

# WHAT TO WEAR

HEADSHOT GUIDE  
BY ALLISON RAGSDALE PHOTOGRAPHY







# What to Wear

## A Guide For Headshots

Gone are the days of headshots being strictly for one type of career path. With the surge of social media and its increasing influence professionally, it's important to let the world know whom they have the pleasure of working (or potentially working) with. Not knowing what to wear, how to pose, or what kind of background is appropriate can make getting your headshot intimidating. The good news? We're here to help and we hope that this guide allows you to dismiss the stress of getting your picture taken. The only thing we ask is that you don't forget about us when you make it big.











# General Don'ts & Their Solutions

## WRINKLED CLOTHES.

We agree, sometimes there aren't enough hours in the day to accomplish everything you need to. However, this is your chance to show off that you are an adult (even if you're pretending) and someone to be taken seriously. Wrinkled clothes give off the impression that the situation isn't important enough for you to iron your shirt.

Our suggestion? Prepare your clothes for the shoot the night before. This way, you'll have plenty of time to iron that shirt that will make your eyes pop.

## BUSY PATTERNS.

The focus of this picture is solely about you – not the optical illusion that you created with multiple patterns. Solid colors really do you justice in this situation, so that will always be our go-to suggestion. However, we also understand that solid colors aren't everyone's style and who are we to tell you to not let yourself show some personal expression? If this is more your jam, then we propose a compromise: only one pattern. If your shirt has a design to it (stripes, polka dots, or abstract) pair it with a solid blazer or cardigan or avoid statement jewelry.

## "UNPROFESSIONAL" ATTIRE.

Ladies – this means short skirts, ill-fitting clothes, logos and tank tops.

Gentlemen – stray away from light wash jeans, logos, and ill-fitting clothes.

Depending on your job or the kind of job you want, your outfit choice should represent that. CEO? Suit and tie is appropriate. Freelance journalist? Business casual is more likely your style of choice, so stick to a blazer and a nice shirt.





# General Do's

## PREPLAN OUTFIT AND LOCATION

One of the best ways to make your shoot seem like getting your picture taken is your day job, is to do just a bit of planning. Ideally, you'll have your outfit (or 3!) put together, ironed, and lookin' fresh. You'll also have an idea of what you want your background to be. If staying in the studio sounds like your ideal situation, we've got you covered. Outdoors more your scene? Just make sure you don't choose a background that's going to distract the viewer – their eyes should be drawn to your presence in the frame!



## FIND A POSE

For the majority, posing feels unnatural which makes the action seem overwhelming. What most people don't realize is that it's always the poses that make you feel silly that turn out the best. So practice a few in the mirror that you're comfortable doing but know you have a professional to help you if you just can't decide!

## WORK ON YOUR FACE

No, we aren't trying to be rude – we simply mean to work on your facial expressions before the shoot. This way you can decide if facing the camera straight on or maybe turning a bit to the right captures everything you love about yourself.



# How to Determine Your Body Type

It's always easier to pick out flattering clothes when you know your body type. Don't add not knowing this onto your list of things to stress about, we've summarized body types for both men and women so you can feel confident about choosing the right outfit.







# Male Body Types

## SKINNY

A “skinny” body type has noticeable lean muscle mass and you might find it hard to gain weight, no matter the number of hearty meals you consume, your fast metabolism will never reveal the evidence.

\*The trick for dressing a skinny bod is to not wear “second-skin” thin shirts but also not choosing something that will completely drown you in fabric. What to look for:

\*Button down shirts that fit your shoulders and fall a little looser from the top.

\*Layer like a boss: choose chunkier knit sweaters if it’s appropriate or tailored jackets.

## MORE MUSCULAR

You have well defined muscles and a rectangular shaped body and have no problem gaining muscle or fat.

\*Keep in mind that you already have an intimidating stature, so you’ll want to choose items that don’t add to the intimidation factor. To find shirts that fit, you should be able to fit a finger between your neck and the collar of your shirt. There shouldn’t be any tightness of fabric across your chest/shoulders/upper back.

## MORE TO LOVE

You have a more “stocky” build and tend to be a little softer and rounder... not necessarily doing your laundry on your washboard abs. You gain muscle and fat just as easily but your muscles just aren’t as defined.

\*Try wearing: Vertical stripes (if you’re choosing a pattern), jackets with structured shoulders, crew neck tees – really any stiffer, solid fabric that compliments your body type. Avoid wearing fitted polo shirts, bright colors and busy patterns, horizontal stripes and boots – especially if you’re on the shorter side.



# Female Body Types

## STRAIGHT

With a straight body, your shoulders and hips are relatively the same width and your waist doesn't have a noticeable definition to it. The general rule of thumb for this body type is to look for pieces of clothing that really help create the illusion of a more "shapely" figure.

\*Try wearing: Snug clothes, not skin tight clothes – like a button down blouse that's slightly tailored at the waist could be a simple way to achieve this look. Color blocking is also a quick trick.

\*Avoid: Shapeless, flow-y tops and dresses. With a straight body type, it's easy for the body to get lost in fabric.

## HOURGLASS

If you have an hourglass figure, the waist is very defined while the hips and shoulders are relatively the same size. Top hourglass figure is also a term – the bust is slightly bigger than the width of the hips but the waist is still clearly defined.

\*Try wearing: Since the waist is where the attention should be, look for shirts with v-necklines or that are more form fitted. Pencil skirts are an easy and classic way to play up the waistline. Add a blazer for a complete look!

\*Avoid: Wearing baby doll tops, a shirt with a high neckline, and loose fitting clothes.

## PEAR

Also known as a triangle body shape. The hips are distinctively wider than the shoulders and the waist has declared itself present and noticeable. Being mindful of what parts of the body to play up and others to tone down is surprisingly easy.

\*Try wearing: A-line dresses, higher cut tops, and bottoms that bring more attention to the upper body.

\*Avoid: Anything that brings attention to the hips – flared skirts, baby doll style shirts that flare at the waist.

# Female Body Types, Continued

## INVERTED TRIANGLE

This body type has wider shoulders in comparison to the waist and hips. It might seem a bit like a balancing act at times but creating a look that sculpts this body type can be easily achieved.

\*Try wearing: Pieces that play down the shoulders while simultaneously adding definition to the hips. It's as simple as pairing an A-line skirt with a simple fitted shirt.

\*Avoid: Bringing attention to the shoulders – i.e. shirts or dresses with high necklines.

## OVAL

In general, with this body type, the waist is equal (sometimes even a little more) in width to your hips and shoulders.

\*Try wearing: Deeper v-cut dresses or shirts and add a belt to create definition around the waist.

\*Avoid: Skin tight clothes that don't do the body justice. It's easier to create a defined body shape with loose fitting clothes, than to start with tight fitting pieces.





# How To Determine Your Skin Tone

It's truly amazing what dressing for your skin tone can do for you. Maybe you know how to be a wizard in Excel but determining your skin tone is a whole new playing field. The world agreed that there are primarily three categories of undertones that affect your skin tone: cool, warm, and neutral. Here are a few tricks to solving the mystery of which color shirt to pick.

- Wrist Check. Take a look at the veins on your wrist. Do they appear more blue or green? If you're seeing a green tint, you can thank the melanin that's in your skin. This means your skin tone has a distinct yellow tone to it, creating a more "warm" appearance. If your veins appear blue and everyone can tell when you're blushing, most likely you have cool undertones. With cool undertones, you're more susceptible to getting sunburned, which means you have less melanin, placing you in the category of fair skin. (Science)

Which leads us to our next test.

- The sunshine test. Who in the family can stand outside for 5 minutes and come back inside looking like they've spent a week on a tropical vacation? Chances are, they have yellow to olive toned skin, also classified as "warm". If you're the family member who gets fried like a lobster, more than likely you're in the "cool" category.
- Gold or silver? The jewelry test is one other option to determine skins dominant undertone. Silver is considered a metal that pairs well and highlights cool undertones while gold compliments those with warmer undertones. Ask whoever has the biggest jewelry collection to help you in your pursuit for understanding your skin tone.



# Dress For Your Skin Tone

## Neutral

Neutral skin tones tend to be the most common, so it's fairly easy to find colors that look great on you. Your typical go-to shade could be dark navy with whites or tans. If you're feeling bold and want some color in your photo, try green.

## Warm

Warm skin tones tend to be most complimented by darker hues. Any color that you could really associate with fall – dark reds, burnt orange, etc. should be your go-to colors.

## Cool

If you're dressing for a cool skin tone, try choosing shirts that have a lighter, almost pastel hue to them. Light blues, greens, purple even! Got blue eyes? Pastel blue will be your best friend.











Allison Ragsdale  
PHOTOGRAPHY

2877 Main Ave  
Durango CO 81301  
970-259-9255  
[info@allisonragsdalephotography.com](mailto:info@allisonragsdalephotography.com)  
[www.AllisonRagsdalePhotography.com](http://www.AllisonRagsdalePhotography.com)