Your Family Pictures Color Palette: Cheat Sheet!

Creating Your Personal Palette (Safe and Sure)

When I do color sessions, I determine whether she has warm or cool undertones and that's how we find out what her best or WOW colors are. But there are also a few colors that are equally warm and cool and considered universal. These particular colors look good on most skin tones and work really well when you're trying to outfit a group of people, like bridesmaids or work uniforms, and in this case, FAMILY PICTURES! This is also a safe way for picking a color scheme, using Mom's outfit (or another family member of choice) as the base to build on. We definitely know that when Mom's happy (and confident), everyone is happy!

Also, when pulling together any color scheme, I like to use BANA: BASIC, ACCENT, NEUTRAL, ACCESSORIZE. Using a universal color as described above, here's how to do it:

Step 1- Choose one of the following Universal colors that appeals to Mom as the BASIC color of her outfit. I'm sure that there is a shade of at least one of these colors in your closet! This color can either be represented as a solid —or a print (as long as the print is not too busy, ie. animal prints)

Choose one (Tip: Google to see the color!)

Pale Bronze

Cornflower Blue

Soft Lilac Blue

Navy

Sky Blue

Salmon Pink

Rose Pink

Soft Brick

Step 2- Now that we have our basic color, everyone else can wear that same color as ACCENTS! For example, a pocket square for Dad, bow tie, hair bow for baby, scarf... you get the idea. And all of the accent items don't have to match exactly, but the shades should be similar. Accents are also a good way to add more texture to your pictures so that the image will look interesting and not just flat.

Tip: If Mom chooses a print to wear, try to keep everyone else's ACCENT items either a solid or a very small, barely noticeable print.

Step 3- Now decide on one coordinating NEUTRAL that everyone can wear in common (black, white, grey or navy are the safest) in the form of pants, skirt, tights, etc.

Step 4- Last, everyone should add the finishing touches with ACCESSORIES that coordinates with their outfit (watch, earrings, necklaces, etc) to their comfort level. Not too much to be distracting, of course, but in a way that looks natural and timeless. Don't overthink it. Remember, the goal is for you to be comfortable in what you're wearing so that you can have fun and be relaxed on big day.

Creating Your Personal Palette (A Little More Advanced)

Now that was the very basic way to figure out a color scheme. Want to step outside of the comfort zone a bit?

This is another method that starts with Mom's outfit, and is a good approach for trying to figure out different types of color schemes or to add a good "pop" of color for your pictures. When I do color sessions for clients, one of the tests that I use to determine the best colors to wear is The Eye Test. Yes, you can identify some of your best colors by studying your eyes!

Step 1- Take a mirror and go either outside or to a large window where you can see yourself under strong indirect sunlight conditions. Take a close look and identify all of the colors you see. Our eyes are never a single color but are made up of a mosaic of different hues and shades.

Step 2- Write down all of the color variations you see. You have now identified your high visibility colors (also known as "inherent colors"). These are the colors that reflect your personal color palette and colors you can use to form the backbone of your wardrobe — and in this case, the best colors for your pictures.

Step 3- Take this list to your closet and see what you have already in those colors. Tip: If your natural eye color is very, very dark brown without much color variation like mine, the Eye Test won't work as well for you. Instead, make a list of some key colors that you are naturally drawn to, or ones that several people has said looks great on you. Are they jewel tones like emerald green or royal blue? Or are you attracted to more earthy colors like olive green and mochas? The key is to identify a color that you look good and feel great wearing.

Step 4- Now it's time to build the color palette! Remember BANA? (BASIC, ACCENT, NEUTRAL, ACCESSORIZE) Pick one of your high visibility colors from Step 3. Then, select an outfit containing that color in the form of a blouse, dress, printed top, etc. That is your BASIC or foundation piece of the puzzle.

Now just like before, other members of the family will now use that color as ACCENTS for their outfits. Or go a step beyond and choose another coordinating color to use as a second accent in small amounts. Just a little of an accent color can go along way— make sure that they don't overpower the basic color. Think of them as supporters, not the main players!

Next, pick your NEUTRAL (black, white, grey, or navy) that everyone can have on in common.

Lastly, everyone should add their ACCESSORIES …and then get ready for a great picture day!

Additional Styling Tips for Your Photos:

1. Pick a neutral and do a Monochromatic color scheme (shades of one color) with one color highlight. For example, different shades of grey with a pale yellow on Mom's belt and daughter's scarf.

2. Take a hint from your home decor. What colors are you drawn to? Neutrals? Bright colors? Depending on where you choose to put your finished photos, you want them to blend in and not clash too much with the space.

3. Go bold! Pick two colors that are OPPOSITE from each other on the color wheel (remember from art class?) for a standout color scheme. For example, selected shades of purple and yellow, red and green, etc.

Still confused about what to wear?? Book your own 1 hr Family Personal Styling Session with me. We'll figure it out. Call/ text 704.243.7178 or email tonya@mypracticalstyle.com