

How To Look Awesome In Pictures

You'd think with all the practice we get taking pictures 24/7, we'd be pretty good at it by now. Sadly, that's not the case. Your friends continue to post poorly planned pictures online, and you continue to pretend to like them.

“But I don't have time to take great pictures,” you say. “I'm so busy!” That's crazy talk—anyone can take awesome pictures, and it doesn't have to take forever. Follow these simple steps and soon you'll be shooting masterpieces just like the stars.

Profit With Props

Your hands are pretty useful all around, but they tend to ruin lots of pictures for you. Rogue hands left awkwardly at your sides, touching your ear, or draped across other people are a photo faux pas.

If you frequently find your hands screaming to grab something during a photo session, make them stick out less by holding something natural, like a Starbucks coffee cup or your iPad.

What's Your Angle?

There's a reason no one takes straight-on, driver's license-style profile pictures for Facebook—they aren't flattering, and can make your face look fat, unattractive, and normal. That's how it goes when cameras try to take a 3D shape and create a 2D image. Thanks, technology. What have you ever done for us?

Try tilting your head slightly when taking pictures to find your ideal viewing angle, or try it in front of a mirror in a public place like a real narcissist. When you discover your best side, the difference from old photographs will be like night and day.

Make sure to ALWAYS take pictures from this side, or else you could be blocked from uploading to Facebook and Instagram.

Twist and Pout

We've already covered how to prevent your face from looking too big, but can this magic also work on your body? Of course! Scientists(?) say a quick fix for your body appearing too large on film is just as easy.

Simply avoid slouching while twisting your body away from the camera, and stand with one leg pivoted behind you. Elongate your body even more by throwing a hand on your forward hip and running the other through your hair to kill two hands with one stone.

Warning: this pose is a bit tricky to pull off in the car, so make sure to pull over first. Or at least put on your hazard lights.

Be Cross

Quick—you have no other option than a head-on picture. Do you freeze like a deer in the

headlights and accept your fate?

Not today, cameras. We've got your number. Whether sitting or standing, crossing your ankles gives the illusion of narrow hips and slender legs, even if you possess neither.

Laugh Like You Mean It

Say cheese? Never again. Forcing a fake smile makes for unnatural pictures. Nothing says "I'm having so much fun!" like a soulless, ear-to-ear grin in every picture.

Fake laughter makes a more convincing smile you can be proud of. Even if it's not sincere, this one trick will make you look more like a human than a robot next time you're caught on camera.

Ditch the Double Chin

Having even a slight double chin can make you look several hundred pounds heavier than you really are. Not fair? We agree, which is why you should arm yourself with our next tip.

Push your shoulders down and tilt your chin slightly up, and watch the second chin disappear back to where it belongs. Rest easy knowing that uninvited guest won't be bothering you again; at least online, where people can see you.

Dress Appropriately

Don't be like the girls lacrosse team who showed up for a photo op with the President dressed in sandals, while he wore a full suit. Or the guy we all know who thinks business casual means Crocs and socks.

It doesn't, Kyle.

You're going to look strange in a picture if you don't match your environment. Sweaters at the beach and flip flops at a wedding will make your photos bomb, no matter how good you think your face looks.

Make Yourself Pop

If you're having trouble standing out, it might not be your fault! Your clothes could be the problem. People who wear neutral colors will naturally blend in with the rest of a picture.

Don't let it happen to you. Add a flashy pocket square, bright socks, vibrant lipstick, or some shiny jewelry, and watch the comments and likes stack up!

Control Your Background

Despite your best efforts, if the background in your pictures is working against you, your pictures will still be bad. Why? A distracting or conflicting background takes the focus away from YOU, and turns your pictures into a sloppy mess.

Avoid the green screen effect and make sure your background isn't the same color as your clothes. Also, check to see if there are any other distractions, such as posters, animals, or

other people.

Experiment With Lighting

You can't shine standing in the shadows, and you also won't stand out when everything else around you is lit up like a fireworks display.

Standing directly beneath or above a light source can cast all sorts of strange shadows on your face, mostly the kind best left to telling ghost stories around a campfire. Face a natural light source like a window, making sure to be hit by soft light from the side so nobody notices all of the makeup caked on your face.