

Pet Portrait Tips and Tricks

Our friends at [Pawww Snap! Pet Photography](#) may not be able to get that perfect shot of your pup in person this year, but they shared these helpful and fun tips on how you can try at home.

Think about lighting. Use natural window light if shooting indoors, and avoid using flash if you can. Position yourself with your back toward the window, with your pet illuminated by the light streaming in. If outside, shoot in the morning or early evening; the hour after sunrise and the hour before sunset offer the most even lighting. Add “fill” light to the pet’s shadow areas with a reflector; aluminum foil taped to a 3-by-3-ft. sheet of cardboard works great.

Take a seat. Unless you have a specific composition in mind, get down to your pet’s level, and focus on the closest eye.

Take in the scene. Look out for distracting elements in the background. Objects like trees and street signs can ruin a picture if they take too much attention away from your main subject. Watch out for a tree branch growing out of your dog’s head! Move around until you find the most pleasing composition. Simple is usually better.

Make some noise. Have an arsenal of noisemakers. rattles, and squeakers—anything to get eye contact.

Shoot a lot. A successful picture of a wiggly dog is often just a numbers game.

Be patient with your pup. Photos should feel like a fun game rather than a reprimand. Every five to 10 minutes, hand over a treat and a “Good work!” If you are losing your dog’s attention, take a break.

Pay your model. Have rewards handy: treats or bits of kibble during the session, and a big reward when you’re finished.