A Weimaraner dog with a red collar is standing in a field of tall grass and bushes. The dog is looking towards the camera with a calm expression. The background is a soft-focus landscape of green and brown vegetation.

Pet Session Guide

Not sure where to start when it
comes to planning your session?

WE CAN HELP!



Photos by Becky
Professional Photography

WHY HIRE A PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER?

1. Memories are priceless

We all return to photos when we feel nostalgic. Photos preserve that moment in time. A memory tells the story of our life, and our fur babies are our a big part of that life. They share every day with us and our kids. It's important to have their presence in our lives documented. Pets are very much our family and family, in any form, is a treasure.

2. You know what to expect

Through years of experience, a professional photographer produces a consistent artistic "look". A photographer's eye for angles and light will result in amazing images. Plus, a skilled pet photographer will take care of fine tuning the image: removing leashes and eye bugs, removing people in the background, enhancing the fur details and the colors. You'll also get the added value of their guidance. Your photographer can look at different aspects of the shots and tell you what might need to be changed, moved, smoothed out, tilted, or adjusted in any way. A true professional is confident enough to let you know if the shots being taken are working – or not.



WHY HIRE A PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER?



3. They Have Post-Production Skills

Professional photographers have the skill (and software) to edit your photos after they've been taken. They'll use their expertise to bring out the light and color, or make other modifications, to enhance your images. In the end, you'll wind up with beautiful imagery and a depiction of a moment, a place, and loved ones, captured with ease, skill, and respect.

4. Pros are versatile



A pet portrait artist has the knowledge and understanding of their equipment, lighting and locations that will lead to unique images. The experienced photographer understands animal body language and always tries to make everyone comfortable. They will have patience and a bag of treats... and "tricks" up their sleeve to get that perfect pose! They know how to make your pet—and you—look the very best. Providing a Stress-free, smooth client experience takes time to cultivate. Planning is what makes this process very personalized and unique for you.



CLEANING UP



Bathing

We suggest giving your pet a bath the night before the session to ensure a clean and fresh look. A quality pet shampoo, conditioner and towel-dry the night before will help your pet to look his absolute best!

Brushing

Brush your pet before the session to eliminate any stray hairs. After bathing, brush your pet thoroughly to help the coat shine. Leave-on conditioners can add a wonderful sheen to your pet's coat.



Wiping the Eyes

For dogs with lots of fluff around the eyes, trim in this area to make sure we can see those eyes in the photos. It's usually a good idea to wipe off any eye-jam before you come.



Paws

Don't forget the pawdicure! Even though it's a small detail, if your dog's nails are too long they can look unkempt.

GROOMING

Grooming your Pet

There is no right or wrong decision when it comes to your dog's grooming. Decide what feels right for you and your dog. You want your photos to show your dog as you usually see him. If that doesn't involve a groom and trim then leave it off your to do list.

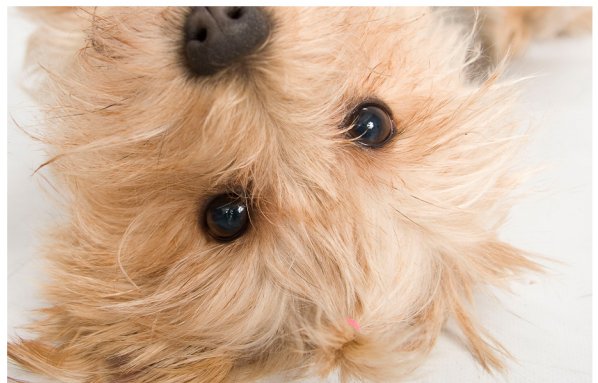
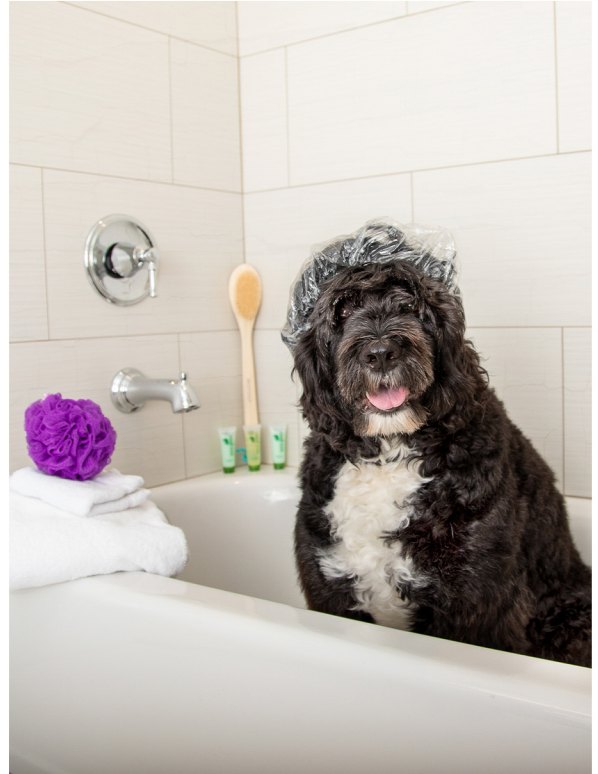
Professional Grooming

For those who aren't comfortable grooming their own pet, a professional pet stylist is a great way to get your pet looking incredible. If you normally groom your dog, so do a few days before their session. That will give their fur sometime to settle in place so they look their best and won't be over stressed for the photo shoot.

DIY Grooming

For those up for a bit of an adventure, grooming can be a fun, enjoyable way to interact and bond with your pet. If your pet is low maintenance and doesn't need a full grooming, a bath and a good brushing should suffice.

Please read all care instructions on your grooming products to ensure your pet is happy, safe, and healthy.



WHAT TO BRING

Toys and Treats

Toys and treats are a great way to get your pup to look at the camera. This will help to motivate them to cooperate during the session. We suggest bringing their favorite toy. Playing with their favorite toy is a great way to let their personality shine. Bring their favorite accessories like a bow tie or a cute sweater. But don't worry—we have a whole doggie wardrobe closet and props for most anything imaginable. If you plan to have your pet dressed in clothing or other accouterments, make sure your pet is used to wearing them prior to picture day to avoid stress or anxiety.

Squeaky toys are a great hit and help encourage your pet to make some of those adorable, playful expressions. Please bring whatever it is with you! When your dog has an item or treats that creates immediate focus, it works like a charm to get those beautiful shots of pure delight. While I will have some treats, I recommend that you also bring plenty of their favorite treats with you too, as some pets may be picky or have food-intolerance or allergies.



DAY OF THE SHOOT

Exercise

Walk it out—or take a nap! You want your furry friend to feel relaxed during your session. If you have an active, wild child on your hands, your dog will likely benefit from some extra exercise or a trip to doggy daycare for a few hours. However, if you have an older dog who is low-energy, they may just need some time to rest up for their session.

Prep Yourself and Get Ready to Assist

While this photoshoot may be all about your dog, you want to look good too! There is something very special about having photos of you and your pet together. I promise you'll be glad you have them. Your pet is most interested in you, so when you're not in the photo you can really help guide your pet's attention to wherever we want it to go. Getting a pet to stay while you back away and come next to the camera is a great, fun way to assist and get in on the action of pet photography.



ODDS & ENDS



Don't Stress

It can be frustrating when your dog isn't cooperating or even actively ignores commands. Don't worry. Stay calm. Your frustrations can make your pet more anxious. If your pet isn't posing properly or being the perfect angel, that's a-ok. The eyes are the windows to the soul. A nervous pet often shows his stress in his eyes.

What does the photographer need to know?

Please let me know if your pet has any anxieties or special needs that need to be considered. This will help me when interacting and bonding with your pet and help bring out your pet's personality by creating a safe and comfortable environment. Also, tell me their key words. For example, "treat" or "walk?" They will be used sparingly.

ODDS & ENDS

My dog doesn't know "sit."

My #1 goal is for your dog to have a great time here. Dogs will be dogs – no need to train for anything fancy. A sit and stay is always helpful, it's more important for your pet to look happy in their photos. A pet with personality is super fun to photograph and their personality comes shining through in the pictures.

Patience is a Virtue

Pets run the show, so a session can take a while if your pet is not cooperative. It doesn't bother me at all. Creating great pet portraits takes a lot of time and patience. There will be a lot of waiting and repeating poses or shots several times. This is totally normal. It's best to show up with a positive attitude and low expectations for your pet.



WATCH ME GROW

A DOG'S LIFE PUPPY PLAN



Puppies grow fast! Celebrate your fur baby's milestones. This 4 session package will capture his first year with you and tell the story of your puppy as he grows into those giant paws.



A one time initial investment of \$850 guarantees you four customized photo sessions with Photos by Becky. Use our suggested sessions or come up with your own. Our Location Guide may give you some ideas. Does your new bundle of fur have siblings? Use one session for the whole family.



Your investment also gifts you 6x6 album with 12 of your favorite photos and \$250 in print credit towards any other prints and products. All other prints and products are purchased separately.



Ideally, the first session is between 8-12 weeks, the second one at about six months, another at about nine months and the final session to celebrate his first birthday.



We recently adopted a puppy with whom we are completely smitten. We wanted to get some great photos of her as she grew from a puppy to an adult. We have just had our 3rd photoshoot and every time Becky exceeds our expectations. Becky captured Daisy's spirit in the studio and at our home. We were impressed by the action shots - Daisy was running around our yard like a crazy pup and Becky was able to get gorgeous shots of her. The photo shoot itself was relaxed and fun and despite the puppy who doesn't always play ball... she can still get the most amazing pictures that we will treasure forever.

--Nancy Hait

FOREVER IN MY HEART

Pets are family members. They're never with us on earth long enough.
Preserve their memory before it's too late.

Forever in my heart sessions are for the terminally ill or elderly pets designed to honor and celebrate the relationship between you and your furry loved one. They can be taken anywhere you want and will be customized to meet the needs of your pet.



In lieu of the session fee, I ask that you make a cash donation to support a local rescue or shelter here in the Coastal Empire and Low Country.

A complimentary 5"x7" print is gifted to you from my favorite image. Other products are available to purchase during your preview session.

In honor of Cornbread.
1999-2017

F. A. Q's



What if my dog has to be on-leash?

No problem! The majority of the dogs are on-leash (either for safety reasons or following leash-laws). Whenever possible I'll remove the leash when editing your photos.

I'm afraid my pet will be camera shy.

Don't worry. Working with a wide variety of temperaments I have developed techniques for working with dogs who need more space and/or time to relax. Perhaps an in-home or backyard session would be appropriate.



My dog is wild! I don't think he will behave.

No need to worry. Exercise your pet before the session to help drain a little bit of energy. Bring your dog in hungry. A tired, hungry pet responds best.

The cats don't travel well.

Not a problem. I can always come to you! The photos at your house will be more casual but often with pets that don't travel well, it eases their anxiety and it's less stressful for everyone.



Can people be included in the pet photos?

Yes! We always encourage it! The special bond between pet and owner is magical. It's one of my favorite emotions to capture.

I have multiple pets. Can they all be photographed?

Yes! I always like to start with individual photos in the studio to get each dog's focus, then we can work with them together.

F. A. Q's

How far in advance should I book my session?

I'm normally booked out two to three weeks in advance. This time period is subject to change depending on the time of year. Fall and spring tend to be the busiest time for photographing pets outdoors. Summer time is busiest in the air conditioned studio.

How long does a session normally last?

Your session time will be based upon your pets. I suggest up to 2 hours depending on the personality of your pet. You'll know when they are done.

Do you photograph pets other than dogs?

Yes! Cats, horses, rabbits, chinchillas, birds or any other animals are always welcome! Even a snake has been photographed in the studio!

Are the photos retouched?

Editing (color correction, toning and cropping) is done to every image we preview. All purchased images receive a special touch to make the subjects "pop." Want additional or special edits? Just ask.

Can I post the photos on social media?

Yes! You are absolutely allowed to share your images on social media. Photographer credit is always greatly appreciated.

What is a Pet Rep?

A pet rep is a pet who represents Photos by Becky. If your pet is a pet rep you will receive benefits and incentives for promoting our studio to your family and friends. For more information, Contact us at becky@photosbybecky.net.

