
EXPERT TIPS

BY THE BOOK

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GIVE ME A HAND

Details can make or break a portrait. Stray hairs, wrinkled clothes, or strange hand placement can distract from your subject's face. Here are some pointers for posing a person's hands.

- Interlocking fingers draw a lot of attention and are visually confusing. Instead, have your subject make a loose fist with one hand while laying the other hand over it, slightly cupped.
- Try to present the edge of the hand instead of its broader back or palm.
- Repeating patterns are a classic compositional technique, and fingers can be treated this way. Arrange the hand with each successive finger bent slightly more than the preceding one for a pleasingly repetitive pattern.

ADAPTED FROM *DIGITAL PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY: ART, BUSINESS & STYLE* BY STEVE SINT (LARK BOOKS, 2009; \$25)

GET PERSPECTIVE

Visual perspective conveys depth and distance in a two-dimensional print. The eye has a fixed focal length and field of vision. Setting your lens to 50mm (or its full-frame equivalent) emulates the perspective we naturally perceive, but here are ways to create perspectives the human eye *can't* see.

- Steep perspective. A wide-angle lens, with a close viewpoint, exaggerates distances and scale. Subjects near the lens seem large in proportion to their surroundings, and distant subjects seem much further away. Use this perspective to emphasize your foreground subject and draw the viewer into the image.
- Perspective compression. Due to its distant viewpoint, a telephoto lens compresses, condenses, and flattens three-dimensional space. Elements in the scene often seem much closer together than they are. Using a tele will emphasize the background, and you can isolate your subject from the background by using a wide aperture. 🌐

ADAPTED FROM *DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY: ESSENTIAL SKILLS (FOURTH EDITION)* BY MARK GALER (FOCAL PRESS, 2008; \$30)
