



# Secret Guide to Better Photos... for beginners

[www.cuties-tools.com](http://www.cuties-tools.com)

# Secret Guide to Better Photos... for Beginners

We find that many service providers are losing a lot of money because they do not have top quality photos. Providers who invest \$1000 for high quality photos find that they can make their money back in a few days.

Although we recommend you hire a professional photographer take better photos for you, there are many things you can on a tight budget. You don't even need to take special courses on photography and color theory. You can learn to take high quality photos of yourself with a \$200 digital camera. And that is what this guide is all about.

## Table of Contents

1.	Why do you need better photos? .....	1
2.	Lighting .....	2
3.	Using your digital camera .....	3
4.	Privacy: Hide your identity in your photos .....	5
5.	Computer photo editing .....	6
6.	Final words of advice .....	8

# 1. Why do you need better photos?

## **A picture is worth a thousand words.**

Imagine yourself wasting time and money buying a product without any idea what you are buying. That is the fear your clients face if you don't have good photos of yourself. Your clients don't know who you are, how you will look like, or if your photos are real.

Spending money for a professional photographer is not the only way to get the best photos for yourself. With today's technology, anyone can take good photos without any experience... even you!

This guide is all about helping you take good photos so you can maximize your earnings. Yes, we know you're worried about friends recognizing you in your photos. And yes, we know you don't have professional equipment. And YES, we know you don't have any knowledge on how to take photos or how to edit them digitally. That's perfect! Then this guide is for you.

## 2. Lighting

Lighting is the most important element. You need good lighting to take good photos. This is why professional photographers prefer to do photo shoots inside their own studios, because they have their own lights set up properly.

You don't need to know about primary and secondary reflectors, soft boxes, diffusion or refractive lighting. You don't need to have expensive, professional lighting to take good photos. What you do need is enough lighting so that your digital camera can take a sharp photo of you. When the lighting is dark, your digital camera slows down the shutter speed to compensate for the low lighting, which causes photos to become blurry.

So how do you get good lighting without money or knowledge? Just turn on all the lights! Find the brightest area in your house, bring in all your desk and table lamps, and turn them all on. The brighter, the better. Don't aim lights directly in your own face or body because it will create patches of bright light on you. Just turn on all your lights, aim them away from you and you will get excellent results.

Another tip is to find a small room with white walls, because the walls will reflect the light. Professional photographers spend thousands of dollars on good reflectors because reflected light is much softer than direct light (light that is aimed at you) and easier to control.

You can also take your photos outdoors. Sunlight is the best photography lighting, because it is pure white and does not have the yellowish tint of artificial lighting. Your clients don't really care where you took the photos. They are concerned with seeing YOU, not the background. The only problem is you can't take off as much clothing outdoors.

## 3. Using your Digital Camera

Digital camera technology has advanced greatly in the past 5 years. A professional-quality digital camera (6 Mega-Pixels and higher) only costs \$200.

However, the cameras also have too many functions which confuse users. All you need to know is that in general, the camera should use “automatic mode” when you take the photo, so the camera automatically detects the lighting and adjusts the settings for you. Here are some other settings you will find useful:

- ➔ **Automatic/Manual Mode:** Always use Automatic mode unless you are familiar with photography. Automatic is usually denoted by an A, and Manual is usually denoted by an M.
- ➔ **Macro Mode:** Turn this off. It is for very close-up photos.
- ➔ **Resolution/Size:** Choose the highest one. Anything above 2048 (3 Mega Pixel) is good enough.
- ➔ **Quality or Compression:** Choose the best one. High Quality and Fine Quality are the best. Low Quality is the worst. If you chose a very high resolution, such as 6 Mega Pixel, you can use High Quality instead of Fine Quality.
- ➔ **File Format:** JPG and PNG work best because the file sizes are smaller. But TIF, RAW, BMP are fine as well.
- ➔ **Red Eye Reduction:** Turn this on. It will eliminate the red dots which sometimes appear in your photos.
- ➔ **Auto-focus:** Most digital cameras will auto-focus the lens to reduce blurring. When you press the

'snap' button to take the photo, you press the button only half-way down, to let the camera auto-focus. When you hear a 'beep', you press the button all the way down and it will take the photo.

➡ **Flash:** If the camera mode is set to automatic instead of manual, the flash is usually set to automatic. But if given the option, it is better to be safe and turn on the flash unless the room is extremely bright or you are taking the photo outdoors.

You should be 6 to 10 feet away from the camera when you take your photo. Avoid using too much zoom in your camera. If you need to be closer, try positioning the camera closer to you instead. Take multiple photos of each shot. The first photo is usually not the best. Let the camera auto-focus (by pressing the 'snap' button only half way down until you hear a beep) before taking each photo.

## 4. Privacy: Hide Your Identity in Your Photos

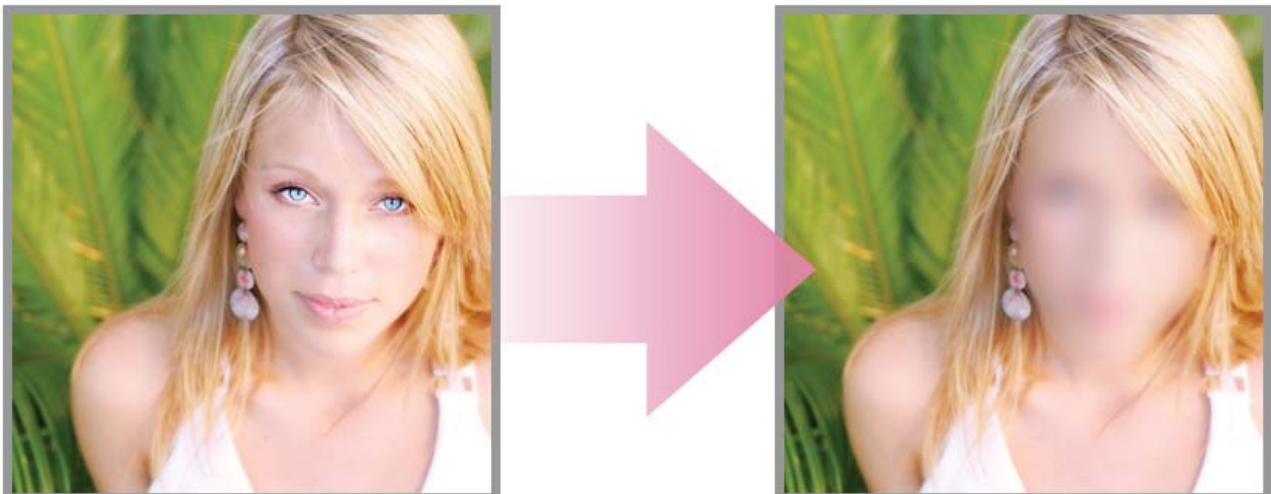
Service providers make a mistake of trying to protect their privacy by taking bad photos. They think very small photos taken in a dark room will protect their identity. Unfortunately, this also means you'll lose a lot of clients.

Most service providers don't want their friends and family to know their occupation. If you are the same, you might not want people to see you or your tattoos in certain areas in your photos. To hide your tattoos, you can wear pieces of clothing which covers the tattoo.

### **There are 3 ways to hide your face:**

- ➔ Look away from the photo
- ➔ Only include your chin/mouth in the photo
- ➔ Let us censor your face

If you don't want to wear a mask, Cuties Tools has a team of professional graphics designers who will blur your face after you have uploaded your photos. When you upload your photos, you can choose to use our graphics designers to blur your face.



## 5. Computer Photo Editing

**Here are some common questions we get about digital editing of photos:**

Can you make my face larger?

Can you make me look skinnier?

Can you make my boobs look bigger?

The answer is no. We don't modify photos to change their content, because all content is created by you, the service provider. However, here is what we can do:

- ➔ **Modify Hue/Saturation:** hue/saturation is a color model which allows our graphics designers to enhance the color of your photos.
- ➔ **Adjust Color Balance and Channels:** adjusting relative amounts of red, green and blue primary colors (or channels) in your photo so that neutral colors are reproduced correctly. We use this for generalized color correction.
- ➔ **Edit Sharpness:** whenever needed, the sharpness of objects in the photo will be enhanced.
- ➔ **Edit Brightness/Contrast:** adjusting the brightness and contrast of a photo is the “beginner’s way” of enhancing photos because it does not balance the change in colors, but it is a quick way to make photos darker or brighter.

Don't get what any of that means? No problem, just upload your photo, request that our professional graphics artists enhance your photo, and that's it! Look at the "before" and "after" images of digital photos uploaded by a provider:

Original Photo



Enhanced



## 6. Final words of advice

You don't need years of experience to take good photos! Follow our guidelines for taking your photos and professional graphics artists can enhance your photos after you upload them, or blur your face to protect your identity.

- ➔ Turn on all the lights in the room; make the environment as bright as possible.
- ➔ Use the automatic settings on your camera. Use the highest resolution and highest quality settings.
- ➔ Unless the room is extremely bright or you are taking your photo outdoors, turn on the flash in your camera.
- ➔ Uploading a file size too large is better than uploading a file size too small.
- ➔ Don't process photos before uploading them to Cuties Tools! You don't need to crop, edit or compress your photos. Just upload the original photo you took and let our professional graphics artists do their work.
- ➔ Keep your photo portfolio updated! If you update your photos every month, your clients will keep coming back and book more appointments.

Don't worry too much if your images seem a little blurry when you zoom in very close to view the photo. As long as there is lots of lighting in the room, you turned on the flash, you let the camera auto-focus and the resolution and quality is set to the highest, then the image will be fine once it has been edited by a professional graphics designer.