

Basic Philosophy:

Everyone is a bit nervous on a photo shoot. Everybody.

For first-timers, I liken the sensation to riding a roller coaster for the first time. For a few days before the shoot, you're nervous and excited, just like you would be standing in line to get on the coaster. Getting ready with makeup and preparations is a lot like the first trip up the first hill. And everybody gets butterflies on the first trip down the hill on the other side.

The important thing to remember is that unlike a roller coaster ride, you can stop a photo shoot at any time. You'll know the difference between a little natural nervousness and genuine discomfort. If something really feels wrong, say something. I want your good opinion, and I want you back.

I also sometimes liken a shoot to a stretching exercise. I may push you just a whisker further than you'd usually go. Again, that's part of my job. But as it is with a good stretch, that little push should feel good. Pushing for something that isn't there on a photo shoot is like riding the roller coaster until you throw up. And I don't need to clean my carpets *that* badly.

General Rules:

1. Show up on time and ready to go. The days when models showed up three hours late and hung over are in the long gone by. If Cindy Crawford can be punctual (and she is), you can be, too.
2. Read rule #1 a second time, just to be sure.
3. Be yourself, go a little wild if you like, and have fun. The best pictures are the ones where the model was obviously enjoying himself or herself. Ladies, think of the shoot as an opportunity to play the same "dress-up" game you did when you were about six years old – only this time you're playing it with a full-size body.
4. All criticism is constructive. I only take two kinds of pictures – good ones and great ones. If I'm asking you to change something, it's because you already look good but I see a way to make you look even better. If you are one of two or more models on the set, critique your colleague in the same way.
5. If you want to bring a friend, that's fine, so long as he or she doesn't get in my way. I like to meet people, but I have a job to do. If you can hide an 88 piece marching band under the sofa cushions, I promise to cleverly disguise about a dozen guys from the Moose Lodge as potted plants the next time we shoot lingerie.

General Suggestions:

1. WEAR LOOSE CLOTHING FOR AT LEAST FOUR HOURS BEFORE A SHOOT. This is particularly important if shooting clothing that leaves lots of skin exposed (like swimwear). Skin can retain pressure marks that will show up on a good professional film long after they've disappeared to the eye. Ladies, DO NOT WEAR A BRA BEFORE YOU COME TO THE SHOOT. Bras are notorious for leaving clasp marks, strap marks, underwire sucking-chest wound marks, etc.
2. DO NOT PUT ON MAKE-UP BEFORE THE SHOOT. Show up clean-scrubbed, fresh from the shower, without any make-up on at all. Bring your makeup kit, and we'll let the stylist earn his or her pay. Keep in mind looks good to the eye is not will look good on film. More often than not, women put on far more makeup than they should (or even normally would) when they are going to have their pictures taken; the end result is that their faces wind up looking like they've been dipped in shellac. If anything, photography demands the use of LESS makeup.
3. GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP. Many an otherwise good photo has been ruined by bloodshot eyes with bags under them.
4. DO NOT TRY OUT A NEW SOAP OR SHAMPOO THE DAY OF A SHOOT. Stick with something that you know isn't going to make you break out in hives. By the same token, if there's some part of you needing shaving or waxing, do it far enough in advance that I'm not shooting reddened skin.