

Tony Rundle Photography

7 Ways Post Processing Improves Your Portrait

Have you ever wondered why top models and film stars look so good? Well, sometimes it is because they have a wonderful complexion and perfect figures. They also have the very best make-up artists to make sure they look at their very best when seen in front of a camera. And that goes for men as well as women.

But that's not the whole story. Many stars and celebrities are actually no better than you or I. We all have some features that are better than others, or some that we would rather hide. An important part of the difference is the way that photographs are post-processed. Just a little bit of work here and there can make a tremendous difference. Here are the main areas that can be worked on to make you look your best.

These techniques apply equally to men as well as women – they are just used differently. For a lady, the objective is to produce a photograph that shows you at your prettiest, for men the objective is to bring out character as well as enhancing attractive features.

Here is our seven-step approach to post processing your portrait.

1. Composition and Lighting

Of course we try to get it right “in camera” by taking the best photograph we can. However looking carefully at the photograph on a 19 or 20 inch screen is different to looking through a viewfinder. Sometimes zooming in to just part of the picture (cropping) can enhance the impact by highlighting the best bits and minimising others. Selective enhancement can lighten areas where there may be little shadows that we may not have been able to eliminate at the time, or add highlights to improve the effect.

2. Spots and Blemishes

Yes, we all get them. They get removed, so your skin looks as it should do. So, if a spot appears on your chin on the day of your sitting, don't worry – it won't end up looking down on you from one of our photographs!

3. Wrinkles

I think wrinkles give a face character. But then I would, as I have plenty of them. Any wrinkles you have will be removed or smoothed. If you remove absolutely any trace of wrinkles, your face might look un-natural – like a strange china doll. The trick is to leave just enough to retain definition – generally more should be retained for men.

4. Skin Smoothing

Skin is never quite smooth – there are pores, as well as little bumps and lumps that you can only see if you look closely. Make-up covers up most of this, but isn't perfect. Your skin can be smoothed and given a beauty "glow" – just like the photographs of models you see in magazines. Again, this applies to men too, but to a lesser degree.

5. Skin Tone

When musicians spend a lot of time in a recording studio, they get what is called ironically a "studio tan" – their skin has a washed –out pallor even in the middle of summer. To a lesser extent we all suffer from this – in the winter our skins may be pale, in the summer perhaps too red. We make sure your skin tone looks good – lightening, darkening, or adding a slight tan as required. Again, this is no different to ladies adjusting make-up, but we can do it to hands, legs, and other parts of the body as well as the face.

6. Face and Body Sculpting

I am often asked "can you make me lose a couple of stone"? Actually the answer is "yes", but that's not normally what we do. Most people want to look their best, but do not want a "fake" picture.

Depending on the shape of your face, we may slim a little off the cheeks, or make the face slightly longer. We may adjust other areas slightly too. If your arms or legs are closer to the camera than your body (as they often are when sitting down) then this tends to make them appear slightly larger than they are. This is where we can adjust them to make them appear more natural.

You are unlikely to notice any of this unless you compare a "before" and "after" picture very carefully – subtlety is the watchword. But it's all part of what goes to make a good portrait a great one.

7. Whitening Eyes and Teeth

Too much coffee and too many late nights have taken their toll on my eyes and teeth. If yours are the same, they will be whitened

There you are. Even if you don't ever ask us to take a photograph you now know how it's done. Alternatively, if you *would* like us to make a fabulous portrait of you, call us on 07785 342261.

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