

FESTIVE FAMILY PHOTO SHOOT POSES CHEAT SHEET



Author: Caro Melnick



THE CLASSIC HUG-IN CLOSE

Everyone stands or sits close, arms around shoulders or waists.

This pose creates warmth and connection.

Tip: Ask everyone to breathe out and then gently lean in – it softens the pose.



WALKING TOWARDS THE CAMERA

Family walks hand-in-hand toward you, chatting or laughing naturally.

This adds movement and removes stiffness.

Tip: Snap bursts – you'll catch genuine expressions mid-step.



THE SNUGGLE STACK (GREAT FOR KIDS!)

Parents kneel or sit, kids pile in around (or on!) them.

This shows closeness and creates a playful, genuine moment.

Tip: Encourage a family "group squeeze" for natural smiles.



THE CANDID CONVERSATION

Have the family turn toward one another and talk, laugh, or tell a quick funny story.

This pose captures authentic expressions.

Tip: Ask them to share, "What was your favourite moment of the year?"



THE LIFT & LAUGH

Parents lift younger kids in their arms, giving a gentle swing or bounce.

This pose creates instant joy and movement.

Tip: Stand with light behind the family for magical rim lighting.



THE OVER-THE-SHOULDER LOOK BACK

Family walks away, then looks back over their shoulders toward the camera.

This pose captures storytelling, is cinematic, and flattering for everyone.

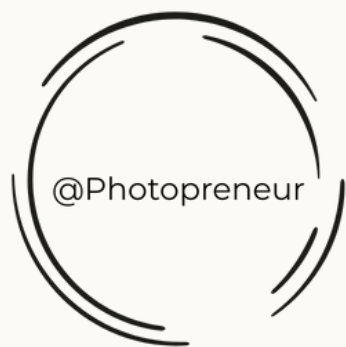
Tip: Shoot slightly from above to avoid double chins.



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PERFECT FOR YOUR FESTIVE PHOTOS... AND BEYOND!



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PRO TIPS TO MAKE YOUR PHOTOS POP

✓ Use Natural Light

Golden hour (just after sunrise or before sunset) gives soft, flattering light that makes skin tones glow.

✓ Match... Don't Duplicate

Coordinate colours rather than wearing identical outfits. Think: calm neutrals + one festive accent.

✓ Keep Hands Busy

Props like mugs, gifts, ornaments, or toys eliminate stiff “what do I do with my hands?” moments.

✓ Watch the Chin & Shoulders

Ask people to:

- Push their chin slightly forward
- Drop shoulders gently

Instantly more flattering.

✓ Focus on Connection, Not Perfection

The best portraits show emotion — laughter, cuddles, movement, storytelling moments.

✓ Shoot More Than You Think

Use burst mode to capture micro-moments. Often, the in-between shots are the winners.

✓ Clean Your Lens!

It sounds simple... because it is. But a clean lens = sharper, clearer, more professional photos.

✓ Pay Attention to the Background

Watch for “photo bombs”, distracting backgrounds, broken things, dirt, rubbish lying around.

✓ Straighten the Horizon!

Most phones have the grid of thirds to help you straighten the horizon and position key focus points in the right place on the photo. Make sure the horizon lines up with either the top or bottom line on the grid.



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