

HEART+LIFESTYLE

BY CAROLINA HANNA



4 Lighting Tips You Need To Know

When photographing newborns
and families at home.

W e l c o m e

If you've ever walked into a house and didn't know how to handle the light you haven't learned to "see" the light yet. But don't worry!

Once you do learn to see it, you'll see your photography start to look exactly how you envisioned in your mind.

Starting out in photography is intimidating and there are so many rules to learn but light is non-negotiable.

Learning to use it effectively will help you add depth, texture and emotion to your images which is what every family photographer strives for.



The first thing to do when you walk into a client's home is to turn off all the overhead lights and open the curtains and blinds.

Better yet, advise your clients to have that done before you arrive so you can assess the light the moment you walk in.

Leaving overhead lights on causes unflattering shadows on your subject's face and will affect your white balance giving you loads of extra work in post.

Don't worry if the house is dark. See the next tip.

1

2

Windows and doors are your best friend,

Many of the homes I visit have very little light but they ALL have windows and doors and when I don't have many options, I bring my clients near those light sources.

The trick with using window light effectively is to pay attention to the way you position your subjects. Have them stand or sit at a 45° angle to the window and not facing it directly or with their backs to the window (unless you want a silhouette).

Keeping your subject at an angle will allow the light to hit them in a flattering way that will preserve shadows and add depth to your images.





3

When you're photographing a newborn, always have their head pointing towards the window and not their feet.

The light should illuminate the baby from the top of the head downward, creating a shadow under baby's nose, or to the side of baby's face.

Pointing their feet toward the window, you'll notice the light going up baby's nose causing unflattering shadows (think about holding up a flashlight under your chin when you're telling spooky stories).

Use this tip whether baby is in mom's arms, lying on the bed, in their crib, or anywhere else.

If you look at the images on the left side, you'll notice an arrow placed where the window was located (the room where I took the bottom picture had 2 windows).





4

Embrace the grain.

Push your ISO and see how far your camera can go. The above image was shot at ISO 8000 on a Canon 5DMiii. It is VERY grainy but beautiful nonetheless. The room only had a small window, to the right of the crib. If I would have been afraid of needing to push my ISO so high, I would have missed out on this shot.

Sometimes (usually) a moment is more important than ideal lighting and camera settings. Let go of the need to produce technically perfect images and create images that are real and emotional.

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