Thank you for downloading!

I put this together because I get a lot of questions about how I edit or if I have any tips/tricks I have learned in photography. This is a 1.0 overview of the basics. I absolutely love when other photographers are willing to share their tips and help others out so I thought I would do the same!

1. Buy an external hard drive! My favorite has been "My Passport" 2TB (terabyte)... holds LOTS of info!

• Make SURE you get the hard drive that is made for the type of computer you are using. EXAMPLE: Mac vs. PC. I've definitely made that mistake before. Not fun!

• Never load your images to your computer itself. You will crash it! Yes, your computer has an internal hard drive, but not enough to hold all the photos you will be taking. Another mistake I have made. CRASHED MY OLD MAC. Had to buy a new one. Also, NOT FUN.

• Keep your drive folders organized. EXAMPLE: One folder should say "Weddings" and then inside that "Weddings" folder should be another folder with the name of the couple who's wedding you just shot - "John & Sue Wedding". Then, inside "John & Sue Wedding" should be another folder titled "Edited Images" with all of your edited JPEG images.

2. Shoot in RAW & Av or Manual setting

• If you own a DSLR, your camera has a RAW setting. Use it. DO NOT ever only shoot JPEG. Why? A JPEG image does not hold nearly as much data as the RAW image does - restraining your editing abilities and leaving your photos less high quality.

• This is also the reason for putting all your photos on an external hard drive. RAW photos should never be put straight onto your computer! Like I said, I learned this the hard way and crashed my Mac. Again, not fun.

• I absolutely love shooting in the Av setting. This is what I shot in when starting out.

• Before shooting in Manual, do your research on how to pair your camera's shutter speed, ISO, and aperture. Knowing this will save you big time. I will be doing future tutorials and blog posts explaining each one of these. Stay tuned! :)

3. Download The Adobe Creative Cloud - $10/month

• Lightroom is my all time favorite editing software. I HIGHLY recommend using this if you are not already! It allows you to put presets (pretty much filters on crack) onto your RAW images. You will always have the ability to go back and re-edit those RAW images how ever you please and export again as a JPEG without losing any quality.

• Lightroom allows for you to keep your work in folders which makes everything extremely organized. I usually name my folders in Lightroom the same as my "My Passport" folders

• Use Photoshop. I strictly use Photoshop for blemishes or taking things out of my photo that I don't think she be there. I never use photoshop for light or color. Photoshop also does not have the amazing organizational ability that Lightroom offers.

• I will first edit my photos in Lightroom, giving them the look and color tones I want. Then if they need touch ups, I will export them as a JPEG and bring them over to Photoshop for the final touches before giving to clients.

• Also - Download Lightroom mobile and edit beautifully on the go - I literally refuse to use anything else!

4. Start a Database!

• Keep track of names, emails, addresses, and phone numbers early on. This is something I wish I would have been more diligent about. Doing so will help you keep track of past clients and get more future business.

5. Give photo release forms and make people sign photography marketing forms

• I have never got in trouble for this, however, it could save you against a law suit. You both need to sign that they can use your photos online/print and you can use photos of them online/print.

• Your clients are going to need photo release forms to print out your work. You need to sign this and send to them so they can bring into the printing company as copyright proof.

6. Name your business and design a logo

• I recommend using your name so that you can just start branding yourself with your work.

7. Start a website and/or portfolio of your work

• Buy a domain for your business off GoDaddy.

• Pick a hosting site - I recommend using Wix or Squarespace. I use Wix and love it.

• You NEED to do this so that you can begin to market yourself and something to show prospects.

8. Start a Facebook Business Page for your work

• Always share to your personal page and TAG YOUR CLIENTS! This will not only give you exposure to your Facebook friends, but tagging your clients also gives you exposure to all of their Facebook friends! EXAMPLE: Tag 5 people in a family portrait and it will go out to ALL of those 5 people's friends, which could possibly hit around 5,000 people!

• Ask your clients to tag you if they post your work.

• Ask your clients to add your website if they post your work.

• Ask your clients to share photos/blog posts you've posted about them.

9. Post your work on social media

• Be on Instagram, Facebook, and LEARN PINTEREST! A course I highly recommend is Pinfinite Growth by Melissa Griffin. I also highly recommend getting on BoardBooster.

• Pinterest has shown to be bloggers number one traffic builder.

• BE ON INSTAGRAM. Plan out your posts to see how the "flow" and colors look together. I love using the app Preview for this.

• USE RELEVANT HASHTAGS.

10. Find your flow and stick to it

• I.e. Find the way you like to edit/your favorite Lightroom preset and edit all your photos that way.

• This is huge for consistency and building a name for yourself. It allows people to see a photo and just "know" it's your work. Some of the best compliments I have ever gotten were when people started to say they could see a photo I took and knew it was mine before even seeing my name attached to it. THAT is branding.

Happy photo taking!