

## 10 Essential Poses (for more see Lindsay Adler [www.creativelive.com](http://www.creativelive.com))



This isn't for me – I don't like photographing models.

We're all asked to "take a picture of me" or like recording family & friends.  
This shows you how to turn snaps into portraits AND it's so simple.

The camera always adds 10 pounds.

No! That's caused by how you stand or sit and the camera position.  
These ideas show you how to look 10 pounds LIGHTER in any shot.

I don't have a studio or lights so it's no good to me.

These were all taken in my living room with lights that cost under £100.  
These ideas work just the same in nature light – in some ways it's easier.

I've never done this before – I'm not sure I could do it.

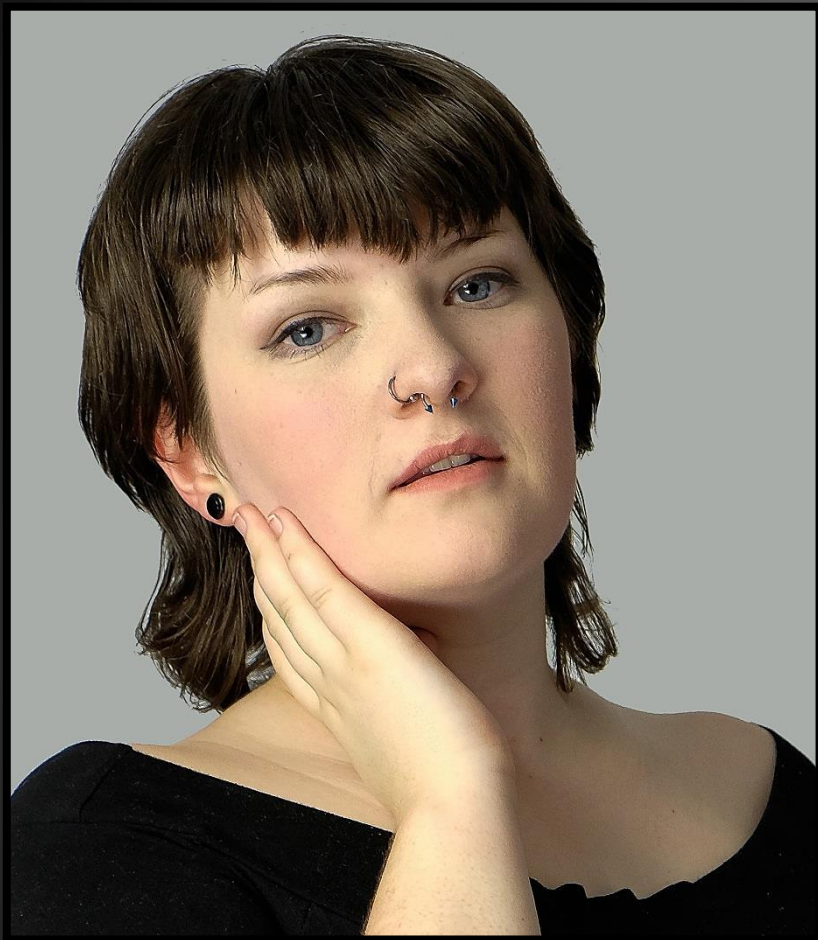
This is the first time I've done a photoshoot.

I've never tried these poses before or asked anyone to pose for me.

I don't have the time.

These shots took 1 minute each to set up record and check.

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Images were taken just to illustrate the pose.

They're all jpegs with minimal editing.

If I'd been taking a portrait I would have spent time on getting the details just right.

Spent an average of less than 1 min / shot.



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# Posing: Resources – Prices not necessarily current



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## How to Set Up 10 Essential Poses

with LINDSAY ADLER



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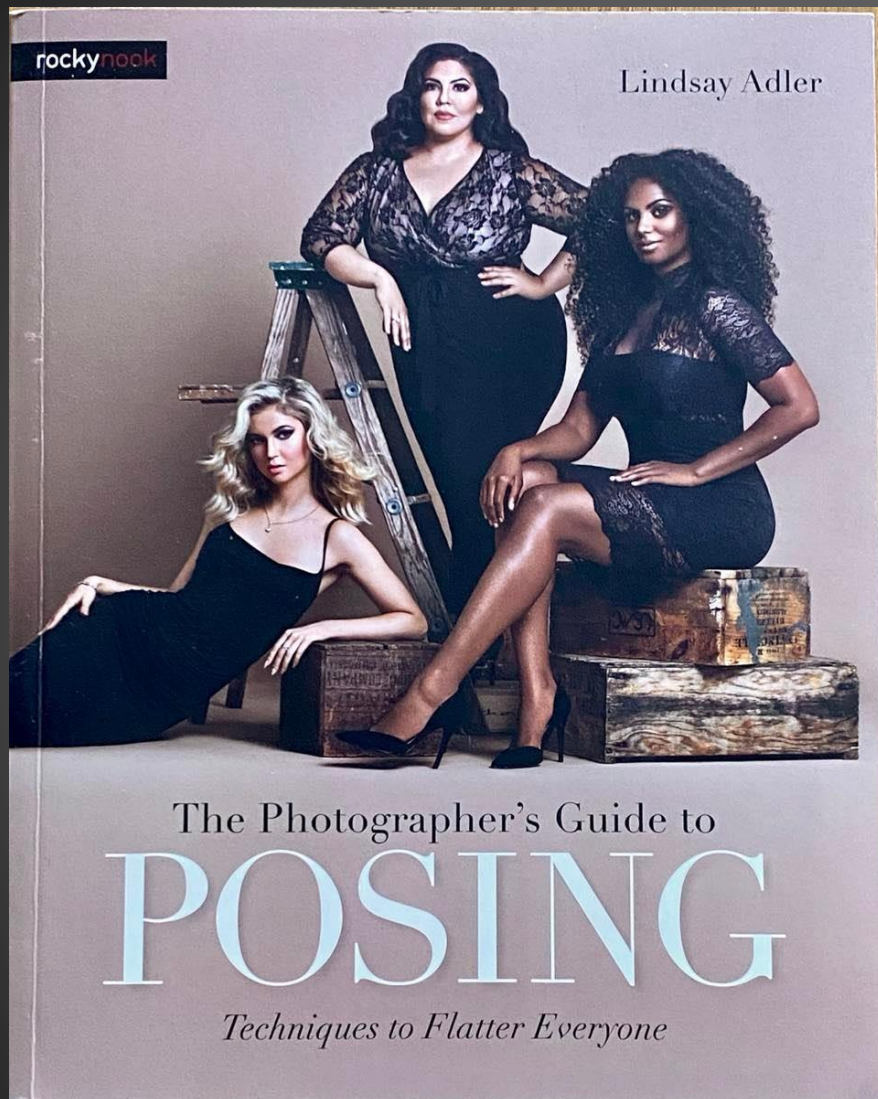
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## Posing: Resources – alternatively buy this book



### Available on Amazon

*It's over 400 pages long and covers all Lindsay's ideas and suggestions.*

*There are extensive images and explanations.*

*All body shapes, sizes and groups are covered individually as are different ages etc.*

*Lots of practical ideas and tips for developing poses plus potential 'problem areas' to check on poses for specific genders, ages, sizes, groups etc.*





# 10 Essential Poses: Introduction



**You don't need to remember a large number of different poses.**

**Start with one of the essential poses then create new images by varying;**

- *Your choice of lens*
- *The crop (in camera)*
- *Your angle or perspective – move around the subject, adjust your height*
- *The depth of field – for couples select who is in focus & your position*
- *The subject's expression, eye line etc.*
- *Change the position of hand, arms, legs and adjust tilt of head – for couples alter the relationship of their bodies.*  
*(Look for negative space and triangles between limbs and/or people)*

# 10 Essential Poses: Introduction



Remember how your camera will display images;

1. Avoid arms hanging next to the body – look for ‘negative space’
2. The closer something is to the camera the larger it will look
3. The further away something is from the camera the smaller it looks
4. Placing the subject at a slight angle to the camera avoids ‘flat’, holiday snap images
5. Good posture is so important to how the subject looks.  
*The idea is to straighten the spine and stretch the neck but keep the shoulders relaxed.*
6. If someone is uncomfortable about having their picture taken get them to sit on a chair or preferably a stool.
7. While keeping the same essential pose it can be tweaked into different shots by adjusting/moving any combination of the following:
  - Hand(s) *on hip, face, beside face, hair, behind head, across the body*
  - Head(s) *for couples: pressed together, facing/tilted towards each other*  
*for individual: tilted to side, face on*
8. Points of contact include; shoulders, arms, face, feet, hips



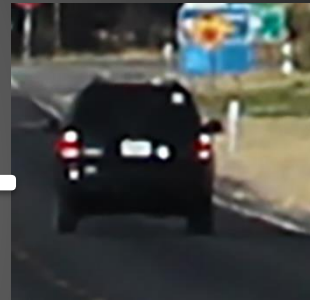
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## Example of size relative to distance from camera



This is a long section of road in Death Valley.

It's an extreme example of how the size of things, e.g. the road, is shown as smaller the further away it is.

**It's the only way** to represent 'depth' in a flat image. Use the same idea to draw attention to one body part, usually the face, and make unwanted parts less obvious. You probably didn't even notice the large van in the background – dark colours help.



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# Female presenter suddenly realises they've gone back to studio



*"The idea is to straighten the spine and stretch the neck but keep the shoulders relaxed."*





# TV presenters & newsreaders

TV presenters and news readers have all been given the same training.  
It's more obvious in women but the men have a similar approach  
It might *feel* a bit weird at first but it makes them look good!

1. **Standing:** Weight on back foot
2. **Sitting:** Roll weight onto one hip (*crossing legs has the same effect*)  
- *when facing the camera, crossing legs also creates 'narrowing point' \**
3. Straight back / spine whether standing or sitting
4. Body at slight angle to camera
5. Chin out and down
6. Eyes engaged with camera
7. Slight lean towards camera



## TV presenters & newsreaders

- TV presenters and news readers have all been given the same training.
- Women may cross their legs for modesty as camera angles can get quite low.
- It's also a way to improve a seated pose – more dynamic.
- Weight put on one leg & narrowing point created plus better posture
- \* Backs straight and away from seat improving posture – elbow helps balance.
- Angled towards one another shows involvement



# 10 Essential Poses: How your camera 'sees' things *For a woman:*



Hips away from camera  
leaning forward:



Hips towards camera  
leaning away:



**Green border**  
shows good pose,  
image or idea

**Red border**  
shows problem  
pose or idea



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## Pose 1: Couple standing.

*Multiple points of contact help to show relationship – shoulders together shows intimacy*





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## Pose 1: Couple standing.



Find different images by changing hands, faces, your position, angle or crop.

Man on the left allows you to show the ring in focus – vary depth of field and point of focus try using a shallow depth of field





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## Pose 2: Woman Standing – semi-fashion, young woman, model



*1 hip out – opposite leg foot out parallel to camera, knee bent – hand on this leg – other hand on opposite hip*



*Lean towards camera & 'pull up to the top of the head' makes shot more flattering.*



*change supporting leg, position of hands or crop for new pose.*



## Pose 2: Woman Standing – semi-fashion, young woman, model



*One hip kicked out to the side, leg turned out parallel to camera and leaning slightly towards it creates great “S” shape for woman.*

*Try hips back, kicked out to the side, foot turned out etc.*



*Vary the pose by changing position of arm(s) leg, hips, neck, face etc. **Avoid** both arms doing the same thing – use different heights even on hips; this adds ‘movement’ to the image.*

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## Pose 3: Woman Standing – flatters all women

*Legs crossed, or knee kicked in, weight on back hip - “S” shape more flattering.*



*Hands **around waist** & hip kicked **back** – waist look smaller*

*Hands on hips draws attention to hips; makes them look big*

*Legs **un-crossed** look too straight for woman*



## Pose 3: Woman Standing – flatters all women



*Alternative - knee just kicked in.*

*Always crop at 'vanishing' point – as shape tapers. Don't crop at wide point – suggests it gets larger – this includes avoid crop at shoulder level.*



*Keep elbows parallel to camera if it's pointing away arm looks too small.*



## Pose 4: Woman sitting at a table - good for someone who;

- *doesn't want a full body shot (perhaps fuller figure)*
- *feels uncomfortable in front of the camera – find a familiar object to hold*



*Elongate neck by “pulling up to top of head”  
Hands relaxed, soft and curved for a woman.  
If the back is included try to get a slight arch.*

***Gentle pressure on desk not used as support***



*If hands near the face you should **only see the edge of the front finger** so the lighter palm doesn't distract from face.*

## Pose 5: Woman sitting on a chair



Pose so there is negative space between arms and body to show figure.

Avoid slouching in a chair - stomach and knees are nearest the camera so look big.  
**Either use a stool or get them to sit at the front of the chair.**

Hands relaxed, soft and curved for a woman.  
If the back is included try to get a slight arch





## Pose 6: Woman lying down

*By changing the position of the subject's **legs, arms, hands** and altering the **camera angle** this pose suits young children or adults.*



*With legs crossed this is great for younger children – this angle avoids ‘rabbit ears’*



*For adults change camera angle and height, moving the hair behind the neck, elbow down to the side and back, tilting head. Bending the knee helps raise buttocks creates a more “boudoir” style image suited to an adult subject.*



## Pose 7: Man standing

*A great basic pose for men – **weight on front foot, leaning forward slightly, fingers in the pocket, thumb out.** Hands at **different heights** add dynamic.*



*Angle away from camera & lean forward to reduce bulk.*



*Face more towards camera & lean forward for slighter build.*

## Pose 8: Man sitting



*Bar stools or anything with a bar that the foot can be rested on are ideal. A high foot bar is helpful. (For a standing pose try resting against a wall or sofa etc.)*



*'Straightening up through the head' gives the image a more dynamic feel.*



*Bringing the free hand across to the one in the pocket or placing it under the chin creates another 2 images.*





## 26 Pose 9: Man on the ground



*For men who aren't models start with a natural pose, e.g. "Pretend you're lying down watching TV", then tweak it by suggesting the odd change so they feel comfortable.*



*Look for triangles and negative space.  
Keep the subject parallel to the camera.*

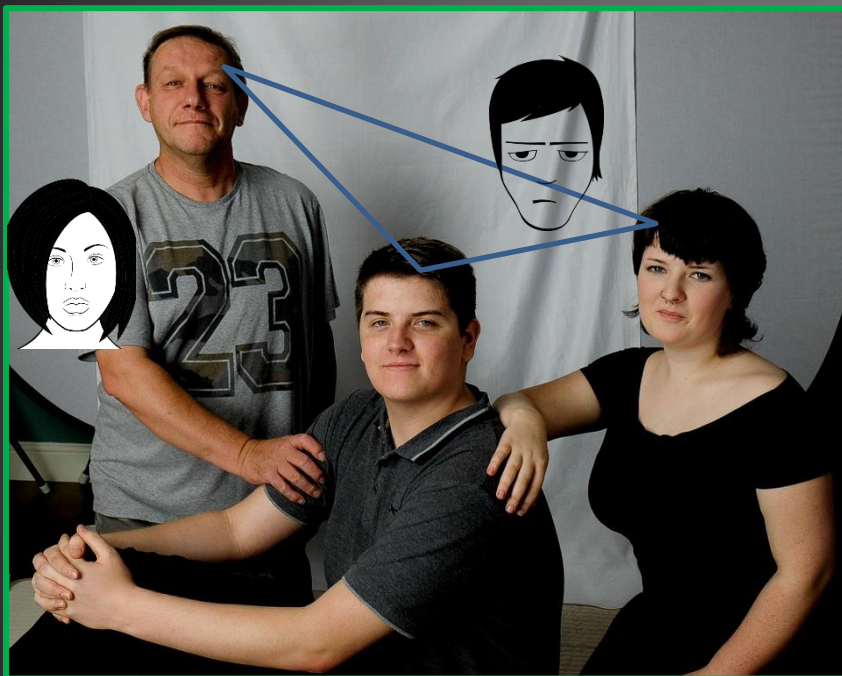


*Try a simple move to this position by suggesting a simple tweak such as "Can you just sit up and put your arm on your leg..."  
This creates a new pose with the same strong triangles.  
**Make sure the supporting hand is parallel to the camera.***

## Pose 10: Group

*The main things to remember are;*

- *Create triangles between heads*
- *Stagger the height of heads by avoiding lining things up - (except formal wedding photos)*
- *Add others – using triangles avoid horizontal lines (often a good idea to have someone's mouth roughly level with another's eyes)*



*'Pulling up to the top of the head' makes the shot more dynamic & flattering.*





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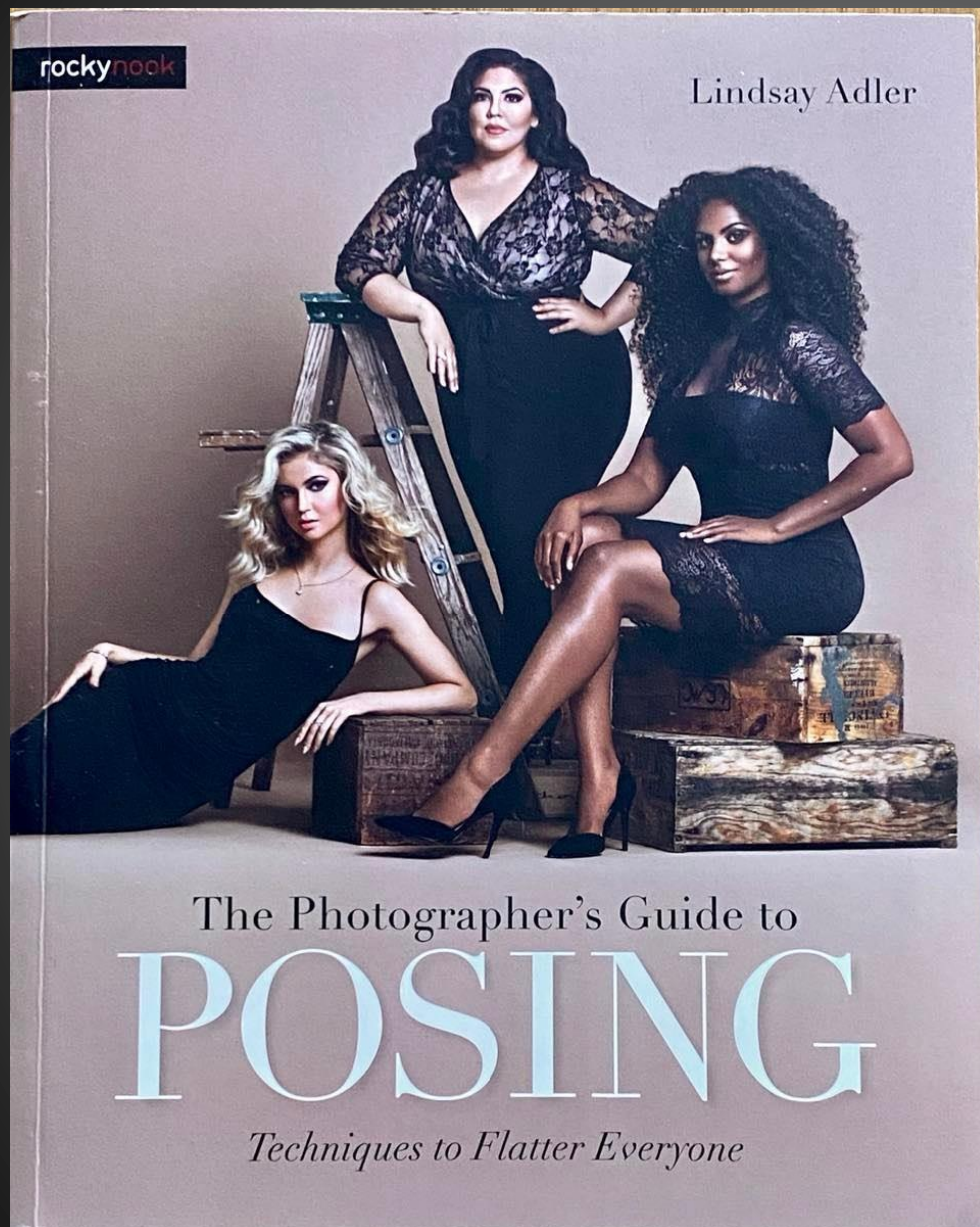
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Available on Amazon  
My paperback copy cost £25  
including offer – RRP £35

- *Over 400 pages*
- *Very comprehensive – contains all the aspects covered in videos and more*
- *Posing every gender, age, shape & size*
- *Wide range of images highlighting points to check and ways to resolve issues*
- *Points to consider when posing people who aren't used to it.*
- *Suggestions about training your eye to notice potential errors & ways to correct poses to flatter subjects.*



## ***Basic Men Posing Essentials***

- 1. Use shoulder angle to define how broad they look.***
- 2. Head neutral or slight tilt away from camera – avoid tilt towards camera (more feminine look).***
- 3. Give hands something to do if new to posing – holding collar, book, etc. – if in pocket ‘fingers in & thumb out’ (less potentially distracting white area)***
- 4. Chin out, and possibly down slightly, to define jaw.***
- 5. Keep first pose comfortable but avoid slouching. “Lie down like your watching TV” then modify.***

## ***Additional guidelines for older male teenagers***

- 1. Pose shoulders to control broadness / size***
- 2. Aim for “cool” poses – get them comfortable then tweak to improve – avoid head tilt **towards** camera***
- 3. Think about using props, table/chair or something relevant to their interests – discuss before and suggest suitable items to bring.***
- 4. Occupy hands and arms – suggest where to place them or mirror the pose.***
- 5. Make use of sitting or leaning – **give them something to put their weight against.*****
- 6. Try getting them to **step forward into pose – practice & repeat.*****



## ***Additional guidelines for mature men***

- 1. Use posture & expression to show 'relaxed & confident' feel.***
- 2. Expression is key to communicating emotion.***
- 3. Always direct hands and arms - pockets, lean on legs etc. – (with pockets fingers in, thumb out.)***
- 4. Get them to interact with chair or wall – most feel more relaxed with 'something to do'***
- 5. Pose hands firmly while not distracting from shot.***

## ***Basic Women Posing Essentials***

- 1. Emphasise assets & reduce their perceived flaws***
- 2. Weight on back leg, hips away from camera, front knee bent in to create narrowing point, upper torso lean towards camera.***
- 3. Create curves by distributing weight unevenly and show negative space by changing position of arms.***
- 4. Hands always soft – if touching body no pressure – lips always soft 'end of deep breath out' feel.***
- 5. Chin out and down – opens eyes and shows jaw***



## ***Additional guidelines for older female teenagers***

- 1. You can get more creative with poses but expression in paramount***
- 2. Look for asymmetry in poses e.g. one hand on waist other in hair – if both hands/legs are the same looks uninteresting.***
- 3. When standing look for uneven weight distribution e.g. weight on back leg other leg extended to the side.***
- 4. Include hands – helps with expression of feeling.***
- 5. Make use of sitting, standing, leaning and laying poses - all should be comfortable & relaxed***

## ***Additional guidelines for mature women***

- 1. Emphasise assets, reduce their perceived 'flaws'***  
*"What do you like most about yourself?"*
- 2. Good posture – straight back, neck extended, shoulders lowered/relaxed – quiet confidence***
- 3. Avoid hands too prominent for older subjects – hands show age most***
- 4. Create subtle curves through weight distribution***
- 5. Chin out further and down slightly helps tighten neck skin (when necessary) and open eyes***



## ***Additional guidelines for 'Boudoir' posing***

- 1. Add curve and arch to body shape***
- 2. Achieve pose the "relax and repeat" – definitely the most demanding posing for 'model'***
- 3. Hands caress the body – ( soft & 'believable' )***
- 4. Vary eye contact – include eyes closed***
- 5. Variety: standing, sitting, laying.***

***Additional guidelines for plus size/curvy women***

- 1. Pose to enhance shape & curve not size – using negative space and weight distribution (weight on back leg where possible)***
- 2. Avoid straight on to camera shots and mergers between body and arms.***
- 3. Hips & waist back– shoulder/chest & head forward.***
- 4. Work to “elongate” body concentrate on posture to flatter***
- 5. Generally avoid full length while sitting.***



## ***Additional guidelines for Bridal posing***

- 1. Stress good posture, shoulders back but relaxed.***
- 2. Flowers below bodice of dress.***
- 3. Pose for negative space (no arms next to body) and create soft curves.***
- 4. Ring hand visible in posed hand shots – including couples.***
- 5. Soft elegant hands.***