

## Take Great Photos of Your Dog

### 5 tips for taking breathtaking pet portraits.

*Laurie Meehan-Elmer*

1. The benefits of food and toy bribes can't be overstated. To keep your dog's attention on you (and not the dog next door) during a photo shoot, offer small, frequent treats. Give enough to keep your dog interested but don't let him fill up on treats before you're done shooting. If you want an action photo of your dog, look for an area with a pleasing background and great light. Then, throw a ball or favorite toy in that area and get ready to shoot.
2. When photographing dogs, it's helpful to have another person act as an assistant. The assistant can interact with the dog using toys and treats to guide his gaze toward the camera. Without an assistant, your dog will often be too close to you, making it difficult to take photos. One assistant is great; two or more assistants are often too many. Dogs, like people, are easily distracted.
3. Generally, the best (or easiest) light for photographing your dog is a bright overcast day when the light is even and soft. The light of a rising or setting sun will give you a warm, pleasing tone. The most challenging light is a bright sun directly overhead, which casts harsh shadows.
4. To avoid that "flashed" look when photographing your dog indoors, place him (or coax him) to a spot close to a window and take advantage of the daylight spilling in. Even if your automatic flash goes off, it won't look as harsh and may even help to fill in shadows.
5. Never force the photo. If you try to make your dog pose, he won't look happy and natural. The process won't be fun, and he'll run away from you whenever he sees you pick up the camera.

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