



STYLE GUIDE



WHAT TO WEAR

Let's talk about the most FUN part of your senior session—and hands-down the most frequently asked question: WHAT DO I WEAR!? Choosing what you wear for your senior session is a big decision and plays a huge role in how your photos turn out. I know that sounds a little intense... but when you feel confident and love your outfits, it makes your entire experience that much more fun! That's exactly why this guide is here—to walk you through my best tips for what to wear, how to style your outfits, and give you LOTS of fun inspiration along the way!



1. BE COMFORTABLE

The NUMBER ONE, most important thing to remember when planning your outfits: if it's not comfortable to wear in real life, it won't make you feel confident on camera! If you do not like fitted clothing (super tight dresses or pieces that fit awkwardly) then leave them at home! Personally, I try to steer clear of items that are fitted in the tummy area (don't we all?) just because it makes me self-conscious and I'm constantly wondering if it looks bad. So, if there are pieces in your closet that make you feel self-conscious or uncomfortable, don't include them in your senior portrait wardrobe! I also recommend trying to steer clear of anything that you have to constantly adjust or is at risk of being revealing. You'll be doing lots of moving and posing, so if the outfit is super low-cut...you're at risk of things slipping while we shoot!

2. BE YOURSELF

At risk of sounding cheesy...staying true to yourself with your outfits is so, so important. When you look back at these images in 20+ years...you'll want them to truly reflect YOU! If you aren't someone who ever dresses up or enjoys being fancy...don't feel like you need to go buy a fancy dress just for photos. If you don't enjoy being girly and wearing frilly dresses or lots of makeup...then leave them at home! Don't feel pressured to buy anything new or outside of your usual style just because you are getting photos taken. This entire shoot is meant to be about who YOU are in this exciting season of life...so don't change a single thing about ya!

3. BE BOLD + CONSIDER USING COLOR

Use this shoot as an opportunity to have a little bit of fun with your outfits + colors! On camera, solid black + white can make skin tones look washed out and unflattering. When choosing outfits for your senior session, try to choose colors that POP and that compliment your hair + skin tones! Primary colors like royal blue and yellow photograph beautifully as well as jewel tones like emerald green, bright purples, pinks, oranges and any other colors that really POP! Sometimes, color combos that may seem odd in-person end up photographing BEAUTIFULLY on camera! Don't shy away from color!

4. ADD LAYERS

In the cold months (fall + winter), adding layers to your outfits always looks STUNNING in portraits! A sweater with a flannel underneath paired with a vest + statement earrings or scarf adds so much dimension to your images and makes for super fun posing options! Even in the warmer months (spring + summer) you can add these layers + dimension by wearing a tank top with a cute sheer cardigan or by throwing a denim jacket over a dress!

5. PLAY WITH TEXTURES

Sometimes textures like feathers, furs and 3D florals can be considered too extra...but, in portraits, they are the BEST! Adding texture to your outfit can make a huge difference. I also love to photograph pieces with MOVEMENT: long, flowy dresses with epic trains or fun feathers that move when you twirl. It adds a super fun element to your pictures!

6. DON'T BE AFRAID TO ACCESSORIZE

There is a whole section dedicated to props and accessories coming up in this guide... but it's honestly one of the most important parts! Adding accessories like jewelry, hats, fun shoes, banners, dance outfits etc. to your outfits really makes them feel like YOU and adds a whole new layer of detail to your senior gallery. I'm a huge fan of statement earrings, a bright lip color, a super fun shoe...ALL of these things give us so much more variety with posing + create such beautiful pictures!

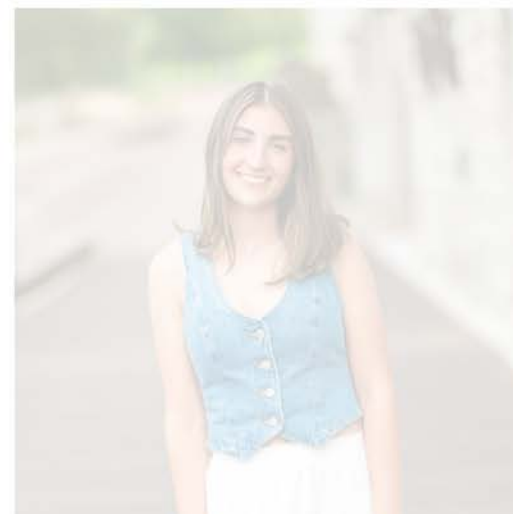
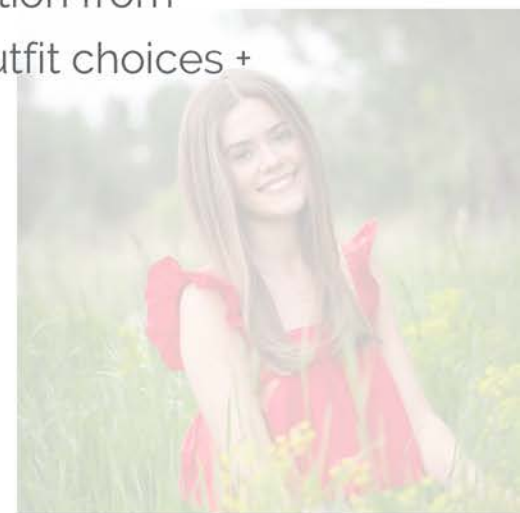
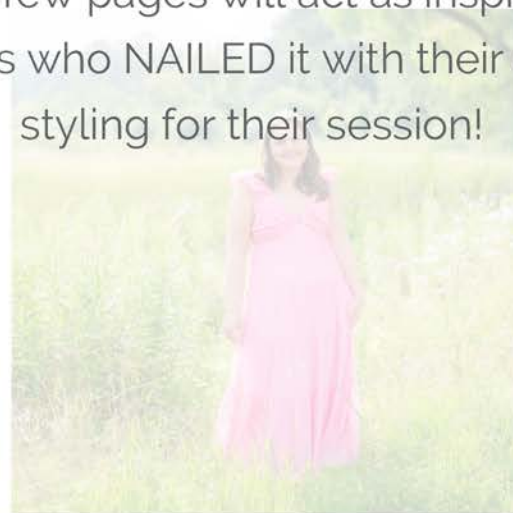
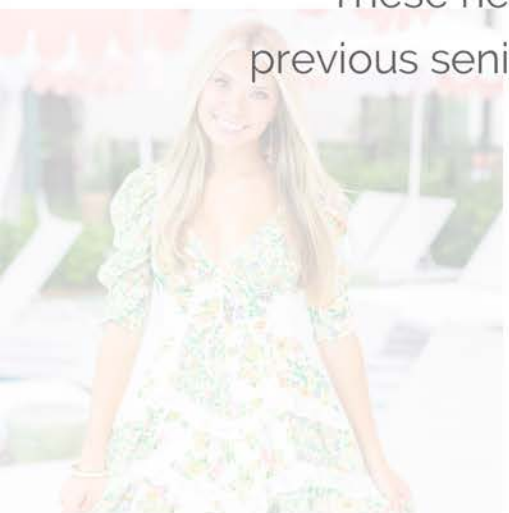
7. MIX IT UP!

When planning your outfits, make sure that you have a VARIETY of looks! I tell all of my seniors to choose from these categories: casual, cozy, dressy, school-related, sports-related, preppy or edgy. I always recommend choosing 3-4 of those categories and finding outfits accordingly. This provides a beautiful array of looks during your senior portrait session, so each outfit looks drastically different and you get tons of variety!



OUTFIT INSPO

These next few pages will act as inspiration from previous seniors who NAILED it with their outfit choices + styling for their session!





LIZZIE

Lizzie's Lake Harriet Rose Garden and Peace Garden session was as authentic as she is. She picked the location because she grew up nearby and spent many hours running around in the gardens and surrounding parks with her family. I absolutely love that she chose clothing that complimented both her personality and surrounding beauty.

- 2 dresses + two top/jean combos allowed for tons of variety
- White, black and denim complimented her surroundings
- Simple jewelry to provide accent versus distraction
- A natural and neutral makeup palette let her own beauty shine through.



BETSY

Betsy went with her favorite color blue for most of her session which is an amazing color for her and the summertime evening locations we chose for her by the lake in Minnetonka.

Complimenting her blue with a vibrant red top against deep greens and pops of chartreuse in some nearby meadows made this one of my favorites in the last few years.

THINGS TO AVOID:

Now, there's a few important things to AVOID that are worth having their own section of this guide! As a general rule of thumb, these are the things to stay away from...

1. Pieces that are sheer, too fitted or potentially revealing

We already touched on this quickly...but it's important! You will be doing a lot of moving throughout your shoot, so wearing pieces that have to sit juuuuust right or that are at risk of slipping aren't a good idea. And, if pieces are super thin or sheer, it may be see-through in your photos or easily show sweat marks in the summer months.

2. The wrong undergarments

This is something that may slip your mind as you are planning your outfits...but it is SO important! Be sure to bring along multiple bras if you are wearing something strapless or that requires a sticky/backless bra. And wearing a neutral pair of undies is the best way to go to ensure it's not showing through anything!

3. Pay attention to wrinkles

We will be doing a lot of moving around, sitting, walking, etc. at your shoot. If the material of your outfit easily wrinkles...you may want to be careful. Pay close attention to textures and remember that not everything is as easy to edit out as you may think! Editing out wrinkles from a dress can take hours PER PHOTO...which can result in your images taking a lot longer to get back or requiring additional fees for extensive edits.





This is the fun part...

PLACES TO SHOP

I mentioned it earlier on in the guide, but I'm going to say it again: buying new clothes is NOT required for your senior session! Sometimes it's actually BETTER to use clothes you already have that you know are true to YOU and your day-to-day style. But if you want to use your session as an excuse to shop a bit - I'm going to share some of my favorite spots and will always encourage you to SHOP LOCAL to get the best help and take care of the lovely people in our community.

edina

Bluebird - 10% off

Melly - 20% off

Mille

Serge + Jane

Evereve



minneapolis

Equation

Combine

Reformation

Anthropologie

Artizia



online

Revolve

Shopbop

J. Crew

Abercrombie



DRESSING FOR THE SEASONS

Sometimes it can be easier to pick outfits for the spring/summer months than it is in the cooler fall/winter months. I also have some seniors who want to have a separate session during BOTH times of year to capture the different looks and styles that a new season brings along. So, this section of the guide is going to help you break down how to prep your outfits according to the time of year that we are capturing your portraits! Another important thing to keep in mind about the time of year is the SUNSET. In the summer months, shoots won't start until 6 or 7pm... but we will need to start much earlier (3-4pm) in the winter months to accommodate the earlier sunset.



SPRING

My personal FAVORITE time of year for portraits...when all of the flowers are in bloom! Some people feel like they need to shy away from color so they don't clash with the blooming flowers...but I disagree! A bright pink against a white floral bush is a DREAM...try coordinating with the colors + add in pastels! This is also the PERFECT time for an add-on grad session.

SUMMER

The only downside of summer portraits is the HEAT. You'll want to keep that in mind when choosing your outfits. Save the warmest outfit (i.e. layers or thick material) for the END of the shoot when it's cooler outside...and consider wearing BRIGHT pops of color to stand out against everything being in full bloom!

FALL

This is my second favorite time of year to shoot! I love the cooler temps, the fall color palette, and incorporating layers into your outfits opens up a whole new set of options for posing. Cute booties, scarves, jackets, cozy cardigans...I'm here for ALL of it!

WINTER

You may automatically think winter is a bad time for pictures...but it doesn't have to be! You can brighten up any dull background with bright colors, fun textures and lots of layers! Fun hats, scarves, gloves and even earmuffs can photograph SO cute!



SPRING





SUMMER





FALL



HAIR AND MAKEUP

I highly recommend that you do your own hair and makeup if you want photos that look authentically you.

But if you choose to use professional stylists for hair or makeup, make sure that you have give them a trial run or you risk not liking your photos if you do not like their application or styling.

Also, be aware that you may be charged if we need to reschedule your session date due to weather.

1. HAIRCUTS

Should be done at least two weeks prior to your session.

Just in case you went a little shorter than you were expecting, it will give your locks a minute to grow. ! advise against trying a new look before your session.

2. TANNING

DO NOT use self-tanner before your session.

It is extremely difficult to retouch uneven application and usually results in fake looking skin texture.

Make sure you go to a professional no closer than three days prior.

3. MAKE-UP

If you choose to go to a professional, make sure to book a prior run.

Be very careful with mascara application

Like self-tanner, it is very difficult to remake eyelashes with natural results.

Do your makeup naturally but just a touch heavier than your usual application.

4. A LITTLE PREP GOES A LONG WAY

The night before your session, a thorough full body exfoliation, shave and pluck will make you feel less stressed and fully relaxed and ready for your photos!

Maybe a spa day glowup is in order? Who doesn't love to be pampered!

And one last tip!! In all of the chaos of senior session prep... don't forget to pamper your nails! During your session, a lot of the poses we do will have your hands close to your face and in the frame, so make sure that your nails look just how you want! Try to avoid any chipped polish or crazy patterns. French manicures, light/natural colors and even nails with no color at all photograph best!!

Be sure to do the same for toenails if you plan to wear open-toe shoes.

I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU!

We are going to have the BEST time...I promise!
If you need me for anything before your session,
you can reach me at

elissa@elissabeanphotography.com

See you soon!

