



# 8 Tips to keep in mind for DIY Newborn Pictures

Lifestyle family photography  
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## SAFETY FIRST

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"Bringing a new baby into your family home has to be one of the most memorable times of your life. This year Covid-19 has thrown a spanner into the works and the world has gone upside down. Due to current restrictions in Victoria I will be missing out on photographing my favourite subjects: newborn babies. A baby goes through numerous changes and milestones on their first year of life and these stages deserve to be recorded, so don't worry if you missed out on newborn photography, babies that are a bit older are also great to be photographed as they interact a lot more. I have prepared this guide to make sure that you don't miss out on recording the first days of the life of your newborn baby. Through this guide I will cover some tips and knowledge I have gathered through the years while photographing newborn babies.

Before I even begin, this might sound obvious but I think it's best if we mention them again: Stay safe.

- Never place your baby in hard elevated surfaces like a kitchen bench or a table where he/she could roll and hurt himself / herself.
- Never leave your baby unattended in a soft surface like a bed with nearby pillows and large blankets.
- Never use props that can be potentially dangerous like glass bowls or any items with hard and sharp surfaces.
- Never leave your newborn baby unattended near a toddler or a pet, you never know how they will react even if they intend to play.
- Never try any poses where the baby's head is not supported. Please remember that in most cases the images you see that are studio based, are a composite of several images and heavy editing techniques. Please don't attempt poses that are not natural.
- Never leave your baby in any outfits that have long cords like ribbons or other clothing items, as these can wrap themselves around their little necks and cause asphyxia.
- Never leave your newborn baby sleeping in props like bowls or wool.
- If you are using a DSLR, then always use a camera strap on you at all times.



## HOW TO ROCK YOUR DIY NEWBORN PHOTOSHOOT



Now that we have all of that out of the way, then we can get rolling with our tips to rock your DIY newborn photography session.

- **Be patient and take your time:** The best time to photograph a little baby are normally in the morning or early afternoon after their nap. You will have at your disposal a longer period of time than most photographers, so if you or your baby are not in the mood then leave it for a better day. Keep in mind that most babies will develop baby acne and cradle cap. If you would like to avoid or minimise baby acne, then add probiotics to your diet and add oats to your babies bath to soothe the skin. For cradle cap you can always use accessories like a cute hat or use olive oil to minimise flaky skin. You will probably be exhausted but the first two weeks are the best time to photograph your newborn as they are still adjusting and they tend to sleep deeper and for longer.
- **Make natural light your best friend:** for this it doesn't matter if you are shooting with a point and shoot camera, a DSLR or your Iphone, the same principle applies: avoid mixing light. Mixed light happens when you have natural light coming through a window and a lamp or above head lights are on. Make sure that you have all the lights turned off, and that you and your Bub is close to a well lit window. The best lighting conditions are overcast days. A lot of light is not always the best option, it's the type of light. The clouds act like a big screen that reflects the light of the sun and spreads it on your subject evenly. The best option to avoid harsh shadows on your Bub, try to angle his/her face towards the light and place their body in a 45 degree angle towards the window. Once you have taken your first image you have in mind, try to think outside the box and use different angles like above, getting closer and getting lower to the level of the bed or the surface where you have placed your Bub. Another great tip is to use your sheer curtains if you have strong direct light coming in through your window (strong light is the one that comes directly from the sun without any type of filters like foliage) on a clear day.
- **Stay safe:** Take your time and make sure that you provide the support needed for the wellbeing of your baby. Many studio images that are featured through Pinterest are heavily edited through a technique called composite:

these images are made out of several images put together. If you don't have the knowledge and the softwares to be able to edit such images I would suggest you to stick to more natural images, try to concentrate on details like hands and feet. And with that it's a perfect transition to my next tip:

- **Remember to capture the beauty in the details:** Tiny toes and finger change in the blink of an eye, so remember to take your time and capture little details like crinkly hands and little noses. The best time to photograph little details is while they sleep. For this you will need to make sure that your baby is in a warm environment, make sure that you crank up the heater if it's winter. The best outfit to be able to capture these little details is either just with a nappy so that you can make the most of beautiful wraps or with a long sleeve or sleeveless white onesie. If you are

looking into outfits the best option is to always keep it simple. A simple set up will allow you to concentrate on what really matters: your baby. If you are looking to add more elements to your set up, try to keep textures, writing and characters to a minimum to avoid distractions.

- **Happy baby = Happy mum:** One of the most important considerations while setting up the space for your photography session is to consider the room temperature. If you want to have your baby with only a nappy or if you will be changing outfits, then consider having a warm space so that your Bub is relaxed and comfortable. Another great trick if you are hoping to keep your baby relaxed its to search for tracks of white noises in Spotify or any other music library you might have access to. You want to try and have a lazy baby so that they are comfortable and they sleep through your DIY photography session.
- **Don't be scared of heading outdoors:** It will all depend on the weather, most babies tend to relax as soon as you head outdoors. Remember to look for sheltered areas if you are in the middle of summer or look for days that are not windy and dry. Keep in mind that the best option is always an overcast day as the light is more flattering during those days.
- **Be patient and have low expectations but remember to include the siblings:** This can be a hard juggle, but if you would like to include the siblings then try to keep an open mind and remember that this is all about the memories and not perfection. Children are like little sponges and they are very sensitive to changes in their routine. Remember that all of this is also a big change for them, so try to include them



and avoid ordering them to sit there or smile here, as most times they won't comply. Over the years I have found that keeping them busy with an activity that is happening nearby so that I can include them in my shot works wonders. An example of this would be for them to read a book and then I would place the newborn baby nearby so that I can have both in my frame at the same time. If they don't like to read or do another quiet activity then maybe they can do something like a drawing, or playing with a Lego or a figurine? If the older sibling is a toddler, then maybe go for a walk or to the park early that morning to take away some of the energy and try to have your photography session once you are back from your activity. Make sure that they have sent some energy, without being burnt out and too tired to follow your shoot. Remember to praise them and give them rewards at the end of the activity and keep it short as they tend to work best in short burst of activity.

- **Remember: you are part of this story too:** I still cringe every time I get my portrait taken, and it was no different when my girls were little. I now look back at this images and I find myself smoking hot! Over the years I have learned how important it is to be part of their story, not only form a legacy point of view but also to remind them that you are part of this story too. Learn how to set up and use the timer in your phone and your camera, and if you can't then enlist your hubby to make sure that you have a few images with you. If you want flattering angles then try to get your hubby on top of a step stool or a chair and get him shooting from above.

I hope that these tips will guide you and give you the confidence to photograph your own baby during these uncertain times. The days go past too fast and before you know it their first years is gone. Remember to take your time and treasure every day even if they are harder and at times longer. I can't wait to get back shooting and hopefully meet you and your Bub once Covid is gone.

**REMEMBER TO MENTION COVID WHEN MAKING YOUR BOOKING AND RECEIVE \$50 OFF YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY SESSION**

