depth of field that helps a model “pop” from the background. This is most noticeable at the high end of the focal length range—especially when you’re shooting a full-length pose.

Really long zoom lenses, such as Canon’s EF 70–300mm f/4–5.6L IS USM, provide lots of cropping flexibility, especially when shooting in a studio (not my tiny space, but a big studio like my friend Jack Dean’s [www.jackdeanphotography.com] where I made some of the examples you

see here). Nikon offers a similar lens, the AF-S DX Nikkor 55–300mm f/4.5–5.6G ED VR. This lens provides built-in image stabilization that the company calls vibration reduction (VR). The Canon telephoto zoom lens features two ultra-low dispersion elements for improved image quality and reduced chromatic aberration. It incorporates a floating focusing mechanism for sharpness from close up (3.9 feet) to infinity plus an image stabilization system that Canon claims increases usability by approximately four stops. The image stabilization (IS) system includes a function that allows it to continue to operate even when the camera or lens (a better idea) is mounted on a tripod. There’s an optional Canon Tripod Mount C for mounting on a tripod or monopod. The lens is dust- and water-resistant and features a fluorine coating that resists smears and fingerprints.

Are these lenses the only ones for portrait photography? No. There are times when wider-angle lenses used indoors will enhance the look of leggy models. Outdoors, you can use focal lengths longer than 300mm for a more dramatic look.

FULL-LENGTH POSES AND WIDE-ANGLE LENSES

Last year (before I moved into a new house and a larger home studio) I wanted to shoot full-length shots in my tiny 7x9-foot basement studio. To do so, I had to clean up some of the junk on the

The EF 70–300mm f/4–5.6L IS USM lens, used at 300mm, is great for shooting runway images. It also comes in handy when you have to make full-length images and headshots without changing position. This image was captured using a Canon EOS 1D Mark II N camera. The exposure was $\frac{1}{100}$ second at f/14 and ISO 100.





I photographed Tia Stoneman in the doorway of an old building that has long since been remodeled into something nicer but with decidedly less character. I asked Tia to sit, resting her back against the wall and also wanted her to pull up her skirt a bit to show her great-looking legs. (See chapter 2.) I asked her to place her left hand on her leg and tried many refinements, always looking for a natural look, before arriving at this shot. The image was captured directly in monochrome mode using a Canon EOS 50D camera and a 50mm lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{250}$ second at f/11 and ISO 800. An 550EX Speedlite provided fill.

opposite side of the studio space and pose the models where I used to stand and shoot. This allowed for a 10x10-foot space. The area wasn't substantially bigger, but it was an improvement. I used that space to test lighting products and shoot glamour photographs for *Joe Farace's Glamour Photography* (Amherst Media®).

Indoors, shooting full-length poses requires wider-angle lenses than I might prefer to use or would have used outdoors. However, when working in smaller spaces, some compromises

are required. To make wide-angle lenses work, you'll need to pay close attention to your camera height. I find that sitting in a chair to photograph the model works best, but you can use whatever contortionist trick works for you as long as you're not shooting down on your subject. If you do, you'll end up with unflattering foreshortened and distorted portraits with disproportionate head sizes. Don't shoot from too low an angle, either. If you do, you'll end up looking up your subject's nose.



FACING PAGE—The wonderfully useful, inexpensive, and sharp Canon EF 28-105 3.5/4.5 lens has been discontinued and can only be purchased used (at affordable prices). If you can find one, get it. I'm sorry that I sold mine. I used that wonderful lens to make this image using my famous "push away pose." It's an easy direction for a subject but takes some prompting. When attempting to use a wall as a prop, typically the subject is too far away from the object, so I tell them to get close to the wall and then to move their arms and push against the wall. When they're in the perfect pose, I click the shutter. I make more than one or two exposures during the process with the subject different distances from the wall.



LEFT—Nikon's AF-S Nikkor 18-105mm f/3.5-5.6 VR lens produces the 35mm equivalent of a 27-157.5mm focal length. The lens is bundled with a reversible tulip-shaped hood that does a great job of reducing flare and protecting the front element of the lens. The filter thread is 67mm. While not as cheap as smaller sizes, a Tiffen Skylight filter, for example, will set you back less than twenty bucks. Considering that the front element is *very* close to the front of the lens and, hood or no hood, stuff happens, some kind of protective filter is a good investment. Photograph courtesy of Nikon USA. **RIGHT**—This image was shot with a Canon EOS 5D and EF 28-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS lens, set at 56mm. This was the only way that I was able to capture a full-length pose in my 11x15-foot studio. A simple two-light setup was used to create a 3:1 lighting ratio, producing an exposure of $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/11 and ISO 100.

THE PROS AND CONS OF USING ZOOM LENSES

The biggest advantage of using a zoom lens in portraiture is flexibility in cropping the image. Depending on the zoom range, you can go from a full-length pose to a headshot without changing the camera position, as I demonstrated earlier in this chapter. The downsides? Zoom lenses, especially really good ones like the two I mentioned in this chapter, can be expensive. Cheaper zoom lenses tend to have smaller apertures that can make focusing more difficult in studios where the only illumination is modeling lights from the flash. You may run into the issue outdoors too, but it's typically less of a problem. Zoom lenses can also be heavy, much heavier than prime focal length lenses. But photography



is a game of compromises. With every benefit, there seems to come a drawback.

There are pros and cons to using prime focal length lenses as well. The upside is that prime lenses are almost always faster than zoom lenses that cover the same focal length. This translates into brighter viewfinders. Also, with prime lenses, your camera's autofocus won't have to work as hard and will probably focus faster. Prime lenses tend to be less expensive as well. My two favorite lenses—the EF 85mm f/1.8 and EF 135mm f/2.8 SF—are relatively inexpensive, especially when you have to replace one because of stupidity as I did with the 135mm. (See “She Didn't Break My Heart, but I Broke My Lens.”) The downside is that you lose flexibility and may need three lenses to cover the range of focal lengths offered by the two zoom lenses I mentioned earlier in this chapter. And three lenses are going to cost more than one lens, no matter how inexpensive they may be. If you only shoot a certain way and in a certain place, you may get by with the focal lengths of my two favorite prime lenses, but if you can't, you'll need a zoom lens.

This intimate portrait was shot with a Canon EOS 60D (not D60) camera and an EF 135mm f/2.8 SF lens wide open. Window light illuminated the model. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/2.8 and ISO 400. When you get in tight, poses may seem unnecessary, but they still have an effect on the subject's body overall. Here, she's just leaning back with her arms on the sill of a window.



LEFT—This is the first of seven shots I made of this subject and the one at the shortest focal length setting. It was made with a Nikon D90 camera with an AF-S Nikkor 18–105mm lens at 92mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/14 and ISO 200. This is a variation of the hands-on-hips pose, but here I asked the model to make her hands into fists (they are just a little tighter than I may have liked) to produce a different look. **RIGHT**—To minimize the impact of the subject's arms in this pose I continued to zoom in, finally reaching the classic 105mm portrait lens focal length to create this headshot. It retains my preferred pose of having the subject's head point one way and the body the opposite direction while focusing the viewer's gaze on her beautiful eyes. After I placed her in the pose, I made all seven shots while changing positions, zooming in tighter and clicking the shutter.



SHE DIDN'T BREAK MY HEART, BUT I BROKE MY LENS

While photographing Michelle at a group shoot in Arizona, I was using two camera bodies. My Canon EOS 1-D N had a Canon EF-135 soft-focus lens mounted, while my EOS D60 had a 28–105mm zoom attached. I set the EOS 1-D N down on a table behind me and, while composing this image, I backed into the table, knocking the camera onto the hardwood floor. All I heard was the sound of breaking glass and assumed I'd knocked a ceramic figurine off the table. I turned around to see the camera on the floor. The lens was still mounted to the camera but was broken in three places like a twig. A Canon technician told me that the cost of repair would exceed purchasing a new one. It was my favorite lens, so I bit the bullet and purchased a new one. Believe it or not, I sold the broken lens, as-is, on eBay and included a copy of the photograph that I was making. *Tip:* Don't throw any piece of photo gear away until you see if somebody is offering something similar.



LEFT—This is the photo of the broken EF 135mm f/2.8 SF lens that ran on eBay and helped me sell the lens. **FACING PAGE**—This image was made with a Canon EOS D60 (not a 60D) camera and an EF 28–105mm zoom lens at 102mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{160}$ second at f/5.6 and ISO 800—another “What was I thinking?” moment. A Canon 420EX Speedlite provided fill.





PART 2

WORKING IN THE STUDIO



4. Seamless Posing

“Taking pictures is like tiptoeing into the kitchen late at night and stealing Oreo cookies.”

—Diane Arbus

I haven't had an Oreo in a long time, but anybody who's ever made a portrait knows what the late Ms. Arbus was talking about. Photographing a portrait subject against a seamless paper background is the ultimate test of one's ability to make something from nothing; you're shooting

FACING PAGE—For this shot made against white seamless paper, the main light was a White Lightning X1600 monolight with a 22-inch matte pan reflector and diffusion sock mounted. A second X1600 was aimed at the background. The subject extended her leg, and we tried various hand and arm poses until she came up with this one. The shot was made with a Nikon D300s camera and a Nikkor 18–200mm f/3.5–5.6G lens. The manual mode exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/9 and ISO 200. **BELOW**—Arizona's Kent Hepburn put his model in a pose with a leonine sensuality that suited the pink lingerie and white background. Three Elinchrom 1200RX heads were powered by two Micro 3000 asymmetrical generators and triggered by an FRC-1 radio transmitter. One flash was placed on the model's right and aimed toward the background with some spill onto the subject. The flash to her left was placed high and aimed behind her. A third light, with a 74x74-inch Octalite, was placed in front of the model, behind Kent. A fan blew from her right. ©2012 Kent Hepburn.



without a net—naked. All that stands between you and a good portrait is your imagination. Because there’s nothing for your subject to interact with, your posing directions are going to have to be more precise than normal, and you’d better hope that the subject is inner directed (see chapter 1) because it’s just the two of you and your talent.

HIGH KEY, LOW KEY

To illustrate how similar lighting and posing techniques can produce completely different results, let me show you how I create high-key or low-key portraits indoors.

High-key portraits are primarily comprised of lighter tones. High-key lighting aims to reduce the lighting ratio in the scene; in other words,



LEFT—This high-key image shows that you don’t need seamless paper for a seamless paper look. This shot of Amber was made in my camera room with no background—just the studio wall behind her. One Rimelite (www.rimeliteusa.com) monolight with a Grand lightbank was aimed at the subject, while a second monolight fitted with a standard reflector was aimed at the wall behind her. The image was shot with a Canon EOS 5D camera and an EF 85MM f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{80}$ second at f/9 and ISO 200. The pose was a combination of two favorites—a bend at the waist and folded arms. The result is natural and relaxed. **RIGHT**—I created this low-key image using the same lighting setup. I placed a black Westcott (www.fjwestcott.com) Scrim Jim behind the subject to create the background. The image was made with an EOS 1D Mark II N camera and an EF 85mm lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{50}$ second at f/9 and ISO 200.



LEFT—A Scrim Jim (www.fjwestcott.com) is a strong, collapsible diffusion and reflector system made up of a series of frames, diffusion and reflector fabrics, and grip accessories that make it all work the way you want. The square section frames are made of lightweight aircraft aluminum, and they are easy to assemble. Their modular construction allows you to create four easy-to-handle frame sizes: 42x42, 42x72, 72x72, and the super-sized 96x96. The high-quality fabrics used have hook-and-loop tape sewn around their perimeter that produces an even, snug, and secure fit to the frame. Photo courtesy of F.J. Westcott. **ABOVE**—Inspiration for poses comes from many places—in this case, it was the dance scene in *Pulp Fiction*. The pose was the subject's idea, not mine. I used a Booth Photographic 60-inch parabolic umbrella, positioned behind me and at camera left as fill. The main light was a Portalite; it was placed closer to the subject and also at camera left. The image was made with a Canon EOS 5D camera and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{80}$ second at f/7.1 and ISO 100. A black Scrim Jim was used as a background.

the light is soft and free from dark shadows. This is usually accomplished with a large, soft light source—for example, window light from a north-facing window with available-light portraits. High key portraits often contain small darker areas such as the subject's eyes to keep the images from being too flat and boring. It's a good approach for photographing blonds.

Low-key portraits are primarily comprised of dark tones and deep shadows, with small bright

areas. Low-key lighting typically requires one light, but it is sometimes supplemented by a reflector. Low-key lighting has a higher lighting ratio (an 8:1 lighting ratio was used in the sample image shown on the facing page) than high-key lighting, which can approach 1:1. A low-key lighting approach is well suited to photographing brunettes.



ABOVE—This setup image shows me working with Amber Nicholson in my home studio. The main light, a flash with a 28-inch square Broncolor lightbank, was at camera left. A second head with a 60-inch Booth Photographic parabolic umbrella provided fill. I cranked up the power in the second head, lowering the lighting ratio to 2.5:1, but the combination of the Broncolor lightbank and the big umbrella produced excellent light quality. ©Mary Farace. **FACING PAGE**—Here's another shot made with a black Scrim Jim serving as the background. The Broncolor A2 power pack has three outlets, and I would have liked to add a hair light or backlight to this shot. The main light, a flash with a 28-inch square Broncolor lightbank, was placed at camera left. Fill was provided by a second head with a 60-inch Booth Photographic parabolic umbrella attached. The shot was made with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{100}$ second at f/16 and ISO 100.





LEFT—Mary was in a 1960s groove when she made this image using a Dynalite SP2000 power pack and a four-head setup. There were two large Chimera lightbanks on the subject and two heads aimed at the background. Yes, the model's hand is behind her back, but you can see both arms. I like the pose, especially with the leggy model's left leg offset, showing the red shoes, which add a punch of color to the predominantly monochromatic image. The image was made with a Canon EOS 60D and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/11 and ISO 100. ©2011 Mary Farace. **RIGHT**—I wanted to use a black background to do a low-key shot of this subject in a black dress, so I employed one of Westcott's small (42x42-inch) Black Block Scrim Jims, which just soaks up any stray light. I used just one light to create the image—a Flashpoint 620M monolight with a Westcott 7-foot white/black parabolic umbrella, positioned at camera left. The shot was made with a Canon EOS 5D and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{100}$ second at f/8 and ISO 200.

ON LOCATION

A new background or prop can get a photographer's creative juices flowing. Look for backgrounds and props that challenge you to think imaginatively about making images, and consider those that your customers might enjoy. When working on location, your prop and background selection will be influenced by the

specifics of your project or budget, but you'll also need to consider the portability of any store-bought portrait elements. Even a tiny car like my Mini Cooper will hold a 54-inch wide roll of seamless paper, for example, but if you want a wide background, you'll need a bigger car and more room to set it up.

DO YOU REALLY NEED A FLASH METER?

When shooting film, we relied upon a flash meter and expensive Polaroid test shots to ensure a correct exposure. With digital, we're led to believe that all we need is a histogram and a three-inch LCD screen. The truth is, whether you need a meter or not depends on your shooting environment.

When some photographers shoot, they pick a shutter speed that will sync the camera with the flash, then they choose an aperture based on experience. Many portrait photographers like to work with mid-range apertures, so they set their camera to f/5.6 or f/8 and make a test exposure. At that point, they look at the LCD and histogram. If the exposure isn't right, they choose another aperture and take another test shot, repeating the process until they zero in on an accurate exposure.

The above approach is one way to get correct flash exposures, but if you are using continuous lighting instead of electronic flash, using your in-camera meter and bracketing is a good idea. Bracketing is a time-honored photo technique where multiple images of the same subject are made at different exposure levels. The idea is that one shot will have a perfect exposure, while some others may be acceptable.

You might think that posing isn't important when you're going for a tight headshot, but it's still critical, as the rest of the body serves as a base for the head and shoulders. Before you shoot, be sure the subject is seated or standing comfortably, with her body pointed one way and her head turned in the opposite direction. The image was captured using a Canon EOS 1D Mark II N camera and an EF 135mm f/2.8 lens. The exposure was $1/160$ at f/3.2 and ISO 400.





This monochrome glamour image was made in my former home studio. The model used the hands-on-hips pose (there are slight variations; no two subjects will do exactly the same thing no matter what directions you offer). In some scenarios, the pose can create a wholesome look. Here, the pose is sexy. The image was made with a Canon EOS 5D camera and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{50}$ second at f/9 and ISO 100.

A BASEMENT STUDIO

The following images—some made with seamless paper backgrounds, and some without—were all shot in my basement studio. Some were made in my tiny old unfinished basement, with the

furnace sitting just slightly out of camera range. Some were made in my new home studio. I have higher ceilings in the new studio, but at 11x15-feet, the space isn't what anyone would call *expansive*.



LEFT—I posed Heather against a gray Savage seamless paper background. The lighting came from a Flashpoint 620M monolight (www.adorama.com), fitted with a Westcott 7-foot white/black parabolic umbrella (www.fjwestcott.com), placed at camera left. Heather is a dynamic, inner-directed model, so I just made a few suggestions as we worked on a sequence of images with this lighting setup. This shot was made with a Canon EOS 5D camera and an EF 28–135mm f/3.5–5.6 IS lens at 53mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{160}$ second at f/6.3 and ISO 100. **CENTER**—Here, the subject executed a from-the-back pose that's tricky to do and even trickier to shoot. She knew what she was doing, but my wife Mary asked her to tuck one leg behind the other. I think that small change added interest and improved the image. The shot was made with a Pentax K2000 camera and SMC DA 50–200mm f/4–5.6 ED WR lens at 58mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/8 and ISO 200. **RIGHT**—Here's another shot of the same subject, made with the same background and lighting. Here, her outfit and pose suit her outdoorsy nature. We went with a slight variation on the Wonder Woman (hands-on-hips) pose. Her hands were positioned higher on her body, and one hand was tucked just behind her back and out of camera view. The image was made with a Nikon D3X camera and an AF Nikkor 85mm f/1.8D lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/8 and ISO 200.

SCENIC BACKGROUNDS

They may not be the main focus of a photograph, but backdrops and props can enhance an image. A scenic background can be as much an important part of the photograph as the person standing or sitting in front of it. Then again, that same background, unlit and barely visible, can be reduced to a supporting role. If a particular background makes the person being photographed feel special, it can help your bottom line.

By working with different neutral backdrops, you can experiment with different designs and textures so you're ready for anything. When shopping for backgrounds, it's best to select one that complements the subject without competing for the viewer's attention. (That's why solid-colored seamless paper is a classic.)

THE POLISHED PORTRAIT: KILLER CURVES

This series of images was designed by Barbara A. Lynch-Johnt and implemented by my wife Mary Farace in an attempt to show you “how to amp up the wow factor to slim, maximize the appearance of legs, waist, rear, and breasts.” To do that, I was assisted by the wonderfully talented Pam Simpson, who did the hard work of actually posing for these before-and-after examples.

The word “curves” has connotations. You see, some women naturally have few curves while some—to people with a narrow vision of beauty—have too many. On one extreme, you have a waif-like runway model; on the other side, you have a view of feminine beauty best expressed in the paintings of Sir Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640). The reality is that when working with customers that are paying for your photography you’ll find subjects that have varying levels of “curviness.” Here are a few tips that you can use, but you’ll have to modify them for your specific subject because no two portrait subjects are exactly alike.

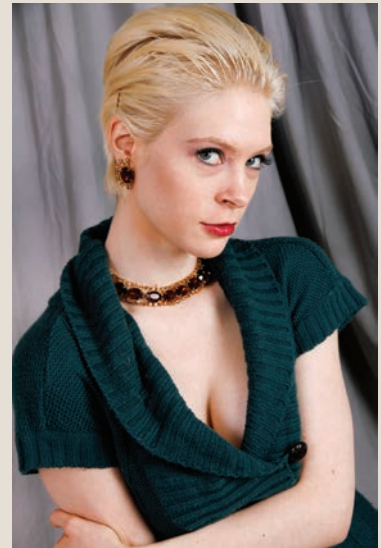
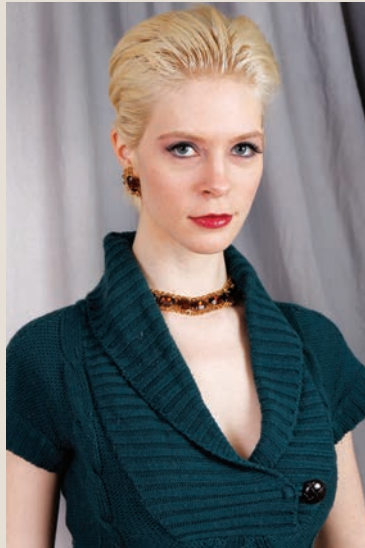


LEFT—This full-length “before” image of Pam in a black jumpsuit is what you get when you tell a subject to “stand over there” and expect them to figure out what you want. Talk to your subjects. That’s what Jay Perskie taught me many years ago, and it’s a lesson well worth putting into practice for your portraiture. **RIGHT**—Here’s a better pose. Pam is posing with one arm up, revealing the curvature of her body, while her other arm, placed on her thigh—with her elbow bent—reveals her thin body frame.

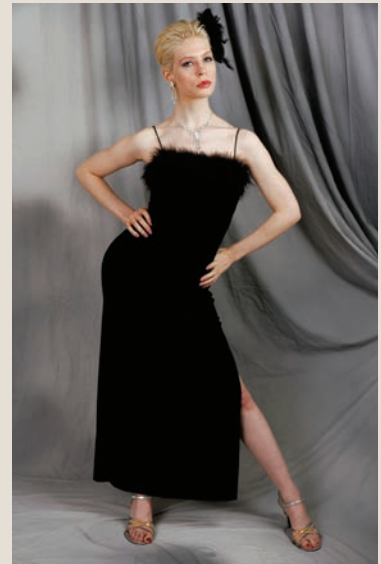


LEFT—Here’s Pam in a “before” three-quarters pose. Her hands are poorly posed and look uncomfortable. Her body is too straight, although she’s turned toward the main light. **RIGHT**—This is better. Wow! One arm is raised and she’s shifted her weight, creating a dynamic curve with body movement. Her body is pointing in one direction and her face is pointing in another, opposite direction (this is a portrait rule of thumb; of course, you can feel free to break the rules for creative effect, per your vision).

LEFT—This pose actually places less emphasis on the subject's breasts. **RIGHT**—This looks much better. Having the model bend down a little bit while using the sides of her arms to lightly squeeze her breasts creates more cleavage. The sexy expression also helps to sell this image.



LEFT—Here, we see a beautiful form-fitting dress with a slit adorning a beautiful body. It's up to you to add curves to this pose. **RIGHT**—Using a more extreme body shift while having the subject's leg protrude from the slit in the dress added drama while creating enticing curves and diagonal lines.



LEFT—This pose is lame, and the non-form-fitting dress has too much fabric for a curvy look. **RIGHT**—This is much better. The subject's hand on her hip improves the body angle, and reposing her hand and leg provided more impact.





5. Using Props

“I take photographs with love, so I try to make them art objects. But I make them for myself first and foremost—that is important.”—*Jacques-Henri Lartigue*

Props may not be the focal point of your image, but they can play an important part in creating a successful image. Imagine the role a Victorian bench might play in an image of a little girl in a lace dress, photographed with a classic backdrop. Of course, you could opt to keep that

bench and background dark and produce a more subdued image that draws more attention to the subject.

Updating props and backgrounds on a regular basis gives the customers the variety they are looking. You often hear photographers say,

FACING PAGE—The false-front schoolhouse was an excellent prop for this outdoor image. The railing was a natural place for the subject to rest her hand, resulting in a relaxed, schoolmarm look. The original color shot was made with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 28–105mm lens at 28mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{200}$ second at $f/5.6$ and ISO 400. A 550EX Speedlite provided fill. **RIGHT**—Trees make wonderful outdoor props. If you shoot in a park as I did here, you’ll find them in a variety of shapes and sizes. When photographing a scene with a tree as a prop, I typically have the subject start by leaning against the trunk. I ask her to move her hands into a comfortable, natural position. In this case, I also asked her to place one of her feet against the tree. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn’t. This shot’s okay, but I think it would have been more appealing if the model was not so square to the camera. This shot was made with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 28–105mm lens. The available-light exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at $f/4.5$ and ISO 200.





Lighting for this retro photograph was done with a Dynalite SP2000 power pack and a four-head setup. Two large Chimera lightbanks were focused on the subject, and two bare heads pumped lots of light onto the background. The shot was made with an EOS D60 and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/11 and ISO 100. ©2012 Mary Farace.

“I can’t buy any new props and backgrounds because I don’t have any more room (or money).” I tell them to check out eBay—the site makes buying and selling your gear a breeze. Successful photographers know that once their backgrounds and props have been used for a couple of seasons, they’ve paid for themselves, and it’s time to invest in new options. Remember, if your customers are bored with your offerings, they’ll go elsewhere.

Hats are one of the simplest, most useful props for a headshot. The downside is that they can

block the light from illuminating the subject’s eyes, but that can often be overcome with the correct lighting setup. One simple, inexpensive solution worth considering is to place a reflector low to kick light back into the subject’s eyes. A hooded sweatshirt (a “hoodie”) is an alternative to a hat. Hoodies are very popular with young people—both male and female—so suggest that your subject wear one to the shoot and have some fun with it.



LEFT—Because it is mostly transparent, this is a hat that photographers will love. Here, it allowed light from the monolight placed at camera right to pass through the brim. A small Westcott Illuminator reflector was placed at camera left. This image demonstrates one of my basic female poses. When the subject bends at the waist, a curved shape is created. More often than not, the subject also tilts her head in the opposite direction, creating a more dynamic portrait. If she doesn't, just ask her to do so. This image was made with a Contax film SLR and a Carl Zeiss 85mm lens. The exposure data was not recorded.

RIGHT—The subject's polka-dot bustier and retro-styled hat made this image scream to be in monochrome, so I used Alien Skin Software's (www.alienskin.com) Exposure plug-in to create this black & white version.



HALLOWEEN COSTUMES

I often ask subjects to bring their Halloween costumes to the shoot. As adults, they don't get a chance to wear them more than once, so my subjects are often game. Wearing a costume adds a fun element to a portrait shoot, and the subject usually gets into the session when they are dressed up. In addition to getting a chance to create some great images to add to your portfolio, you also get to add another potential sale from the session. It's a win-win situation.

Mary Farace photographed this "butterfly" at a group shoot in Northern Colorado. This is one of ten different shots and three poses that she made. Using the hay bales gave the subject something to interact with and created a diagonal line that showed off the costume. It also provided Mary with the opportunity to make a horizontal portrait, something that's not always easy to do with a single person. This image was made with an Olympus E-500 and a Zuiko Digital ED 40-150mm f/4.0-5.6 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{160}$ second at f/4.5 and ISO 100. The camera's pop-up flash provided fill. ©2012 Mary Farace.



TOP—Here is the same subject in a different costume. The basic hand-on-chin pose is an old one. It directs the viewer’s gaze to the subject’s eyes. The “break” in the wrist might be too extreme for some competition judges, but as photographers, we’re often pressed for time, which can make a shot just shy of perfect. This image was made with an Olympus E-500 camera and a Zuiko Digital ED 40–150mm f/4.0–5.6 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{160}$ second at f/4 and ISO 100. Backlighting created a highlight along the subject’s edge. The camera’s pop-up flash provided fill. ©2012 Mary Farace. **BOTTOM**—Mary Farace photographed this model in a well-suited Halloween costume. The shot was made with an Olympus E-1 camera and a Zukio Digital 40–150mm lens at 54mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{100}$ second at f/3.5 and ISO 200. The camera’s pop-up flash provided fill. I like the pose; the fact that the model was able to rest her hand on the cobweb-covered fence added to the impact of the image. ©2012 Mary Farace.





TOP—Most shooters have a collection of photographica, and I am no exception. This stereopticon sits in my workroom where I produce large-format prints. During this session with Noelle, I just ran out of ideas and asked her to hold it. She and I had fun with it. The image was shot with a Canon EOS 5D camera and an EF 85mm f/1.8 USM lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{80}$ second at f/7.1 and ISO 100. **BOTTOM**—What the image really needed was a true nostalgic look. I got what I was after by applying Topaz Labs' (www.topazlabs.com) BW Effects Photoshop-compatible plug-in, which offers seven different suites of presets. Here I applied the Hazy Viewfinder preset from the Opalotype collection for a look that's well-suited to the prop.



THE ENVIRONMENTAL PORTRAIT

An environmental portrait is one that is made in a subject's living, working, or playing environment. These images typically feature some of the things that surround the subject in their daily life. Many photographers feel that photographing a subject

in her natural surroundings helps to tell a story about the subject. For years, photographers have asserted that subjects feel most at ease in a familiar environment. Well, I don't think any subject who has a camera pointed at her ever feels completely at ease—but perhaps it helps a bit.

The downside for the working photographer is that going out to photograph your subject on location is time consuming—and time is money. You'll also incur travel costs and possibly toll charges, admission fees to various locations, and so on. You may even find that you'll need to seek permission to photograph your subject in various venues. Needless to say, you'll need to charge

your client more if you decide to offer this kind of portrait.

CASE STUDY: BIG PROPS CAN BE FUN

I am always on the lookout for interesting locations to make glamour images, so when the president of a calendar company asked me to photograph some gorgeous models at a fire



LEFT—Here's Mary Farace with her Miata track day car at the now-closed Second Car Raceway. She is dressed in her fire suit with her helmet as a prop. The classic hand-on-hip pose helped her to maintain her balance, as she was leaning against the car more than sitting on it. The image was made with a Canon EOS 1D Mark II N camera and an EF 70–300mm f/4–5.6 IS USM lens. The available light exposure was $\frac{1}{500}$ second at f/8 and ISO 400. **RIGHT**—Here the subject is a football fan dressed in her team's attire and using a football as a prop. The pose Mary used in the previous image is seen again here. The image was made at a local recreation center. There were bleachers for the baseball diamond, but I kept them out of the frame by pointing the camera in the opposite direction. This shot was made with a Canon EOS 20D camera and an EF 28–105mm lens. A 550EX Speedlite provided fill. The exposure was $\frac{1}{200}$ second at f/14 and ISO 400.





FACING PAGE—This is an unpublished image from a calendar shoot that took place at a fire truck factory. The truck gave the model something to hold on to. She was positioned in a three-quarter pose. I had her slide her arms down until they formed an angle I liked. As luck would have it, the pose allowed one of the truck's warning lights to shine through. The image was shot with a Canon EOS 1D Mark II N camera and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{30}$ second at f/5.6 and ISO 400. An 550EX provided fill.

LEFT—Cliché: a portrait of a leather-clad woman posing with a motorcycle. What makes Mary's image much more interesting than the standard fare is the pose. Instead of taking the standard approach and having the subject posed seated on the bike or standing next to it, she posed Tia in a reclining position with her feet on the handlebars. Of course, this pose would work best with the model wearing pants—or chaps, as she is here. Sometimes the initial pose encourages the subject to place her hands and arms in a pleasing presentation, and all you need to do is suggest some simple refinements. During this session, Mary only shot two variations on this pose; this was number two. ©2012 Mary Farace. **RIGHT**—Without changing the camera position, Mary used her Zuiko Digital ED 50-200mm f/2.8-3.5 SWD lens, this time set to 182mm, to produce a headshot of Tia. The previous image was captured at 79mm, showing how a portrait photographer's best friend is a zoom lens that will allow you to deliver multiple views of the same subject, wearing the same outfit. The more variety you can offer the client, the higher your profits will be. The image was made with an Olympus E500 camera. The exposure was $\frac{1}{160}$ second at f/2.8 and ISO 100. ©2012 Mary Farace.

truck factory, I couldn't say no. (*Note:* All of the shots were made with the permission of the company's owners. During the shoot, there were no workers present.)

Working in this space presented some challenges. The fifty-foot high ceilings and mixed light sources were a concern, and there were environmental challenges for me and the models—we were shooting during winter inside

a hangar-like structure that's heated with the type of radiant heat that keeps the trucks comfy. Trucks have different temperature needs than models—especially when they're wearing next to nothing!

There seems to be a trend away from high-key white props and more toward vintage colors like ivory, walnut, and neutral greens. Your prop selection will also be influenced by your



TOP—During a group shoot sponsored by a photographer/model group in Northern Colorado, Mary photographed another subject who posed on that same motorcycle. Mary asked the model to lean forward on the motorcycle and wisely decided to crop tightly, in camera (by zooming the Zuiko Digital ED 50–200mm f/2.8–3.5 SWD lens to 200mm), to keep the focus on the subject, not the bike. The result is more of a glamour-style image. Because the subject was backlit, Mary used an FL-50R speedlight for fill. ©2012 Mary Farace. **BOTTOM**—This was the first shot in the sequence. I converted the image to monochrome to minimize the clutter, but it's still too busy. The shot was made with an Olympus E-500 camera with a Zuiko Digital ED 50–200mm f/2.8–3.5 SWD lens set at 72mm. ©2012 Mary Farace.

target client demographic. For example, high-school seniors are incredibly discerning. Once something becomes popular in the eyes of the general market, teens consider it passe. You'll need to stay ahead of the curve to draw the attention of these younger clients and make a profit.

Why not make your own props or use simple household items? Chairs and stools are some of

the most useful props—and they need not cost a lot. Shop at places like Target and Wal-Mart for props that are not only bargains but give the model something to interact with. And don't forget your basement, attic, or storage space. It's full of interesting items that only get used once a year, such as Christmas lights, which can be used as props.



Here, Tia is shown with a different bike and photographed by a different photographer. I photographed Tia with a dirt bike from a low angle using a relatively wide-angle lens—a 28-135mm lens at 65mm. Now, the experts will tell you that it's a bad idea to photograph a person from a low angle because you will see up their nostrils. That's not usually a flattering approach, but it doesn't bother me here. Tia was posed with all of her weight on one leg. Tia bent her other leg and pointed her toes, resting them on the ground—that was her idea. We shot more than thirty images, and this image wasn't the last one. As I mentioned earlier, it's a good idea to shoot through a pose. Once you're happy with what you've got, keep going for three to five more shots. You never know what will happen. In this case, I got several good shots after this one, but I like this one best.





ABOVE—It's not necessary to use complicated lighting or props to create a saleable photograph. Here, the subject was positioned leaning against a wall. Available light served as the main light for this image, and a Canon 550EX Speedlite provided fill. The shot was made with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 28-105mm lens at 63mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{200}$ second at f/8 and ISO 400. **RIGHT**—This subject had a retro look, so I converted the image to monochrome—with a light copper tone—using Nik Software's Silver Efex Pro. I then applied Glamour Glow—a plug-in offered in Nik Software's Color Efex Pro's Complete edition—to finish the image.



FACING PAGE—This pose is one of my favorites. I positioned the prop—the chair—facing one way and had the subject turn her back to it. I asked her to lean back and position her legs at different angles. The shot was captured with a Rebel T2i camera and an EF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 IS lens. I used the camera's monochrome picture style setting, with the sepia tone option selected. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/14 and ISO 200. Lighting was provided by a Dynalite SP2000 power pack and a four-head setup. The main light, placed at camera left, had a Chimera (www.chimeralighting.com) lightbank attached. Fill was provided by another Chimera lightbank. The hair light had a small Chimera lightbank attached. A fourth head was used to illuminate the "Carbonite—inspired by Joe Farace" muslin background from Silverlake Photo.





FACING PAGE—This subject was photographed in the smaller studio of my old home. The lighting was provided by three Adorama (www.adorama.com) FlashPoint II monolights and various Westcott (www.fjwestcott.com) lightbanks and umbrellas. The image was made with a Nikon D3X and AF Nikkor 85mm f/1.8D lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/8 and ISO 100. I bought the stool shown here ten years ago, for just ten bucks, and I use it while running my model trains! I like the bare feet in the pose but made sure to ask the subject to extend her foot so she posed on tip-toes. I think it added a special touch to what is otherwise a simple seated portrait. **LEFT**—The feathers you see here are on the top of a mask I used in a different image that appeared in *Joe Farace's Glamour Photography* (Amherst Media[®]). Here, the feathers frame part of the subject's face and add a colorful touch while giving the subject something to do with her right hand. The model used her left hand to follow my "rip off your clothes" suggestion. **RIGHT**—Here's the same model, "clothed" in a roll of Caution tape I purchased at Wal-Mart around Halloween time for a few bucks. The model wrapped the tape around herself, and while she did so, I made some small posing refinements to produce the image you see here. The background in the image is my living room wall.



RIGHT—This inexpensive Target chair was taking up space in our basement. I never guessed that a subject would show up wearing the exact same color as the chair! The model's pose was a natural one, but Mary posed her body in one direction and her head in another to create a more dynamic feeling. The image was made with an Olympus E-30 and Zuiko Digital ED 40-150mm lens at 43mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/10 and ISO 125. ©2009 Mary Farace.



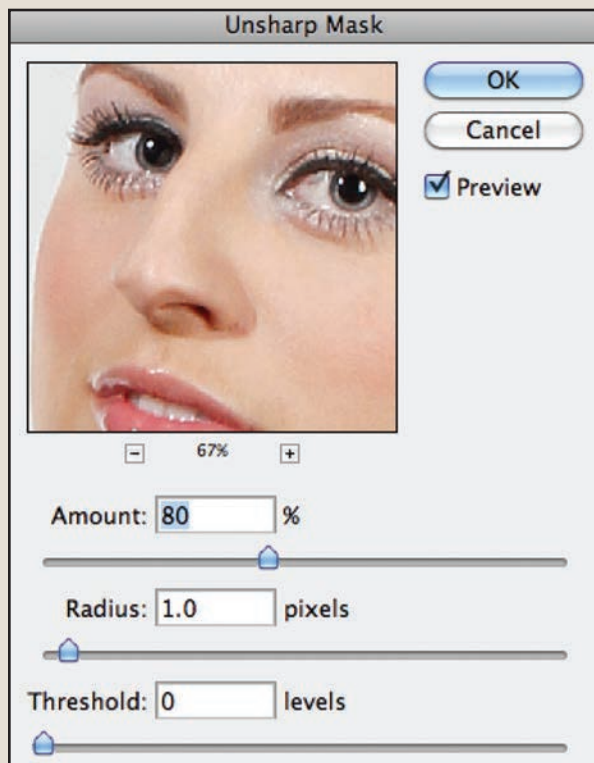
FACING PAGE—The subject was posed on a cloth-covered box and asked to cross her legs. Sure, that sounds pretty simple, but each model does it differently, and some poses are less photogenic than others, so you may need to make some refinements. The image was made with a Canon EOS 1D Mark II N camera and an EF 135mm f/2.8 SF lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{80}$ second at f/10 and ISO 100. The main light was a Dynalite head with Booth Photographic's 75-inch silver umbrella used in bounce mode. Two additional Dynalite heads were used—one illuminated the background and the other was fitted with a small lightbank and served as a hair light. The backdrop is one of Silverlake Photos' "Shutters" Colorsmacks. **BELOW**—Here's the setup shot for the image shown on the facing page. To create the final image, I placed a black cloth over a box and asked the subject to pose. A black cloth is one of the most important tools a photographer can have in their toolbox. Go to a fabric store and look for black polyester remnants. You can get pieces like this for just a few dollars, and you'll find unending uses for them. ©2012 Jack Dean Photography.



UNSHARP MASK SHARPENING

When looking at photographs, your eye is drawn to image sharpness, followed by brightness and then warmth. Not all images are tack-sharp when captured, though. One of the biggest advantages that digital imaging has over traditional film photography is the ability to sharpen images in postproduction. Many image-editing programs contain a Sharpen command that typically works by raising the contrast of adjacent or edge pixels. Unfortunately, sometimes this technique increases sharpness at the expense of overall contrast. Some images can handle additional contrast before losing highlight detail, while others can't. A more reliable solution is Photoshop's Unsharp Mask command (Filter>Sharpen>Unsharp Mask) and other image-enhancement software. This digital fix mimics a traditional technique where a blurred film negative is combined with the original to highlight the photograph's edges.

The Unsharp Mask dialog box offers three sliders that let you control the amount of sharpness. The Amount slider controls the percentage of sharpening that will be applied to your image. Don't be afraid to apply more than 100 percent to higher-resolution files; lower-resolution images will fall apart if high amounts are used. The best setting for the Radius slider will vary depending on subject matter, final reproduction size, and output method. For high-res images, a Radius value between 1 and 2 is usually recommended. A higher value sharpens a wider band of pixels; a lower value sharpens only the edge pixels. The Threshold slider is used to determine how different the sharpened pixels must be from the surrounding area before they are considered edge pixels and are sharpened by the filter. If the slider is set too high, noise and color fringing may become apparent in your image. *Tip:* Here's a useful strategy for dealing with color fringing that may occur when applying the Unsharp Mask to some image files. After applying the filter, go to Edit>Fade Unsharp Mask. Don't change the Opacity setting—leave it at 100%—but select Luminosity from the pop-up menu. Any glaring color artifacts should then be gone!





ABOVE—This setup shot shows me photographing Amber in my new studio. The main light, a 28-inch square Broncolor lightbank, was placed at camera left. Fill was provided by the second head with a 60-inch Booth Photographic (www.boothphoto.com) parabolic umbrella mounted. I cranked up the power of the second head, lowering the lighting ratio to 2.5:1, but the combination of the Broncolor lightbank and the big umbrella produced excellent light quality. ©2011 Mary Farace. **LEFT**—Here's an image of Amber with my Kodak Duaflex IV box camera. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/14 and ISO 100.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Like a lot of photographers, I collect old cameras. I'm not a serious collector, but I've been inspired by images made by the late Peter Gowland (www.petergowland.com) who often used cameras as props. A former colleague once said that my photograph indicated that I was channeling the spirit of Mr. Gowland. I took that as a compliment (although I don't think he meant it that way)

because Mr. Gowland was a pioneer in both the technical side and aesthetics of photography. He was very kind and encouraging to me late in his life. My book *Joe Farace's Glamour Photography* (Amherst Media®) is dedicated to Alice and Peter Gowland.

The images above and on pages 106 and 107 were made in homage to Mr. Gowland and the kind of shots he made in the 1950s.



LEFT—This image was shot using a Canon EOS 5D's monochrome picture style. The model wasn't quite seated on the bike; this allowed her to present a great angle in her right leg and some separation between her upper leg and the bike. Her outspread arms created diagonal lines that lead the viewer's gaze to her face. The exposure was $\frac{1}{200}$ second at f/5.6 and ISO 500. Because the subject was backlit, I used a 550EX Speedlite for fill. **FACING PAGE**—(left) I naively thought that since we were shooting in the snow, choosing a blue tone in the camera's monochrome camera options would be a good idea (it wasn't). The gap on the left-hand side of the histogram shows that the image is underexposed. The exposure was $\frac{1}{250}$ second at f/9 and ISO 400. (right) Since overexposure wipes out image data, there's no remedy for a terribly overexposed image. If you're just slightly off the mark, try this fix: In Photoshop, create a duplicate layer, change the mode of the new layer to Multiply, then adjust the opacity slider to get what looks like a proper exposure. For this image, I used a 15% opacity setting. Next, I used Nik Software's Vivenza filter to increase the contrast. I added a touch of soft focus with Nik's Glamour Glow filter (I set the layer opacity to 50%). What started out as an image that didn't meet my standards ended up looking pretty good—at least I think so.

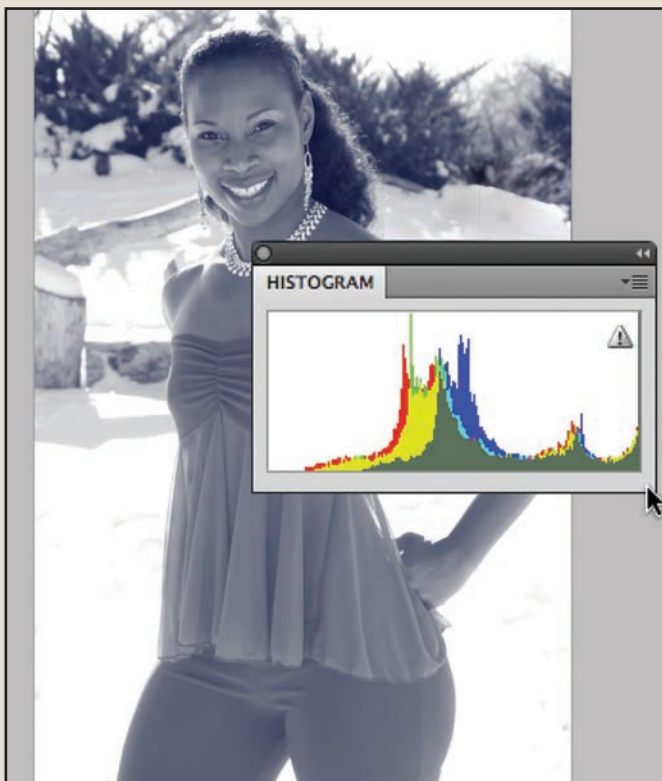
EXPOSURE FOR MONOCHROME

There are advantages to capturing a monochrome image in-camera, rather than doing a color-to-black & white-conversion in postproduction. First, you can see the results as you shoot and can immediately show them to the subject. Second, you can take your memory card to Target or Wal-Mart and make prints *now*. Providing your exposure is dead on, you can avoid digital darkroom work.

Over- or underexposure affects the density of colors or tones and the overall style of the final image. Tips for achieving proper exposure are provided in many books, including *Lighting for Photography* (Amherst Media®), but here's a quick look at exposure as it relates to monochrome image capture.

The term “latitude” refers to the ability of any capture medium—be it film or digital—to tolerate over- or underexposure. Color negative film has the most latitude. Slide film has the least amount of latitude, especially overexposure. Digital sensors respond like a color negative/slide hybrid: overexposure wipes out digital image data, but the medium is fairly tolerant of underexposure. The downside of underexposing a digital image is the creation of noise—the digital equivalent of grain. The secret to maximum digital image quality is to properly expose the image.

One way to critically evaluate the exposure of your image is to use your camera's built-in histogram function. A histogram provides a graphic representation of a photo's exposure values, from darkest shadows (left) to brightest highlights (right). Zero represents pure black and 255 is pure white, with all of the other tones between those two extremes falling in between. If the histogram data stretches from the very left corner to the very right corner, in a bell-shaped curve, your image has a full range of tones. (*Note:* This is true for “normal” images. Images that are predominately light or dark will present a lopsided histogram, but your exposure may be dead on for that scene and subject.) If it starts out too far in from either side of the slope, your image may be missing data. If the data seems cut off at one edge, the scene's contrast range may exceed the camera's capture capabilities.





PART 3

SHOOTING ON LOCATION



6. Using the Environment as Part of the Pose

“And in not learning the rules, I was free. I always say, you’re either defined by the medium or you redefine the medium in terms of your needs.”—*Duane Michals*

Portraits—no matter where you make them—are all about light, so start by searching for places where the light looks good. When the weather is nice, I’ll shoot at a local park a few blocks away from my home. When I’m creating swimsuit shots, I head to a nearby lake. I typically make portraits during the week rather than on weekends, as there is far less activity in the neighborhood, at the park, or at the lake.

FACING PAGE—Colorado has three hundred sunny days a year, more than some so-called Sunshine States, so it’s almost always a nice day in the park, even if it might be a bit chilly. Megan needed some “winter clothes” shots for her portfolio, and we made this image when the temperatures were in the 50s. The arms-folded pose worked because she was shivering. The image was made with a Contax Aria and a 135mm f/2.8 Carl Zeiss lens. The shot was captured on Kodak ISO 400 color negative film. No exposure data was recorded. **RIGHT**—Use the subject’s own pose and take steps to make it even better. This image was made during a group session at an outdoor movie set. The subject grabbed the chair, turned it around, and sat down. I had her bring her left hand to her cheek to direct attention to her face. The hat is a great prop, and I like the way she peers out from under the brim to make eye contact with the viewer. The shot was made with a Canon EOS 50D and a 50mm lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{200}$ second at f/5.6 and ISO 400. A Canon 550EX Speedlite provided fill.



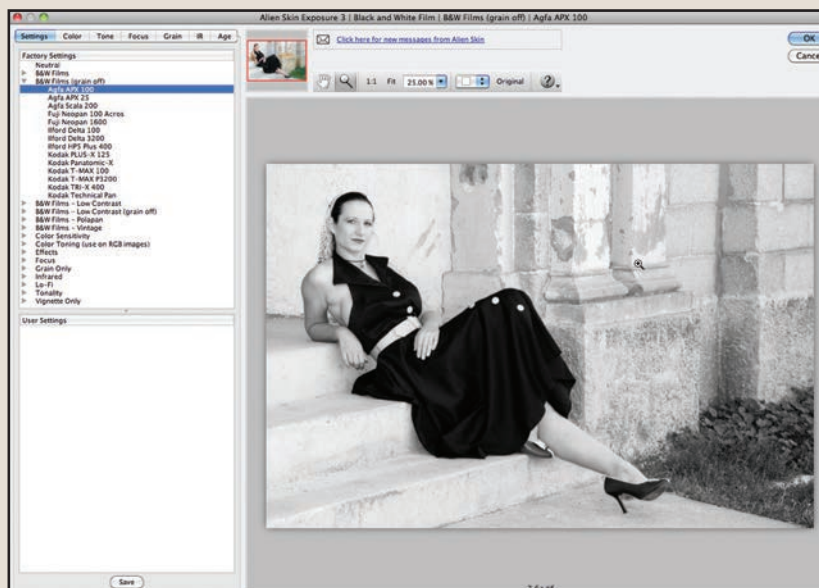
BLACK & WHITE PORTRAITS CREATE IMPACT

Black & white is a wonderful media for making portraits. The lack of color simplifies the image, making the viewer focus on the subject—not her clothing or the surroundings. Arnold Newman’s portrait of composer Igor Stravinsky could never have been made in color and have the same impact that it has as a monochrome image.

Sometimes a subject’s look demands that the image be photographed in black & white. Media trends also result in a surge in the popularity of black & white photography. MTV, motion pictures, and fashion magazines periodically “rediscover” black & white as a way to reproduce photographs that are different from what’s currently being shown. Right now, many professional photographers are saying that they’re seeing a higher-than-normal demand for black & white portraits. Individual and family portrait purchases are driven by these same trends.



TOP—Sometimes the location and the subject’s clothing dictate a pose. The steps were a natural place to pose her, and the retro outfit complemented the pose. This image was made with a Canon EOS 1D Mark II N camera and an EF 100mm f/2.8 Macro USM lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{100}$ second at f/7.1 and ISO 200. **BOTTOM**—Alien Skin Software’s (www.alienskin.com) Exposure is really two Photoshop-compatible plug-ins: Color Film and Black and White Film. The Black & White plug-in emulates dozens of different film stocks. The Color Film option includes thirteen different cinema effects, can mimic fifteen different kinds of Polaroid, and includes what appears to be another 100 options. These plug-ins not only re-create a particular film emulsion’s distinctive look (in a more-or-less one-click operation), they also allow you to manage saturation, color temperature, dynamic range, softness, sharpness, and grain. The built-in presets are only a starting point; they can be tweaked to suit a particular photograph or even applied to a batch of images.





TOP—Using the Agfa APX filter that's part of Alien Skin Software's Exposure plug-in, I took this portrait back to its rockabilly roots. You can select "grain off" or "grain on." I chose "grain off" to keep the tonalities smooth, but feel free to use the "grain on" option to produce a film look. **BOTTOM**—Since Alien Skin Software's Exposure creates a new layer atop the color image, I couldn't resist the urge to erase portions of the top black & white layer to reveal what was pink in the original image.



Unless you skipped ahead, you'll remember that I used this outdoor set for a portrait that appeared in chapter 1. Here, the same model, wearing something completely different, leaned on that same railing. Here's one of Farace's posing laws: If you have a railing or fence, use it. Here, the prop gave the model something to do with her hands and added diagonal lines that direct the viewer's gaze to her face.

WINDOWS

No matter your location, if you have a window, you can make a successful portrait. Work with lens focal lengths that are appropriate for your portrait style, and maybe crop a little tighter than you might otherwise, depending on your locale. Some shooters like wide-angle lenses. I use them occasionally, but my 85mm focal length lens tends to be my go-to lens for location shoots. Sometimes I use my Canon EF 135 f/2.8 soft-focus lens—it's great for full-length outdoor shots.

OUTDOOR PORTRAITS AND THE LAW

Shooting images outdoors means you're going to have to be creative about where and when you

shoot and look for places that will accommodate your photographic needs. That doesn't mean you won't encounter problems. Shooting anything post-9/11 has made many people, especially those wearing badges, sensitive about photography, and sometimes they overreact. I was shooting a portrait of a fully clothed model outside a county office building, and within ten minutes a sheriff's deputy asked us to move along. We managed to get twenty-two shots. I would have liked to make one more image, but I politely agreed to leave. My personal rule is never argue with anyone who has a gun.

Bert P. Krages II, author of *Legal Handbook for Photographers* (Amherst Media®), has a page

on his web site (<http://www.krages.com/phoright.htm>) about photographing in public places. He'll help you understand what to do if you are confronted by authorities while creating images. He also discusses your legal remedies if you're harassed. Print out this useful information and keep a copy in your camera bag. Thank you for your insight, Bert!

WORKING AT INTERESTING LOCATIONS

I am always on the lookout for interesting locations to make glamour images, so when a calendar company asked me to photograph gorgeous models at a fire truck factory, how could I say no? In case you're interested, all of the shots were made with the permission of the company's owners, and we shot when there were no employees present.



LEFT—During this shoot, we caught a sheriff's deputy's attention, and he asked us to move along. I never got the shot that I was trying for, but this pose will give you some idea of what I was after—black dress, white building. The image was made with a Canon EOS D60 camera and a now-discontinued EF 22–55mm lens. The program mode exposure was $\frac{1}{200}$ second at f/11 and ISO 100. A 420EX Speedlite provided fill. The original image was shot in color. **RIGHT**—Not to be deterred, the subject changed clothes (in my car—she was a trouper!), and we drove three blocks to City Hall, where we made this image. The window directly behind her was the court bailiff's office. No one took issue with our activity, even though we'd just been turned away from another government building. If someone had asked us to leave, I would have. This image was made with a Canon EOS 60D camera and an EF 28–135mm IS lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{200}$ second at f/5.6 and ISO 100.



Shooting in a factory setting can be challenging. This building has fifty-foot high ceilings and mixed light sources. Also, we were shooting in this hangar-like structure in the winter with the type of radiant heat that keeps trucks—but not glamour models—comfy.

Because of the mixed lighting in the factory, the color balance seemed to change every time I

took a few steps to the left or right. I tried the various white balance presets my camera offered before I finally settled on using Auto White Balance (AWB). Most digital gurus will advise you *never* to shoot in AWB mode, but I found that it worked best in this scenario.

After a few photo sessions at the factory, I realized that working with available light was my



FACING PAGE—I made this image while photographing Miss September for the calendar. This image was captured using a Canon EOS 10D camera with an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/3.5 and ISO 400, with a $+\frac{1}{2}$ stop exposure compensation (made after checking the histogram). A Canon 420EX Speedlite provided fill. **LEFT**—This background in this image is the exterior wall of a junkyard. I had the model place both hands flat against the wall, with her arms held out from the sides of her body. Creating separation between a subject's arms and torso helps to keep the subject looking slim (obviously, this subject is naturally slender). In this image, the model's arms formed diagonal lines that lead the viewer's gaze to her face. This shot was made with a Canon EOS 60D camera and an EF 28-105mm lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{200}$ second and f/11 and ISO 400. **RIGHT**—I couldn't decide whether I prefer the color or monochrome version. Which do you prefer? Why not give your customer a choice? Champagne is the name of the action applied to this image. It creates a warm, soft portrait.



This image was made at a film studio in Phoenix. I love props that my subjects can interact with. The subject leaned against the heavy, wooden gate. The position of her legs creates an appealing triangular base for the overall pose. With one arm bent and the other arm creating a great leading line in the composition, this image is dynamic. The punch of color in the subject's suit is visually reinforced by the windmill, creating compositional balance and adding interest in the image. This shot was made with an EOS 50D camera and a 28-135mm IS lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{200}$ second at f/16 and ISO 400. A 550EX Speedlite provided fill.

best bet. I added fill flash from a 550EX or 420EX as needed. These aren't the newest Speedlites in the Canon arsenal, but they work in E-TTL

mode. Using this streamlined lighting approach allowed me to deliver the quantity of images the client wanted at a price he could afford.



LEFT—Here is another image that was shot at the film studio. You can call it an intimate portrait or a fine-art nude—take your pick. The model is posed inside of the base of a different windmill. The prop served as a posing aid for her hands, and the board that cut across her midsection allowed for some modesty. This shot was made with an EOS 50D camera and a 28-135mm IS lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{160}$ second at $f/6.3$ and ISO 200. **RIGHT**—Here's another version of the image. I did a little retouching then used Nik Software's Silver Efex Pro to convert the image to black & white. I finished the image by using the Classic Soft Focus filter (part of the Select and Complete editions of Nik Software's Color Efex Pro).





7. Turn Your Home Into a Studio

“The subject must be thought of in terms of the 20th century, of houses he lives in and places he works, in terms of the kind of light the windows in these places let through and by which we see him every day.”—*Arnold Newman*

MAKING DO

I don't have a standalone studio. In the distant past, I had one, but for the past twenty years I've made all of my portraits on location, in my home, or in a small in-home studio. Living in Colorado, it gets cold in the winter and sometimes it snows—a lot. What this means is I end up shooting most of my portraits in my home or close to it.

When some photographers see my images, they ask, “How big is your house?” The truth is, many of the images that appear in this book were made

in my old home—an average-sized house located in an average working-class neighborhood. I believe you can make photographs anywhere by making the most of what you have. Instead of complaining that you don't have a studio, use your imagination.

FACING PAGE—I like to place a subject in the corner of a room and see what happens. In this case, I asked the model to rest her left hand on a window sill. This was the first and best shot in the series. The main light for this image came from the north-facing bay window in my kitchen. Fill on the left was provided by a Flashpoint (www.adorama.com) 5-in-1 reflector kit. It's available in 22-, 32-, and 42-inch versions. I use the 32-inch size because it's compact when collapsed but it's big enough for working with a single portrait subject. **RIGHT**—Here's another image that was made in my kitchen. The light came from the same bay window that served as the main light source in the previous image. I'll show you how I created the color/monochrome effect in “Green Eyes” on pages 122 and 123.



GREEN EYES

While mixing monochrome and color in the same portrait is cliché these days, it's still popular with many customers. One of my favorite tricks when creating a monochrome portrait is to let the subject's eye color show. The effect is subtle and sometimes it's not immediately noticeable. After viewers notice the color, though, they almost always react positively. Creating the effect is easy. Here's how it's done:



STEP 1—You can make a good portrait with any camera. Want proof? This shot was made with an Epson PhotoPC 3100Z (remember when Epson used to make digital cameras?). The exposure was $\frac{1}{50}$ second at f/2.4 and ISO 100.



STEP 2—I created a new monochrome layer using Nik Software's Silver Efex Pro. Here the default settings were used, with the grain slider pushed all the way to the left. I like to create as soft a look as possible, but you should apply an effect that appeals to you.



STEP 3—I then erased part of the monochrome layer (top left) to reveal only the eyes in the original color layer (top right).

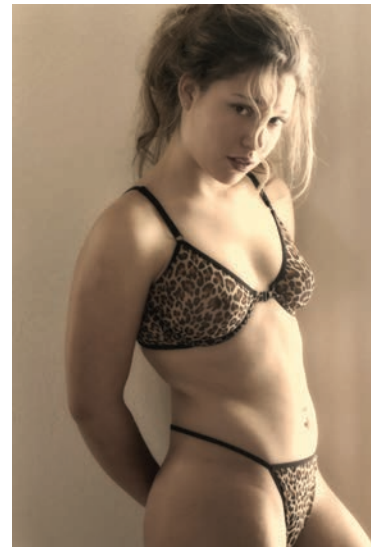


The final portrait.



LEFT—As of this writing, I have done more shoots with Ashley Rae than any other subject. She’s a professional model, and when I asked her to stand next to my back door and put her hand on the wall, this is almost exactly the pose she gave me. After several shots, I made some slight refinements to produce this final result. **RIGHT**—The original image was shot with a Canon EOS 50D camera and EF 28–135mm IS lens. The available light exposure was $\frac{1}{30}$ second (image stabilization helped) at f/4.5 and ISO 400. The image was enhanced using the Glamour Glow filter found in the Complete Edition of Nik Software’s Color Efex Pro (www.niksoftware.com). The exposure was $\frac{1}{30}$ second (image stabilization helped) at f/4.5 and ISO 400. The image was enhanced using the Glamour Glow filter found in the Complete Edition of Nik Software’s Color Efex Pro (www.niksoftware.com). **FACING PAGE**—Changing the direction of the light can dramatically alter the image. Here, the light from my back door came from camera left instead of camera right. The image was made with a Canon EOS 1D Mark II N camera and an EF 75–300mm lens at 145mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{200}$ second at f/5 and ISO 640.





LEFT—The subject had a specific idea for a photograph and described the kind of lighting she wanted (it seemed like she was talking about a strip light). There is a pair of long, skinny windows in my living room next to the fireplace, and that's where we made this image. The portrait was captured with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an inexpensive, now-discontinued EF 22–55mm lens. The available light exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at $f/5.6$ and ISO 400. **RIGHT**—I think the mood was heightened by the monochrome effect, which was achieved via the Duplex filter that's part of the Complete Edition of Nik Software's (www.niksoftware.com) Color Efex Pro.

FULL-LENGTH SHOTS

I have found that it's hard to do full-length shots when shooting portraits in your own home—at least it has been in the last two homes I've owned. If you *can* step far enough from your model to capture a full-length portrait, chances are you'll find that the shooting area isn't well lit. When you try to take pictures where the space works but the light doesn't, the images end up

looking bad. Get into the habit of looking for natural light that emulates studio lighting. Why buy lots of expensive lights when there's a freebie right in your living room?

OTHER INDOOR LOCATIONS

I often work with window light in the kitchen, dining room, and a loft area outside my home office. Occasionally, I'll use a friend's house

This portrait was shot at a condominium clubhouse. The pose evolved, as many do, from the props used. The image is far from perfect: her right arm should have been bent at the elbow so it's not a straight line. I'm not sure what I was thinking about when posing her leg, but I like the photograph and so did the subject—and sometimes that's all that matters. I just try to do better next time. The shot was made with a Canon EOS 1D Mark II N camera and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{30}$ second at f/5 and ISO 400.



that has a large bay window. One important tip to keep in mind is that you should not get fussy about posing a subject. Watch what she does naturally and try to have her interact with the background in a way that's physically comfortable for her. To show a model how I want her to stand, I put myself in the pose but let her give me her own interpretation. Once she's in a pose, I select camera angles that accent her best features and minimize anything she is

self-conscious about. One way to build rapport with your subject and amplify her confidence is to show her your favorite images from the shoot as you go. Most subjects respond positively to this, but in some cases, showing your images will break the model's concentration and you will have to start all over again. If this happens, don't show any photos until you're finished with a specific pose or clothing change.



LEFT—As you've seen elsewhere in this book, I like to pose models using doorways because it gives them a place to put their hands. This image was shot in a doorway in my basement. Every home has several doorways, so you should be able to find one where the lighting is good. If not, create your own! Sometimes you can get by with just one light, as this setup demonstrates. The lighting for this image came from a single Broncolor (www.bronimaging.com) Litos head with a 28-inch lightbank placed at camera left and aimed at the subject. **RIGHT**—Here's the final image made with my one-light setup. The image was made with a Canon EOS ID Mark II N camera and an EF 135mm f/2.8 SF lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/10 and ISO 100.



TOP LEFT—The pushing-against-the-wall pose shown in chapter 2 is not just for low angles or showing a subject's derriere to best effect. This shot was made from a higher angle than those other examples. Think of the pose as a vertical push up, and make sure the model's hands are no higher than her shoulders so she won't block her face. This is the unretouched original photograph. I wasn't quite satisfied. I felt that the image needed something more. This image was made with a Canon EOS D60 camera and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/5.6 and ISO 400. The camera's pop-up flash provided fill. **RIGHT**—The original image was first colored using Nik Software's Duplex filter. Next, I applied the Vignette Blur filter to soften the edges. Both filters are found in the Complete edition of Nik Software's Color Efex Pro. **BOTTOM LEFT**—Here's a closer shot made of the same subject in the same loft location outside my home office. The original photograph was made with a Canon EOS D60 camera and shot with an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{100}$ second at f/8 and ISO 400. The pop-up flash provided fill.



LEFT—Sometimes you can use doors as a posing aid and as “barn doors” to direct the light (in this case, the light came from a 620M Flashpoint II monolight at full power and placed behind her in the room). The main light was just to the right of the camera position. It was fitted with a 28x28-inch PZ softbox. The shot was made with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 28–135mm IS zoom lens at 65mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{100}$ second at f/8 and ISO 100. **RIGHT**—What happens when you outshoot the lights? A flat and ordinary portrait, that’s what. Because the 620M Flashpoint II was set at full power running on battery, it would occasionally not recycle as fast as the 620M Flashpoint II main light that was on $\frac{3}{4}$ (or less) power and running on AC current.

THE DOWNSIDE OF SHOOTING AT HOME

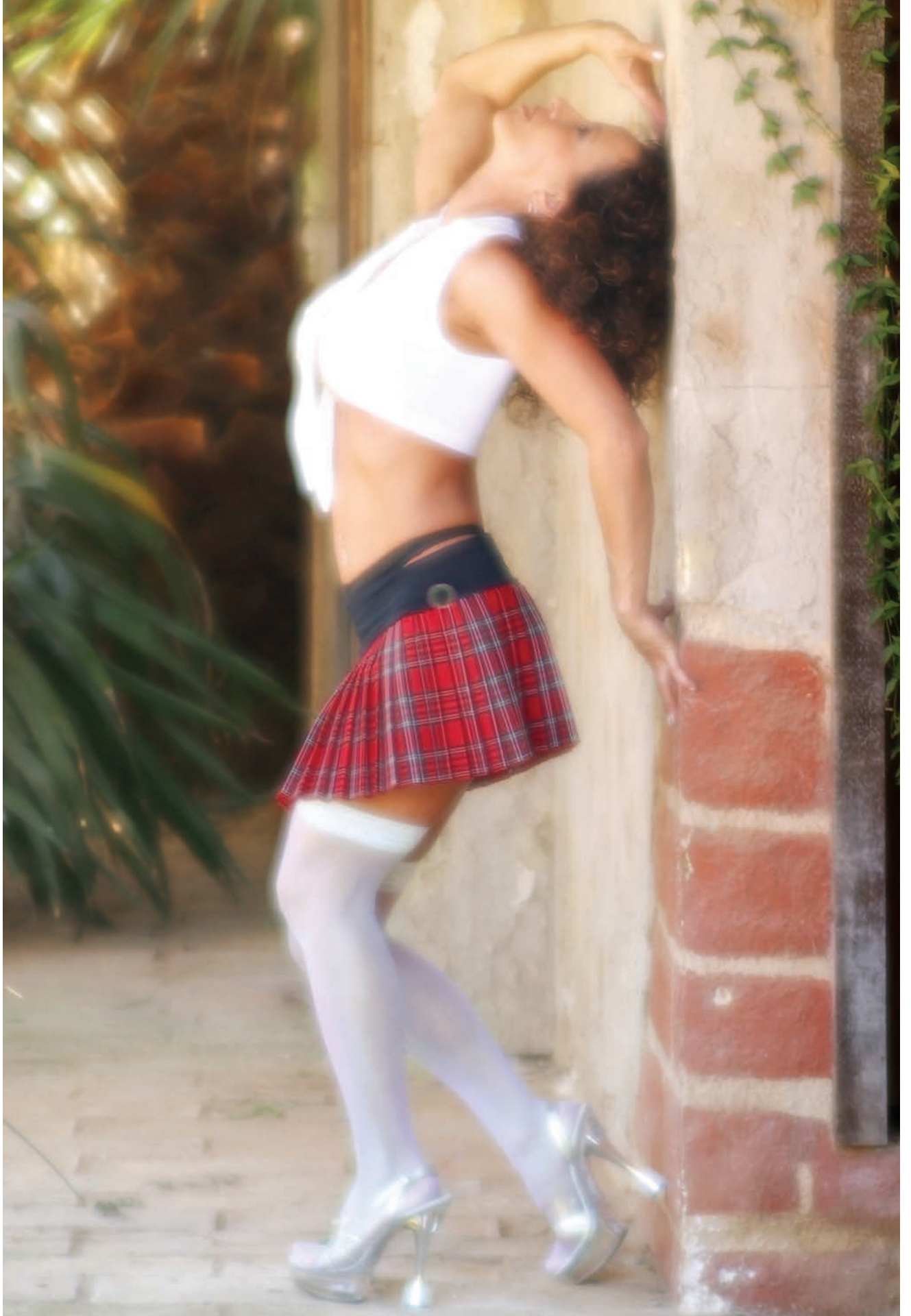
If the upside of shooting portraits in your home is that it’s convenient, the downside is that sooner or later your photographs are going to

start looking the same. Moving and redecorating are expensive solutions, so the best way to make your portraits look different is to do some work in the digital darkroom. Here’s one way to do it.



TOP LEFT—This portrait was made in my kitchen using mostly available light but with fill from an 550EX Speedlite. The image was made with an EOS 10D camera and an EF 28-105mm lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{60}$ second at f/4.5 and ISO 200. **TOP RIGHT**—Presets can be used to apply portrait effects. Presets are similar to Photoshop Actions and are a tiny bit more complicated to install but are available to run within Adobe Camera RAW, Adobe Bridge via the (right-click/Control-click) Develop Setting menu or within Adobe Lightroom as Presets in the Develop module. Presets are typically tiny (4K) .XMP files in Photoshop. Gavin Philips (www.photoeffects.biz) has put together three different sets including Fashion FX, Chic BW, and Retro Passion. **BOTTOM RIGHT**—The Autumn Soft preset was applied to this image. The names of specific effects—such as Color Bump Vignette, Mist and Moonlight, and Color Fade 1,2,3—give you a pretty good idea of what they look like, but visit Gavin’s web site (www.photoeffects.biz/fashionfx.html) to see a few before-and-after examples. Keep in mind that all actions and presets are subject-dependent. What looks good with one image may not look so hot with a different one.





8. Making Nature Work for You

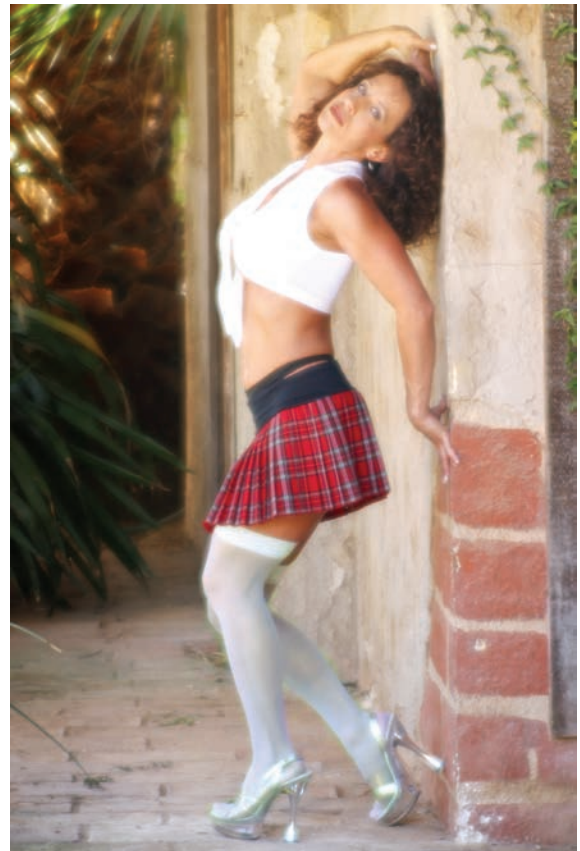
“It doesn’t matter if you take a great picture if no one knows what it’s about.”—*Carl Mydans*

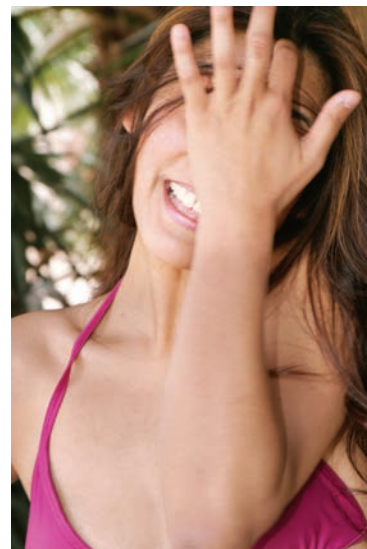
There are lots of advantages to working in a studio, even if it’s just a temporary setup in your basement or garage. The biggest advantage is that you have total control over the environment. You don’t have to worry about

wind or changeable weather conditions, and you have complete control over the lighting.

Of course, there are advantages to shooting on location outdoors and discovering the myriad backgrounds and posing aids that await you.

FACING PAGE—Always avoid crutches. For a long time after I purchased a Canon EF 135mm soft-focus lens, I shot everything in soft focus, but over time, I regretted that some of my outdoor images—like this one—weren’t in sharp focus. As I mentioned in chapter 1, soft focus and diffusion effects are best added *after* you’ve captured the image. I’ve decided to share this image because I like the pose. I used a wall to anchor her body but asked her to move slightly away from it and arch her back, which is always a good idea when shooting a subject from the side. She looked up, flipped her right arm against the wall, and I made the shot. **RIGHT**—I also made a few exposures with the model looking at the camera—this is the best one—but I think the image in which she’s looking away from the camera is stronger and more dynamic. This shot seems a bit forced, and her head is at an odd angle. Remember, you should always make variations of a pose and share the options with your subject. Who knows? She may decide to purchase all of the different shots. Both shots were made with a Canon EOS 50D and an EF 135mm f/2.8 SF lens (probably at the #2 soft focus setting). I set the aperture to f/3.2 to maximize the soft-focus effect. Looking back, I think that shooting at f/8 would have yielded a better shot.





ABOVE—I am in phase three of my photographic development now, and these days, I tend to take fewer and, I hope, better photographs. I also tend to be a bit of a comedian, thinking—rightly or wrongly—that it makes my subjects relax. This less-than-successful image resulted from taking that approach.

LEFT—After the subject had stopped laughing, we created this image. I had her lean against the wall and relax. I like that the green vines complement the color of the subject's swimsuit. One of the simplest poses and one that answers the age-old question "What should I do with my hands?" is to have the subject put her hands behind her. This image was shot with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 28-135mm IS lens at 70mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{80}$ second at f/5.6 and ISO 200. A 550EX Speedlite provided fill.

Shooting in Cancun may be too expensive for most of us, but shooting outdoors in local parks is free—and some of them even have beaches. You'll find that shooting Monday through Friday, during the day, parks are less crowded. Admission to a state park usually costs less than ten bucks a day. If you give a state park a try and feel like you'd benefit from making the location a go-to destination for your sessions, consider purchasing an annual pass.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

The best way to improve your photography is to practice. Make sure that you shoot something each and every day so you eventually get to the point where you don't have to think about how to operate your camera.

The following suggestions are hardly secrets. The information may be tucked into the back of your mind, languishing and waiting to be jogged so you can continue to improve your skills. Here's that jog:

FIND NEW LOCATIONS

Search for interesting locations. Not too long ago, there was an online discussion asking what inspires people to create new images. New things inspire me. It can be a new camera, new lens, or just a new place to make photographs. While traveling around, I look for and make notes

This is one of my phase-one images, made while I was still shooting film using a Contax SLR. I found this location while driving down a major road one day. I spotted this structure along a walking path and ended up using it for several photo sessions. Keep in mind that you can overuse a background, so keep looking for new locations. This casual hands-in-pockets pose works with the model's clothing. I think the concept would work equally well for men and women.

about locations that will work well for a portrait session. You can even go looking for portrait locations on purpose. Recently I went to a state park with a large lake looking for a beach-like location for swimsuit photographs. I had my Olympus XZ-1 point-and-shoot camera with me, and while walking around the lake's edge I saw many spots that would produce interesting photographs.

KEEP YOUR LIGHTING TOOLS SIMPLE

Years ago I was advised to work with as few lights as possible. I try to do that because the less time spent working with my gear, the more time I can spend putting my subject at ease. These days, much of my people photography is done with natural light using a single reflector. I like





LEFT—When this young model asked me to photograph her nursing her baby, I had never done it (and haven't since), so I decided to give it a try. The shot was made on location at an outdoor historical museum. The museum was closed on the day of the shoot, but I was granted access by the docent there. The pose was initially defined by the subject's need to hold her child. I shot many variations. I hate to sound pretentious, but I think this image has a "prairie Michelangelo" look to it. **RIGHT**—Although the subject liked the color shot, I decided to make a black & white version. I think that eliminating the color of the robe gave the image a more documentary look. I added some soft focus to make it appear more idealized. The image was made with a Canon EOS 5D camera and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{200}$ second at f/11 and ISO 400. A 550EX Speedlite provided fill. **FACING PAGE**—Here, we have the same porch and the same subject, but this is a completely different portrait. Brenda shows why porch railings (if they are safe and sturdy) make good posing tools. The post behind her gave her a place to rest her back. Her crossed hands create interest but keep the look simple and help draw the viewer's gaze to her face. This shot was made with a Canon EOS 5D and an EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{200}$ second at f/8 and ISO 400. A 550EX Speedlite provided fill.





LEFT—Wynette is a small but vivacious model. I photographed her at Buffalo Bill's Scout's Rest Ranch in North Platte, Nebraska—it's a great place to make outdoor portraits. A permit was required, but it was inexpensive. The image was shot with a Canon EOS 5D and an EF 28–135mm IS lens at 70mm. The model was backlit, so I introduced a 550EX flash to produce some much-needed fill. The exposure was $\frac{1}{200}$ second at f/10 and ISO 200. **RIGHT**—Here's another one of my soft-focus lens images. I used a Flashpoint reflector at camera left to reduce the image contrast. The shot was made with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an EF 135mm f/2.8 SF lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/2.8 and ISO 200. This is a good pose if you have a limber model. The post at the left gave her some support—just in case. Don't forget the most important rule in posing: ESP=Expression Sells Portraits. So if the subject isn't relaxed and trusting, you're not going to get a pleasant expression.

to work with Adorama's (www.adorama.com) versatile Flashpoint 5-in-1 reflector kit, which is available in 22-, 32-, and 42-inch versions. I mostly use the 32-inch size because it makes a compact package when collapsed, but it's big enough to work with a single subject.

Mounting the reflector on a light stand is useful when working alone, but if an assistant is available I prefer to use them instead. It's much easier to talk to an assistant from camera position and get them to move the reflector than it is to walk back to the light stand to make an adjustment.

AVOID DISTRACTING BACKGROUNDS

Watch the background. It's easy to become so enthralled by the person you are photographing

that you forget about the background. There's an old expression that will help you make great portraits: "If you watch the background, the foreground will take care of itself." Nowhere is this more true than in making available light portraits.

If the best light is had in an area with an unattractive background, you have some recourse. Busy, ugly backgrounds can be thrown out of focus by using longer lenses and wider apertures, but it's not uncommon to have to physically clean up an outdoor site before you can create a portrait. While you can always digitally remove beer cans and fast-food wrappers, taking the time to clean up the trash in an area before you make an outdoor portrait leaves it clean for everybody else too.

Using Flashpoint's 32-inch 5-in-1 Collapsible Disc Reflector lets you choose from multiple surfaces to suit the situation. The basic reflector is covered in diffusion material that's useful for removing hot spots from a portrait subject's face while softening the overall lighting. Two-sided, reversible reflector skins are also included in the kit. You can use the black skin to block light, gold to warm light, silver for strong fill-in light, or white for softer fill light. The 5-in-1 Collapsible Disc Reflector is available in a 22-inch version that folds into a package small enough to fit in your camera bag. There's also a 42-inch version that works great if you have an assistant or a lightstand and adapter. Photo courtesy of Adorama.



LEFT—Okay, I'll confess, if you give me a doorway, I'll use it as a prop. Doorways give subjects something to do with their hands and add interest to the portrait. This image was captured with a Canon EOS 50D camera and an 85mm f/1.8 lens. The exposure was $1/250$ second at f/5.6 and ISO 200. **CENTER**—This is an early pose from a sequence of shots. The subject is showing too much of her bare shoulder to the camera. When posing clients, it's a good idea to create a series of images, making gradual refinements to the pose until everything is perfect. Sometimes you'll find that no amount of refinement seems to work. In that case, it's best to just start all over again. ©2012 Mary Farace. **RIGHT**—Mary stood in front of that same doorway, 180 degrees from where I made my shot, to get a completely different portrait of the same model at that same location. The matching scarf that the model somewhat hid in my portrait became a major prop for Mary. This image was made with an Olympus E-1 camera and a Zuiko Digital ED 40-150mm f/4.0-5.6 lens. The exposure was $1/160$ second at f/5.6 and ISO 200. An Olympus FL 50R speedlight provided fill. ©2012 Mary Farace.



BACKLIT PORTRAITS

The ingredients for making great portraits are easy to find: you need a subject, a camera, and some light. Producing great light is like creating a great meal, and as every chef knows, the secret to success lies in using just the right ingredients and carefully controlling the way they're combined.

When talking about portraiture with amateur or aspiring pro photographers, they often tell me they want to do a better job but don't have studios or expensive lighting equipment.

Here's another portrait of the same subject that Mary and I just photographed, but this time the image was shot at another time and in a different location, and the mood is completely different. This shot was made with an Olympus E01 camera and an 14-54mm f/3.5 lens. An Olympus FL-50 speedlight provided fill. The exposure was $\frac{1}{160}$ at f/8 and ISO 200. When I posed her against the fence post, she intuitively used her leg to brace herself against the opposite post.

The outdoors is a great equalizer. We all have access to natural light and an array of fabulous backgrounds. We also have a better-than-average chance at creating great indoor portraits if we take the time to look.

One of my favorite techniques for outdoor portraiture is backlighting. It can produce beautiful highlights on the subject's hair and blow out the background to create a pseudo high-key effect. The next time you plan to photograph a subject outdoors, place her in a position that you might normally use with the sun on her face and then turn her around. Right away, she will be more relaxed because the sun is behind her and she won't have to squint!

Next, turn on your flash. Be sure to use it, otherwise your subject will appear in silhouette. In order to get a final image that you can live with, you may have to open the lens a few stops over the metered exposure just as you might with any backlit subject. If you plan to shoot full-length portraits instead of close-ups, you'll find that a powerful speedlight will be more effective than the weaker pop-up flashes found on entry-level digital SLRs.

COLORED FLASH

A digital SLR's tungsten color balance setting is amazingly useful; it's like loading a film

camera with tungsten-balanced color slide film or a forgiving color negative film, such as Fuji 800. When shooting under typical living-room incandescent lamps, you may want to shoot a few test shots to see if you have to increase exposure, but the color balance should be right on. You can also use the tungsten white balance preset outdoors with a filtered flash to create a special



TOP—What’s the best way to attach a gel to a speedlight for this or any other lighting technique? While you can always duct tape them on, there’s a better way: the LumiQuest (www.lumiquest.com) FXtra is a compact gel holder that makes it easy to use colored gels on your flash. Eight Rosco gels are included in the integrated storage pouch: CTO, 1/2 CTO, 1/4 CTO, Plus Green, 1/2 Plus Green, Sky Blue, Canary Yellow, and Fire Red. FXtra is sized to use with most speedlights, and the gel pocket accommodates the Strobist collection and both Rosco and Lee gel samples. Any LumiQuest accessory can be attached to the speedlight while the FXtra is in place, allowing you to colorize the light while using a variety of light modifiers. Image courtesy of LumiQuest. **BOTTOM**—This image was made with the camera in the tungsten white balance mode, which accounts for the extra blueness of the sky and background, but an orange (85A) Rosco gel was placed over the Canon 420EX Speedlite to keep the subject’s color correct. This technique takes some practice, and success depends on the flash’s power output and how “correct” the gel is to get a specific effect. I placed the subject out in the middle of this area not only to show the background but to prevent the filtered flash from hitting a background object and spoiling the effect. I tried several poses and this one—admittedly uninspired—worked best. This shot was made with a Canon EOS D6 camera and an EF 28-135mm lens at 28mm. The exposure was 1/200 second at f/14 and ISO 200.





FACING PAGE—Here the model placed both her hands on the door frame. I usually have the subject place her hands on different levels to produce a diagonal line, as I have here, but it's not a hard-and-fast rule. This image was captured with a Canon EOS D60 camera and an 135mm f/2.8 SF lens. The available light exposure was $\frac{1}{320}$ second at f/4 and ISO 200.

LEFT—Doorway redux. Here's an almost identical pose, shot with a different model in a different doorway. Here, a confident Tia Stoneman really threw her hip into the pose—it's something I've always liked, but many models are too intimidated to try it. I think it helps to create a more dynamic portrait. Even though the model's hands were on the same level, the sweep of her body adds an "S" curve composition. That element, combined with the more asymmetrical nature of the photograph in general, makes this portrait look much different than the previous doorway shot. This image was shot in monochrome mode with a Canon EOS 50D and an EF 28-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM lens. The available light exposure was $\frac{1}{250}$ second at f/6.3 and ISO 800. An 550EX Speedlite provided fill.

effect. Just because a camera offers a tungsten setting doesn't mean you can't use it outdoors.

POSING AIDS

As I mentioned, I like using doorways as both a framing device and a posing aid. I think rustic doorways are best because they have character

and offer a hard-edged contrast to the soft-edged subject.

MADE IN THE SHADE

Shady conditions are my favorite for outdoor portraiture. The light is soft, not directional, and this softness helps put the subject at ease,



increasing the odds of producing a good portrait. The downside is that the decreased light level means you'll need to use slower shutter speeds. Camera movement at lower shutter speeds can result in a blurry image.

Unfortunately, sometimes this ever-so-slight softness can be difficult to see on an LCD preview screen. Take the time to learn about and use your camera's view magnification control, and enlarge the image on the screen to see if it's sharp before ending the portrait session. The best test is to look at the subject's eyes. If they're sharp, it doesn't matter how sharp anything else in the frame may be. One of the best ways to avoid blur

while shooting when the light is low is to use a tripod, but that isn't always practical. That's why for outdoor portraits, I've started using lenses like Canon's EF 28–135mm f/3.5–5.6 IS USM. The image stabilization feature allows you to hold a camera three stops slower than you otherwise could.

The only other problem with shooting in the shade, especially among a lot of trees, is that the overall color balance can be affected. Using your camera's Shade white balance preset can usually solve this, but sometimes you just forget to change the white balance before you press the shutter button.



LEFT—Using your SLR's Shade white balance preset is a good idea when working outdoors, where there are a lot of reflections from foliage—but what if you forget to dial in that setting or your LCD screen isn't as color correct as it should be? Here's a portrait of beautiful Shannon Marie that makes her look more like Shrek than the beautiful wood nymph she's portraying. **RIGHT**—Nik Software's (www.niksoftware.com) Remove Color Cast plug-in is part of the Color Efex Pro package of Photoshop-compatible plug-ins. Its simple interface lets you remove color casts quickly and effectively. **FACING PAGE**—I did some retouching, used Photoshop's Curves to increase the contrast, and did some dodging and burning to produce the final image.



NEED A SUBJECT? DRAFT A FRIEND

Anyone who hangs out with a photographer for any length of time is going to have to get used to having their portrait made. And practice does help. I've been photographing my wife for more than the thirty years that we've been married, but making a portrait of another photographer is always a challenge. The downside is that they

tend to want to take over the session; the upside is that they know how to pose. They are the Energizer bunnies of posing. Just point and click. Non-photographer significant others need more coaching, so you'll get lots of practice, which is something that all of us need.



LEFT—This portrait is meaningful to Mary and I, because shortly after it was made, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. You'll be happy to know that after surgery and treatments she has been declared cancer-free. At this particular shoot, models were in short supply, so Mary volunteered to pose. Interestingly, she wore the same outfit as the model she photographed whose image appears earlier in this chapter. The pose was all Mary's idea. It's a variation of the hands-in-hair pose that I like to use with some subjects. This shot was made with a Canon EOS 1D Mark II N camera and an EF 28-135mm IS lens at 93mm. The exposure was $\frac{1}{250}$ second at f/13 and ISO 200. An 550EX flash was used as fill to compensate for the backlighting. **RIGHT**—Here's a portrait of Mary in her normal attire at some hay bales in a friend's front yard. I shot it with a Canon 20D and EF 85mm f/1.8 lens. The available light exposure was $\frac{1}{400}$ second at f/3.5 and ISO 200.



Now, it was Mary's turn to be the photographer. Instead of using the more traditional approach I used when photographing Mary at the hay bales, Mary turned the pose on its head. She had the subject lean back against the bales, creating a diagonal line. The result is a more environmental portrait, not just a picture of the woman. This shot was made with an Olympus E-300 camera and a Zuiko Digital ED 40-150mm f/4.0-5.6 lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{160}$ second at f/5 and ISO 200. The camera's pop-up flash provided fill. ©2012 Mary Farace.



Conclusion

“Being an artist, I had an artist’s instincts. . . . You can see the picture before it’s taken; then it’s up to you to get the camera to see.”—*James Van Der Zee*

One of the most important parts of glamour photography is deciding on the best pose, but remember one of Farace’s immutable laws of photography: every subject has a hot button when it comes to their appearance. It may be their nose, legs, or hands—hey, for what it’s worth, for me, it’s my ears! Typically this “flaw”

is not noticeable to others, but for the subject, it’s the only thing they see when looking at a portrait. While the pose you’ve orchestrated may look fantastic to you, the truth is, if the model feels it emphasizes her “flaws,” she won’t like the portrait—no matter how great her expression is. This fact of life can be maddening

BELOW—To give you some idea of what a typical session is like, I’ve gathered five images from an eight-shot sequence that goes from an initial test shot, through the best pose, to one that’s still “close but no cigar.” **FACING PAGE**—What’s my choice? Here it is. It was number four in the ones I’ve chosen to show you (but it was actually the seventh frame in my eight-image sequence). I like the upward tilt of the model’s chin and her saucy demeanor. I think the shot would have been better if her body was tuned slightly, but she is slender enough to handle a straight-on pose like this. This final, retouched image was shot with a Canon EOS D60 camera and an EF 135mm f/2.8 SF lens. The available light exposure was $\frac{1}{400}$ second at f/5 and ISO 400. The subject liked all of the images that we made during the session. As a photographer, nothing is more satisfying than making your subject happy.





TOP LEFT—When you get stuck for ideas, try a retro style or pose. This original color portrait of my wife Mary is an homage to the kind of shots that Peter Gowland made during the 1950s. I captured the image as part of a *Shutterbug* review of the Broncolor Senso/Litos lighting kit. The image was shot with a Canon EOS Rebel T3 camera and an EF-S 18–55mm f/3.5–5.6 IS lens. The exposure was $\frac{1}{125}$ second at f/14 and ISO 100. **BOTTOM LEFT**—Using Nik Software’s Silver Efex Pro plug-in enhanced the retro feel. I applied a copper tone to warm up the image—the look was popular in the 1950s and well into the '60s. Next, I used the Classic Soft Focus plug-in, part of Nik Software’s Color Effect Pro (Compete and Select editions) to add a bit of softness. Finally, I used Photoshop’s Lens Flare tool on the camera’s flash. The effect was just what I wanted. **TOP RIGHT**—Here’s the final “yesterday” shot.

for photographers, but you're just going to have to deal with it by making sure that even if the subject doesn't purchase the best-possible photograph of themselves, even though you made one, you will have a great portrait that you can use as a sample.

Is that all there is? The short answer is no. Posing is just like the rest of photography—there are fads and trends. What's great today will one day seem as out-of-date as 1970s disco fashions

and just as quaint as the tintypes of our forefathers with neck braces holding them still for long exposures. Portrait posing is dynamic and ever changing. Read what I've written and look at the pictures, but make them your own with all the life experience you have and knowledge of what your customer base wants. There is no perfect pose, just as there is no perfect photograph, but that shouldn't keep us from trying. *Vaya con Dios*, my friends.



LEFT—There are those amongst us who believe that black & white (or monochrome, if you prefer) is just too “yesterday.” Topaz labs (www.topazlabs.com) BW Effects is a Photoshop-compatible plug-in that also lets you apply toned or hand-colored effects such as this one from their Opalotype collection. **RIGHT**—I used Topaz BW Effects to apply a one-click effect that resulted in a very different take on the original color image. I then applied Photoshop's Render>Lens Flare effect to add some snap and disguise the fact that there is no flashbulb. I like both versions.



THE POLISHED PORTRAIT: ZERO TO SIXTY

As Douglas Adams said at the beginning of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, “This never happens...”: A subject meets a photographer in the studio who tells them “stand over there.” The photographer clicks the shutter and the resultant pose is perfect.

Throughout this book, I've advised you to shoot through a pose. By that, I mean that you should work on refining a pose by trial and error until you arrive at a pose that's comfortable for the subject. Then and only then you can make a final, saleable photograph. But you shouldn't stop there. Keep shooting variations of that pose and maybe tweak the camera angle and lens focal length until you arrive at something that you—and hopefully your subject—like even better. But don't stop there either. Continue shooting through the pose until you don't like what you see. Only then can you stop. (*Tip:* The idea of shooting through an image/composition works equally well for all kinds of subjects, including landscapes and even one of my loves, automobiles.)



LEFT—What not to do. Here, the model just sat all the way back in the chair with no direction. This series shows options with subtle changes in hand and arm positioning for multiple *wow* shots. **RIGHT**—Here the subject placed one arm on the chair's seat and moved one of her feet back a little for a slight improvement.



LEFT—Crossed feet are always a great idea with a seated subject. There were other improvements as well: the subject kept one of her hands on a leg and the other on the chair. **RIGHT**—If crossed legs work great, why not ask the model to also cross her hands for yet another variation.

Mary asked Pam to place her elbow on the back of the chair and lean slightly back for the last shot in this sequence.

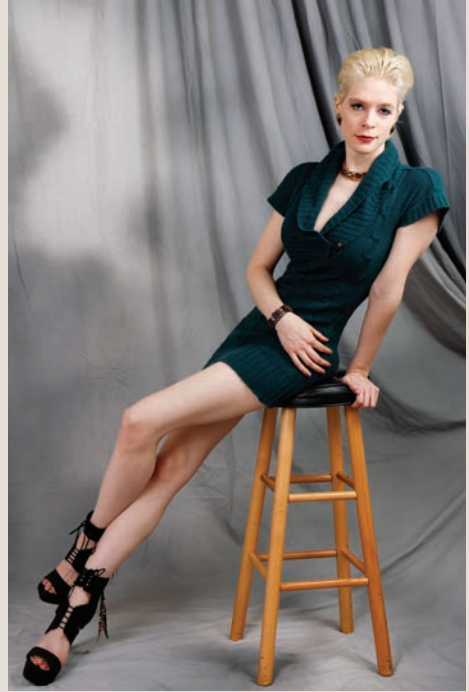




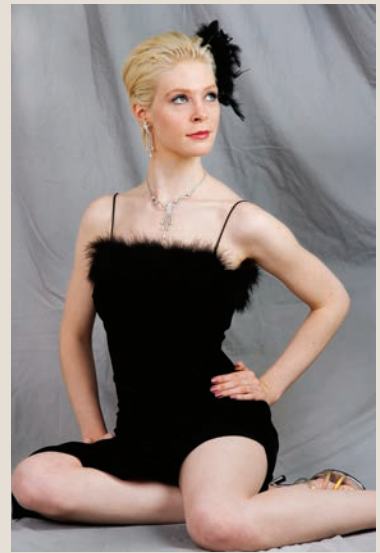
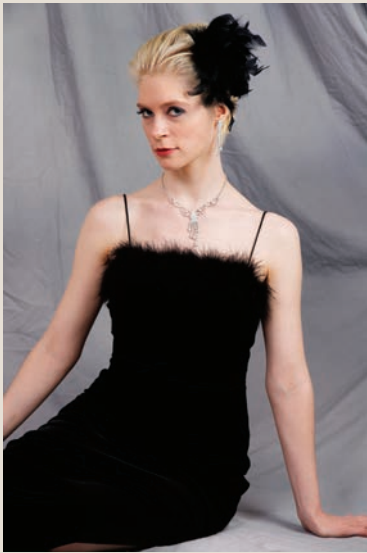
TOP LEFT—In our starting image, the model is shown in a full-length presentation with a natural hand and arm pose. Her hands are crossed in front of her body in a pose that many people naturally assume (some photographers call it the “fig leaf pose”). This series shows how subtle changes can be made to produce fabulous full-length shots. **TOP CENTER**—After just a few changes in the way the subject’s arms were posed, we had a much-improved image. **TOP RIGHT**—A slight change in her head position helped create the wow factor.

To wrap it up, we kept the subject’s head in the same position but had her bring the other hand up to her neck.

LEFT—Here, our model is shown leaning on a stool, semi-seated. **RIGHT**—With her crossed legs and ankles, her legs are shown to best effect, but her hand is flat to the camera.



LEFT—Wow! The model placed one hand up and behind her head. Dynamic angles were created with both arms. **RIGHT**—Here's another great wow pose! The model is shown leaning back on the stool with arms back, shoulders still relaxed, and one foot up. Her bent knee created another angle and helped to show off her great-looking legs.



LEFT—Here, the model is posed square to the camera, seated on the floor. **CENTER**—Mary Farace had the subject shift her legs and add a nice head tilt. **RIGHT**—We asked the model to raise her eyes while positioning the slit in her dress to reveal more of her great-looking legs.



LEFT—Don't forget to position the model lying on the floor and shoot straight down on her from a high angle. **RIGHT**—Asking the model to bring her arms up produced the kind of photograph that any model and photographer can be proud of.



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LEARN HOW TO DESIGN MORE EFFECTIVE AND ENGAGING POSES FOR GLAMOUR PHOTOGRAPHY—AND BEYOND

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