



Let's prepare for your branding shoot!

I'm not going to sugar coat it: preparing for your branding session is a lot of work!

From helping my clients plan their branding sessions to having my very own branding sessions, I can tell you that it takes time and effort. What I'll also tell you, is that it's worth every single second of planning.



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The first step to preparing for your branding session is first to know: **WHAT IS YOUR BRAND IDENTITY?**

Your logo, brand colors, visuals, brand voice, ideal client, values, etc. play a vital role when it comes to knowing how to prepare for your branding session. For my own personal branding session, I wanted my images to be feel fresh, light, and easy going, which is a direct translation of my brand identity and personality.

The second step is to know exactly why you're doing a branding photo shoot. Is it because you need an updated headshot? Do you need more content for social media? Have you been taking all your own photos but don't have the time now? Perhaps you have no idea but realize that quality photos are important in your business. Therefore, I have a chat with all my clients. We'll talk about why you want a branding photo shoot, your brand identity, and pull it all together to bring your brand to life with photos of your business that feel genuine and authentic.

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Start working on pulling together a shot list, and I don't mean tequila and fireball! I'm talking poses! This is essential to how your branding photo shoot will go. The more you prepare, the more you'll get out of your session. If you're not quite sure, start by thinking of the

words you want to share. What social media captions, blogs, ads, emails, etc. do you want to share? From there, think of the images that would support those.

More great ideas to think about are:

your process from start to finish
your workspace/location
your life outside of work

your client experience
behind the scenes

Now that you have your brand identity and you're clear on why you're doing a session, take your shot list and start preparing your props and outfits – *the fun stuff!*

Outfits

For each "shot" on your shot list, you want to aim to have a different outfit. For a one-hour session I suggest 4 outfit changes. The goal is to make it seem like you've done multiple sessions on multiple days but in fact, we've done it all in a one-hour session!

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For your outfits, the first goal is to feel comfortable. If you're uncomfortable, it will show in the photos via your expression and body language. You also want to make sure that your outfits match your brand identity, especially visually and professionally. Is your business more of a jeans and tee kind of aesthetic or do you want to come across as more formal? Referring to my own business, I pick outfits that are more on the casual side, but also professional, to compliment my brand and personal identity. I want my clients to see that I'm personable, down to earth, and inviting.

Props

The third step is complimenting your shots. Try not to overthink this one. My number one piece of advice is: if you're thinking "ah, maybe?" just bring it! It would be a bummer to realize a prop would be the perfect fit, except it's sitting at home because you weren't sure. Again, props will help support your brand identity, so if it's a mug that has a saying on it that's "so you," bring it. If it aligns with your brand colors, bring it. If it's a tool you use, bring it!



The props that you bring for your branding photo shoot will all depend on your business, but most common items for my clients are:

coffee/tea mug laptop day planner promotional
products notebook/ fancy pen tools of the trade cellphone brand
products

Phew!

...after doing all of that prepping, you'll be ready for your branding photo shoot! And don't fret, every single person has the same excited, yet nervous feelings before their session, myself included! A few more great tips I've learned are:

- Bring a friend to help you stay organized, so you can focus on being the model, etc.
- Share your favorite playlist with me or tell me what you like, so I can have it playing!
- Don't be too shy to bring food or drinks to help your session feel like fun! Wine, doughnuts, you name it...
- Make sure you have fun and I mean lots of fun! At the end of the day, having a branding session should feel like something you would do again.

I hope by now you're feeling totally informed on how to prepare for your branding shoot. However, if you have a few more questions, send me a quick email! I'm always happy to help.

I'm so excited to create with you!

- Jessica

