Getting Ready for a Portrait

The most important guideline for a portrait or headshot session is to be comfortable. You want to look your best to represent yourself, your department and the University. This applies to what you wear, what shoes you put on and how you style your hair. If you feel comfortable, you will look comfortable. Your confidence will show in the camera.

Now take a deep breath, smile and relax.

Wear something simple and that fits well. Solid colors are best. Pastels and softer, cooler colors (such as blues) for attire are a good choice because they create a nice contrast with skin tones. A soft color next to your face is almost always flattering.

Blouses or tops with sleeves at least to the elbow work best. You can always bring a spare shirt. If this is a casual portrait, Purdue shirts are fine.

We suggest avoiding red and shirts with large logos, graphics or marks.

Jewelry should be kept very simple so it doesn’t detract from your face. Scarves can be tricky to drape correctly.

Do your hair the way you’d normally wear it. Bring a brush or comb to the shoot. A tissue or handkerchief may come in handy as well.

If you wear makeup, choose natural and soft colors that you would normally wear to work.

If this is an environmental or lab shot, wear the correct safety items required in your lab setting (eye protection, close toe-shoes, lab coat, etc.).