

# Quick Guide to Model Posing

A great model is proactive and creative with her poses. She knows which postures and gestures suit her look and can flow easily from one to the next. Here are some tips for great posing, practice these in front of the mirror!



## Hands and feet

Always be aware of what your hands and feet are doing. Think about your whole body being aligned with the emotion or message that you want to portray, including your hands and feet!

Are they hanging limp, clenched, cut out of the shot by your body, or covering your most photogenic parts?

Should they be elegant, soft, strong or faced towards the light?

Never point your fingers or feet straight at the camera lens unless directed to, a 45 degree angle is usually better.



## Face

Facial expression can make or break an otherwise amazing shot.

To create a certain expression close your eyes and imagine that thought, then open your eyes and portray it in your whole body. Alternatively you can turn your whole head away from the shot to 'feel the emotion' and then turn it back with that emotion in your face. Practice doing this in front of a mirror.



### Posture

Unless you're directed otherwise, always stand tall in each pose, tightening your stomach and pulling your shoulders back slightly. Your posture should be both elegant and strong at all times. A slouched posture can be perfect for some shots, however there is an art to this pose and it needs to be practiced in front of a mirror to test how much and where to slouch and angle your body.



### Mouth

Practice both serious looks with your mouth and different kinds of smiles. A wide mouth, teeth-showing smile may be great for some types of modelling i.e. commercial or lifestyle, but may be inappropriate for another i.e. high fashion. A serious look can be harsh and intimidating or soft and feminine depending on what look is required- always ask which look your client has in mind, and think about the fashion you're modelling and what kind of facial expression will enhance it. By practicing in front of a mirror you'll get to know which expressions suit your face, you can also ask others what they see in your expressions.



### Head

Tilt your head in different directions to create different looks- up, down, side, angled. For example turning your head to a 45 degree angle and raising your chin slightly, while looking back and down at the camera can create an arrogant look.

Many photographers report that when they direct their model to turn her head to the side and look to that same side with her eyes, the model will automatically turn their eyes too far and what ends up showing in the camera is the white of her eyes. To avoid this, when turning your head to one side keep your eyes pointing the same direction as your head.



### Breasts

To enhance cleavage, lean forward and bring your arms together in front of you, loosely clasping your hands together at your waist.

To lessen cleavage, lean back and keep your arms apart, slightly opening up your chest.



### Sitting

For sitting poses, posture is important to avoid folds of the skin showing and heavier parts of your body being enhanced.

In all sitting positions keep your back and stomach softly but consciously flexed and your body elegant.

For a slimming effect, shift your weight more onto one thigh than the other so you are not sitting flatly.

When trying to sit in a feminine and flattering pose always think about bringing your weight up rather than letting it sink.

### **Resource images**

Always research poses yourself so that you are proactive and creative at every shoot. When you find a pose in a magazine that you like, practice it at home until you can recreate it on demand. You may want to keep a scrapbook or folder of poses you like and can pull off well.

Have about 5-10 poses you can move into easily from one to the other, and also know which poses are not so flattering for you so you can adapt them or make suggestions if asked to pose like this in a shoot.

### **The photographer**

Learn how the photographer works. You may notice that the photographer snaps frames quickly so you need to blink in between shots. Or they may snap more slowly so you can learn to judge their body language to know when the shot is about to be taken and blink beforehand.

Some photographers will want you to move from pose to pose as they snap away, so knowing a good flow between poses is important. However some photographers will want you to perfect a pose and hold it, and in this case its important to concentrate on the pose with your body but be able to relax into the emotion of it when the shot is ready to be taken, as opposed to having a clenched and concentrated look in your face and body because you're trying so hard to hold the pose.

### **Listen**

Always attempt to do what the photographer directs you to do, as they are seeing you through the camera lens and know exactly what needs to move or change to get the perfect shot. Listen to the photographer carefully – if they ask you to keep your head straight but tilt it to the left, ask for a demonstration and follow it exactly. Inexperienced models may just move their whole head and lose the pose.

### **What to avoid when posing:**

- Don't hold your breath while posing. This can create a look of concentration. Relax as you would normally and breathe into the pose.
- Never completely straighten your arms, legs and body unless directed to. As a rule, curves and angles are much more visually appealing than straight lines. Be aware of how all your limbs appear and ask the photographer how it looks from their angle if you are not sure. There's nothing worse than seeing a great pose you've just done and noticing that your arm or leg was awkwardly straight or angled and having to re-do it.
- Avoid looking directly at the camera with your eyes and head facing completely forward, unless directed. Lighting usually enhances the face when it's turned or tilted slightly and the eyes turned back to the camera.
- Don't focus on the lights or flashes as this will cause you to blink or squint, and can make your eyes water. Concentrate on your pose and holding the emotion you are portraying.
- Avoid creating symmetry with your arms or legs. Different angles and lines look more appealing than exactly the same thing on both sides.

**Remember... keep practicing, keep up to date with poses used in each type of modelling, be a proactive and creative model, and you are sure to get great results from your shoots!**