

CHRISTENING PHOTO CHECKLIST

One Small Child

BY KATY LANE

1. PORTRAIT TYPE/STYLE: DO YOU PREFER A FORMAL STUDIO SETTING OR DREAMY NATURAL LIGHT? THE BEAUTY OF TODAY'S PORTRAITURE IS THAT YOU CAN DO ANYTHING YOU WANT! YOU CAN GO FOR A TRADITIONAL, VINTAGE, CONTEMPORARY, CONTRAST-GRUNGE, URBAN OR RURAL LOOK...WHATEVER FLOATS YOUR BOAT! SPEND SOME TIME SEARCHING THE BLOGS AND WEBSITES OF YOUR FAVORITE ONLINE RETAILERS AND PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHERS FOR PHOTOS YOU LOVE, EVEN IF THEY'RE NOT NECESSARILY OF BABIES IN FANCY CLOTHES. ANY IMAGE THAT SPEAKS TO YOU CAN BE INTERPRETED IN A UNIQUE WAY THAT IS ALL YOUR OWN.

2. BACKGROUND: DO YOU LIKE SUBTLE (CREAMY, TEXTURED) OR HIGH-CONTRAST (DARK, CRISP)? INDOORS? OUTDOORS?

3. PROPS: MAKE THIS PHOTO SHOOT ALL ABOUT *YOUR BABY*. LOOK AROUND YOUR HOME FOR ITEMS THAT REPRESENT WHO YOU ARE. THINK ABOUT HOW YOU CAN INCORPORATE FAMILY HEIRLOOMS, RELIGIOUS-THEMED DECOR, BASKETS, BLANKETS, FURNITURE, TOYS, BOOKS, SPORTING EQUIPMENT...BE CREATIVE!

4. WHO: DECIDE IF YOU WANT OTHER PEOPLE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE SESSION...MOM, DAD, SIBLINGS, GODPARENTS, ETC. (SEE STEP 6 BELOW)

5. MAKE A LIST OF SHOTS YOU REALLY WANT: FULL LENGTH BABY IN OUTFIT, CLOSE-UP HEAD SHOT, CLOSE-UPS ON DETAILS YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUR CHRISTENING GOWN OR BLESSING OUTFIT, CLOSE-UPS OF BABY'S HANDS AND FEET, STILL-LIFE SHOTS OF CLOTHING AND ACCESSORIES, ETC.

6. KEEP IT SHORT AND SIMPLE: DON'T TRY TO CRAM IN 4 OUTFITS AND SPEND AN HOUR AND A HALF ON THIS SESSION...BABIES ARE GENERALLY COOPERATIVE FOR 15-20 MINUTES IN THIS SETTING (DEPENDING ON AGE AND PERSONALITY, OF COURSE).

7. DRESS PREP: MAKE SURE YOUR BLESSING DRESS OR CHRISTENING OUTFIT IS READY FOR PHOTOGRAPHS. PRESS OR STEAM THE DAY BEFORE TO ELIMINATE ANY LAST MINUTE RUSH.

8. PLAN FOR A WARM, RELAXING ATMOSPHERE: KEEP THE STUDIO OR HOME AT A COMFORTABLE TEMPERATURE, PLAY SOOTHING MUSIC, AND HAVE SOME FUN ATTENTION-GETTING TOYS OR GADGETS ON HAND.

9. MODEL PREP: THIS DEPENDS ON SEVERAL VARIABLES...BABY'S AGE, PERSONALITY, AND THE TYPE OF PORTRAITS YOU WANT. IF BABY IS REALLY LITTLE AND YOU WANT PEACEFUL/SLEEPY PHOTOS, TIME THE SESSION JUST BEFORE A NAP. IF BABY IS A LITTLE OLDER AND YOU WANT BOUNCY/CUTE/SMILEY PORTRAITS, SCHEDULE THE SHOOT JUST AFTER A NAP. IN ALL CASES, MAKE SURE BABY'S BELLY IS FULL, AND BRING ALONG A BOTTLE AND PACIFIER TO SOOTHE BETWEEN SHOTS IF NECESSARY.

10. RELAX, MOM! YOUR CHILD CAN SENSE IF YOU'RE ANXIOUS OR AGITATED. LET THE PHOTOGRAPHER WORK WITH THE BABY...DISTRACT, ENTERTAIN, ETC.