

COUPLES SESSION GUIDE

STEF ELIZABETH PHOTO



2021-2022 CLIENT GUIDE

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WWW.STEFELIZABETHPHOTO.COM



Hello there!

My name is Stef. Business-wise, I am a wedding and portrait photographer, but at heart my drive is to make a living making beautiful images.

If you're reading this, you're either considering booking a session with me, or you've just booked me as a wedding photographer and you're curious about your included engagement session. You've also probably never had a professional photo shoot with your significant other until now, so I'm here to guide you along the way!

An engagement or couple's session with me probably isn't what you're picturing: there won't be any stiff poses, awkward arm placement or fake smiles. I focus on taking the time to slow down, relax and focus on the unique dynamic of the love between you and your partner. I want you to be able to look at your photos and make you relive that feeling of being completely absorbed in your partner. During our time together I make it my goal to draw out genuine expressions and laughter, even if you're not the "lovey-dovey" type. I also try my absolute best to make your session genuinely fun - when couples tell me they even forgot they were being photographed, I know I've done my job!

Read on to find out more. . . .

Stef

FEATURED SESSION



FEATURED SESSION



FEATURED ENGAGEMENT SESSION

*Chelsea &
Jordan*

CREASEY
MAHAN
NATURE
PRESERVE

You might feel nervous on the drive to your couple's or engagement session, even dread if you are particularly camera-shy. This is totally normal! I see a lot of clients with nerves and tension upon arriving at their session, and most of the time that quickly dissapates. Most of the couples I work with need a few minutes at the beginning of a session to let the nerves settle as you realize having your photo taken with your partner really isn't so scary! Leave all of the "posing" and lighting to me - your only job is to have fun! This is my job and I know how to flatter both you and your partner in photos. The best piece of advice I give couples for their session is to not take anything seriously, and to let me worry about directing, ideas, and all the other technical photographer stuff. Just trust me and have fun with your partner! I make a lot of ridiculous jokes and remarks during your session, so you'll have to forgive my lame humor!

Take a look at my featured engagement session at one of my go-to Louisville locations, Creasey Mahan NaturePreserve in Goshen, Kentucky Preserve. This is a sample gallery of the kind of images you'll get with me at an outdoor location during the golden hour!





FEATURED SESSION



Love affair
LOUISVILLE
FEATURED SESSION

KATY & ALEX
Wedding date: June 2021

Location: Downtown Louisville, St. James Court
and Central Park

Downtown Louisville makes for a great
engagement session location with its mix of urban
areas and natural spaces.

FEATURED SESSION





LOCATION:

Big Four Bridge and
Jeffersonville, IN

QUICK TIPS

Quick Tips

FOR THE PERFECT COUPLES SESSION LOCATION

LOCATION

The location you choose is a huge factor for the mood and feel of your session. What kind of story do you want to tell? Are all of your favorite moments together found in those quiet, intimate moments spent cuddling at home or would you like to create a dramatic, adventure-filled story in a stunning location outdoors? Consider your story and pick the setting that best fits.

BE YOURSELF

There is no need to perform in front of the camera. I understand being camera shy, so It's important to remember that stepping out of your comfort zone and intentionally being vulnerable is going to create the most authentic images. During your session, we will take the time to acknowledge and photograph your favorite types of moments whether that is cuddling and enjoying each other's embrace or being adventurous, wild spirits.

TAKE YOUR TIME

There is no need to rush or manufacture moments, feeling like we are working with a time crunch. I love allowing 2 hours for sessions to allow moments to unfold organically. Allowing this time gives you the chance to really get comfortable and even forget I'm around so you can really focus on your partner.

TIME IT RIGHT

For outdoor sessions, we will be using the sunrise or sunset to let us know when our session will be. We will generally plan our session to begin 2 hours at sunrise or 2 hours before sunset. This light is golden, warm and dramatic-- perfect for highlighting your love story.

TALK WITH YOUR PARTNER ABOUT WHAT TO EXPECT

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THE PROCESS

From start to finish

1.

SET YOUR SESSION DATE

The first thing we need to do is solidify your session date. If you are a wedding client, an engagement session is included in your collection choice, and that will be the first thing we figure out once the contract and deposit are done. If you are not a wedding client, we will first need to figure out a date and sign a brief online contract with a 25% deposit. Once we all agree on a date, we can decide on the location, which is totally up to you as a couple. I have a list of (free and paid) locations that I frequently use, but I am ALWAYS down to hear your own ideas

2.

DAY BEFORE

The day before your session is a good opportunity to check in with your partner about how intimate you'd like to get during your session the next day, to lay out your outfits so you're ready to go and to get excited about the session. Any remaining payment is also due any-time prior to your session, so this is a great time to make sure that's been taken care of.

3.

SESSION DAY

The goal of the engagement session is to capture you as you appear in everyday life together and show how comfortable you are with each other. Rather than put you in awkward poses and tell you to smile at each other, I use prompts to make your session as game rather than a long and torturous experience. For example, I might ask you to walk toward me as if your hips are glued together. Having a "goal" takes your mind off the camera! Other prompts include asking you to guess each other's preferences, tell me about each other's tics, draw a picture on your partner's cheek with your nose, and other ridiculous suggestions. Remember it's totally normal to feel self-conscious and not entirely at ease at first - as the session goes on you will get more comfortable with the camera.

The best tip I can offer you is to not take yourselves too seriously!

4.

DELIVERY OF IMAGES

I take a lot of photos during couple's sessions. I've learned it's better to have too many images rather than not enough, and that results in a huge number of images to go through! For that reason, as I sort through all of the images from our session I choose to edit only the best ones. Instead of providing my clients with a ton of "meh" photos, I spend time culling and editing the shots you will love and look at over and over.

You may also notice that I do provide some but not all images in black and white. This is because I only convert the images that "work" as black and white, and the reality is that will not apply to every photo. You are of course free to make your own black and white conversions - all I ask is that you don't post them online as my work!

Please be aware that I may post a few photos on my Instagram page (@stefelizabethweddings) after our session as a sneak peek. If you prefer to see your photos before I post them, please let me know beforehand and I would be happy to refrain from posting a sneak peek. I will aim to have your gallery of portraits edited and ready within four weeks of our session. You will receive your photos in a personalized online gallery. This allows for the quickest delivery of the images and allows you to easily view and share your photos. From there, you are welcome to order print products through me, or you can look after creating prints with your own preferred lab. You have full printing rights to the digital images in your online gallery.



What to wear

Often the biggest question when it comes to sessions are regarding wardrobe. Keep in mind that we are creating a memory of your favorite day-- I want you to choose clothing that reflects who you are as a person and makes you feel beautiful and confident. Err on the side of too dressy rather than too casual. The following are my personal recommendations and I would be more than happy to consult with you before your session about your outfit ideas!

FOR WOMEN: Long flowy dresses help create a feeling of movement and emotion in your images. You don't have to wear a dress of course, but they sure do help in creating more emotion in images! For any of your clothing items, choose solid colors (think earth tones, pastels or neutral colors) or timeless prints that compliment your skin tone. You don't have to spend a ton of money on clothing - just choose one or two outfits with "flow" for the best photographic results. If you have long hair, I also highly recommend wearing your hair down for added impact in your images. Hair blowing in the wind always creates more emotion and visual interest than a tight bun or boring ponytail!

For an in-home intimate session, I'd recommend selecting clothing you are comfortable in that you would wear while lounging around your home. Think long socks, v-neck t-shirts, underwear, lingerie, kimonos, etc. This type of clothing really portrays the casual nature of a love that is both deep and comfortable-- a love that lasts.

FOR MEN: V-neck t-shirts and button-ups in solid neutral colors and fitted shorts or pants. I recommend staying away from khaki and denim.

For an in-home session, you can have a more comfortable look. Think of what you would typically wear at home, but maybe a bit dressier. Think of jeans, ripped up denim or pants, plain v-neck t-shirts or even no shirt at all (depends on the vibe you're going for!). Avoid sweatpants (in most cases).

Wearing clothing you are comfortable in will help ease any nerves you have about your session.

The above suggestions **are by no means rules** and if you have more eclectic tastes and love lots of colors, I'd like to encourage you to put as much of your personality into your clothing selection as possible! And don't be afraid to wear accessories such as hats and jewelry.

If you are doing a natural outdoor location, I suggest you also find a blanket to sit on that coordinates with your outfits. Similarly with clothing, I would suggest avoiding red, white or blue-checkered plaid/neon-colored/dirty blankets and sticking with neutral colors. But, if you don't have a suitable blanket, don't sweat it - we can improvise!

Here are some ideas on what NOT to wear:

- neon/fluorescent colors that reflect on your skin
- animal prints
- glossy/heavy makeup (too reflective)
- baseball caps (unless only for a few photos) - they tend to block the other person's face

If you feel like you are in need of assistance, I am happy to help you. During our consultations leading up to the session, we can discuss your wardrobe selections and I would be more than happy to give you advice on what will and won't work photographically.



TESTIMONIALS

A little love... FOR STEF ELIZABETH PHOTO

I was totally in awe of our engagement photos because of how well she captured each of our personalities and fun-loving relationship. I honestly can't pick out a single favorite photo because they're all so great! The lighting, location, and day was absolutely perfect and really made for stunning photos! Stef was full of ideas, easy to work with, very professional and great at what she does! I cannot wait for her to capture our wedding day! I would recommend her to anyone again and again!

CHELSEA R., LOUISVILLE

When looking for a photographer we found a lot of stiff poses and photos that looked overly edited, so we were overjoyed when we found Stef! We just got our engagement photos back, and I can't wait for her to do our wedding! She immediately put us at ease, and we had so much fun at our engagement shoot! Nearly every comment on our pictures we're friends and family saying how natural and happy we looked- no stiff poses here! Or they commented on the GORGEOUS way Steph captured the sunlight in all our photos!

KATY S., LOUISVILLE

She came up with fun prompts and questions to get a reaction out of us so she could capture a real genuine smile/laugh/hug/etc. She is amazing at positioning you in natural light settings so the light hits you just perfectly. Working with her made my cheeks hurt because I was smiling and laughing so much. She is extremely creative and when we got our engagement session photos back I almost cried because she did such a beautiful job at capturing our relationship.

ANNIE D., LOUISVILLE

STEF ELIZABETH PHOTO
CONTACT | INFO@STEFELIZABETHPHOTO.COM





READY TO BOOK?

YOU CAN SET UP YOUR SESSION BY
EMAILING ME AT:

INFO@STEFELIZABETHPHOTO.COM

OR SHOOT ME A TEXT AT
502 292 8014

PLEASE TEXT FIRST AND DON'T
LEAVE ME VOICEMAILS. . . .
I GET LOTS OF SPAM CALLS :)

I'M EXCITED TO HEAR FROM YOU!