

ENGAGEMENT PHOTO SESSION GUIDE



Ditching Traditions and Embracing Your One Of A Kind Love

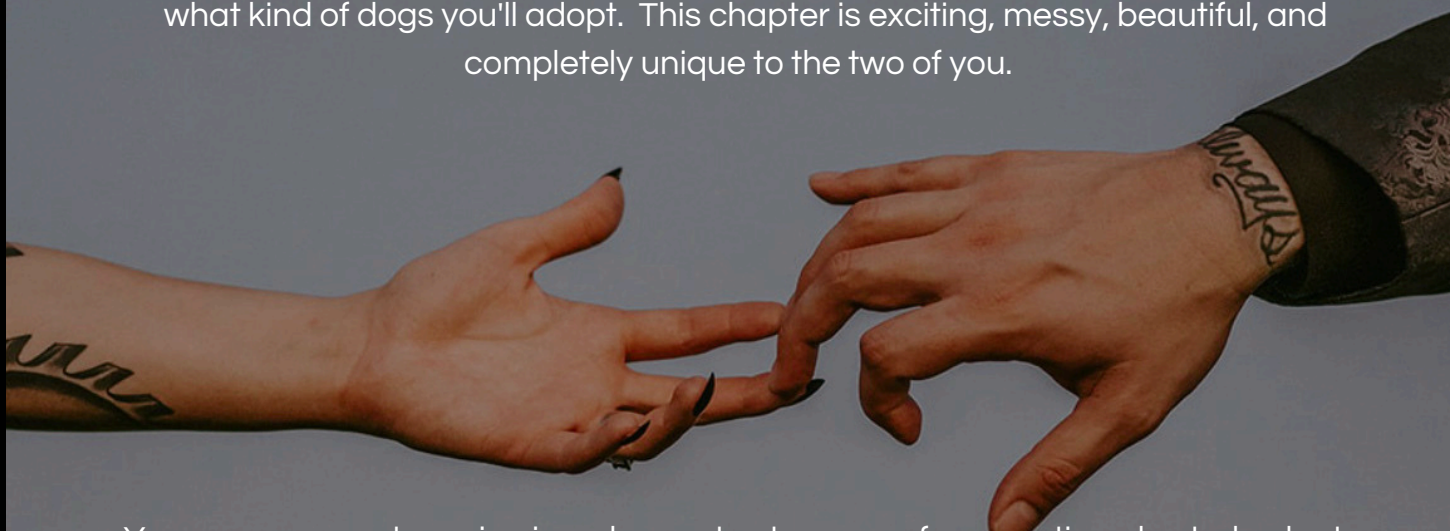
The Tattooed Bride Photography



Erin and Nick re-created their first date at Arby's in Nick's Grandpa's car. Nick's Grandpa bought this car for his wedding to Nick's Grandmother. We combined old traditions with new traditions, and they had a fun drive through dinner date!

Why Engagement Photos Matter

Your engagement session isn't just about getting a few cute photos for your wedding website. Right now you're in the middle of one of the biggest adventures you'll ever take together. You're planning a wedding, dreaming about the future, figuring out where you'll live, what life will look like, where you'll travel, or maybe what kind of dogs you'll adopt. This chapter is exciting, messy, beautiful, and completely unique to the two of you.



Your engagement session is a chance to step away from seating charts, budgets, family opinions, and wedding planning stress and just spend time together. Maybe that means wandering through a museum, exploring a city, chasing waves, or doing an activity you don't always carve out time for as much as you would like to.

Whatever your adventure looks like, I want your photos to feel like an actual memory—not a photoshoot. The truth is, some of my favorite images aren't the ones where you're looking at the camera. They're the moments in between. The way you reach for each other's hand without thinking. The way you laugh when something goes wrong. The way your face lights up when you look at your person and years from now, that's what these photos will mean.

Not just, "Look how good we looked." But, "Remember when we were here? Remember how excited we were? Remember who we were before the wedding, before the house, before the kids, before everything else?" Because at the end of the day, your engagement session isn't really about photos. It's about documenting your adventure before the next chapter begins.



Ashlie and Ricky met me for a forest hike under a full moon. She took advantage of using her bridal hair trial for the engagement photos.



We will start on time

Choosing the right time of day for your engagement session is a pretty big deal. I love shooting during golden hour, and luckily we get two chances every day. My favorite? Sunrise. Yep, I'm serious. The light is soft, dreamy, and the world is usually a lot quieter. The timing of your session is never random. (Trust me, I'm the girl checking sunrise and sunset times months in advance.) When planning your session, be sure to leave extra time for traffic, parking, hiking, or getting lost on an adventure. If we're shooting at sunset, we'll start about two hours before the sun goes down and shoot until sunset. If we start late, the sun doesn't stay late, which means we lose some of that beautiful light. This helps make sure we're in the right place, at the right time, with the best light possible for your photos.



Come prepared

A lot of my couples choose to get their hair and makeup done before their session, and I highly recommend it if it fits your budget. Be sure to get your engagement ring cleaned a few days beforehand too! The more you can prep the night before, the more relaxed you'll feel when session day arrives. Once you get there, we'll jump right into our session. Little details make a big difference. Being hydrated, clean shoes, the right socks, and having all your accessories packed and ready can save a lot of stress. Lay everything out the night before so you're not scrambling at the last minute.

Pro tip: If you're wearing a backless dress, skip the bra the night before and the morning of your session. Those straps leave marks way longer than you'd think!



Brandi and Evan wanted to try horseback riding for the first time as a fun experience for their shoot, and it felt like they rode out of a romantic western. We ended the night with a taco bell picnic of baja blast in champagne flutes and hot sauce packets they saved from Vegas. Evan played his guitar while the sun was setting.



Different Outfits

Feel free to bring a second outfit! I always recommend it if you want a little variety in your gallery. Most of my couples choose one outfit that's a little dressier and one that's a little more relaxed, but honestly, wear whatever feels most like you. An outfit change can completely change the vibe of your photos and help tell more of your story. If you wanted to wear a funky color or black on your wedding day but Mom said no way- Wear it for this shoot!

Just keep in mind that depending on where our adventure takes us, your changing room might be the backseat of your car, a gas station bathroom, or me holding up a jacket as a privacy shield. It's all part of the experience. Embrace the chaos—we're here for the adventure anyway.



It's okay to feel nervous

Feeling nervous? Perfect. That means you're a real human being. I do not expect you to show up knowing how to pose, where to put your hands, or how to magically become an Instagram model overnight. That's my job. I'll guide you so you can focus on having a good time. You don't need to spend hours studying Pinterest poses or practicing in the mirror. In fact, I'd rather you didn't. The best photos happen when you're laughing, exploring, flirting, and being yourselves—not when you're trying to remember Pose #37 from a wedding board.

By the end of the session you'll be running through fields, making out in the woods, and wondering why you ever thought you were awkward in photos. Trust the process—I got you.



Caleb and Sara went to thier favorite music venue/bar for drinks. They wrote their save the date on the bathroom wall with a sharpie, and we went shopping for vinyl records to play for their first dance at the wedding.



Props, puppies, etc.

If you're looking for ways to make your photos feel even more personal, bring something that tells your story. I want your photos to feel like you, not a Pinterest copy of someone else's session. If that means bringing your dog, your kayak, your record collection, your favorite craft beer, or the beat-up truck you've taken on a hundred adventures together, I'm all for it.

Some of my favorite sessions have included tacos, hiking gear, vintage cameras, vinyl records, canoes, picnic setups, and even a horse. If it's meaningful to you, chances are it'll make for some really fun and unique photos.

And don't underestimate simple props. A hat, a bouquet, a blanket, a bottle of wine, or even a cool jacket can add movement, personality, and give you something to do with your hands. The goal isn't to bring props for the sake of props—it's to create photos that feel like your story.



What to wear

Wear something that feels like the best version of yourself. I want you to look amazing, but I also want you to be able to hike, dance, eat and breathe without fighting your outfit the whole time.

- Black is absolutely welcome here (have you met me?), but it pairs best with some lighter tones or texture to create contrast.
- Layers are your best friend. Jackets, hats, flannels, and jewelry can completely change the vibe.
- Coordinate instead of matching. You're a couple, not a middle school choir concert.
- Avoid large logos, busy patterns, or anything with giant text across it. I want people looking at your faces, not trying to read your shirt.

Think timeless with a little personality. Whether your style is edgy, western, boho, vintage, tattooed, outdoorsy, or somewhere in between, I want your outfits to feel like YOU.



Sarah and Diana included thier pup in thier engagment photos! We spent a quiet afternoon at home drinking wine and cuddling on the couch, dancing in the living room, and playing fetch in the backyard.



Location, Location, Location

One of the first things you'll receive from me is a location questionnaire! This helps me learn more about you as a couple, the types of places you love, your adventure level, and the overall vibe you're dreaming of for your session. If you have a location that is meaningful to your story, I absolutely want to hear about it. Maybe it's where you met, where you got engaged, your favorite hiking trail, the dive bar where you had your first date, or the beach you visit every year. I'm a huge believer that your photos should feel personal and tell your story.

That said, remember that your session is about the two of you—not just the location. Some of the most beautiful photos I've ever taken were in places nobody would ever recognize. Great light, real connection, and a little adventure will always matter more than a famous backdrop.

If choosing a location feels overwhelming, don't worry. That's literally part of my job. I live in Florida, and I have a giant list of favorite locations all over Florida and beyond, and I'm always happy to choose a spot that fits your personalities and vision.

Travel Fees: I will travel up to two hours from Winter Park, Florida (32792) for an engagement shoot at no additional charge.

Dreaming bigger? Let's do it.

For locations outside of Florida or destinations beyond a four-hour drive, I'll create a custom travel quote based on airfare, lodging, rental car, and any applicable travel expenses. I always book my own travel and keep things reasonable. I'm perfectly happy flying coach, renting the cheapest car at the airport, and finding a clean, safe place to sleep. I'd rather spend money on adventures than fancy hotel robes anyway.



Sam and Paul love The Phantom of The Opera, and that play is a huge part of their story. We quietly and respectfully wandered through a cemetery and left flowers we used as props behind on some very old graves out of respect and reflection of family, legacy, and tradition.

Location Ideas!



Think Outside The Box

There is absolutely nothing wrong with an engagement session at a local park, but if you've been following my work for any amount of time, you already know I'm probably going to encourage you to dream a little bit bigger.

Close your eyes and think about your favorite place to be together. What does it look like? Is it mountain views at sunrise? A quiet forest trail? A rocky coastline? A crystal-clear spring? A field of wildflowers?

A hidden lake? A city street covered in murals? Your favorite coffee shop? A tattoo studio? Curled up on the couch at home with your cats?

Your engagement session doesn't have to happen somewhere "Pinterest-worthy." It should happen somewhere that feels like you. The best photos come from creating an experience together, not just showing up somewhere pretty. So think less about what everyone else is doing and more about what adventure feels most like your story. That's where the magic lives.



Kevin and Wendy's used thier wedding venue for thier shoot location. We used the theme of "love birds" with the doves there on site and wandered around the estate laughing and having fun.



WHAT'S INCLUDED

01

- 2 hours of Photojournalism Photography someplace cool: This style is all about telling a story. The photographer will capture candid, emotional moments as opposed to posed just portraits.

02

- Digital album with a private website link of unlimited high resolution edited digital photos. Free to download and print!

03

- Photojournalism Blog of your Engagement/Proposal to share with family and friends as an announcement on social media!

INVESTMENT:

\$500 or FREE with select wedding packages

To get started, just request an engagement shoot by email or book one here:
<https://www.thetattooedbride.com/book-online>

THETATTOOEDBRIDE.COM



Cindy and Amanda had a picnic and brought along the first book they read together and shared details of their love story while holding hands next to a beautiful water lily pond.

ENGAGEMENT SESSION INSPIRATION GUIDE

Need Some Inspiration?

Here are a few of my absolute bucket-list engagement session ideas.

Some require intentional styling, the right wardrobe, florals, or a little extra planning to truly shine—and yes, I help with all of that.

If something sparks your interest, tell me. I probably already have ten ways to make it even better.

Remember:

If you have a location that is near and dear to your story, tell me about it. I believe your session should feel meaningful to the two of you—not just beautiful, but personal. There are gorgeous locations everywhere, so if you'd rather have me choose, I'm happy to do that too.

INTIMATE • EDITORIAL • HIGH-END ENERGY



Hotel Room Story

A beautifully designed boutique hotel room. Coffee in bed, open curtains, silk sheets, unbuttoned shirts, bare feet. Think *quiet morning after* energy. Works incredibly well if you want intimacy without nudity.



Retro Motel / Neon Motel Signs

Classic roadside retro motel, flickering neon sign, nighttime shots + flash. One outfit polished, one outfit unhinged. Very editorial. Very cool!



Candlelit Dinner at Home

Long table or sitting on the floor vibes, white drapery, mismatched candles, wine, handwritten menus, cooking together. Feels cinematic and grown. Zero crowds. Huge emotional payoff and memories!



Sunday Morning at Home

Bare feet, records playing, plants, messy hair, coffee mugs. Great for pets included. Documentary and honest. These always become my favorite photos!

Dark Romance / Gothic

Old Church / Abandoned Ruins

Moody architecture, long dresses, veils, dramatic light. Not sacrilegious—just timeless and cinematic.

Cemetery Picnic

Vintage blanket, wine, florals, books, dramatic outfits. Quiet romance, not spooky-for-spooky's-sake. There are festivals for this.

Blood Red Florals Editorial

Clean location, minimal background, *insane* florals. Fashion-forward and bold. This is a florist collab dream, and I have suggestions of tomb bloom dong this!

Playful but Elevated

Costume Shop / Thrift store

Trying on old costumes, corsets, tuxes, decade pieces, theatrical chaos. Very “behind the scenes” and adorable.

Fairground at Night (Not Just Carousel)

Cotton candy, ferris wheel lights, tilt-a-whirl motion blur, flash photography. Romantic chaos. There is fun spot in Orlando always open or we can hit up a local fair. Western apparel, sundresses, or little white elopement dress.

Old-School Arcade / Pinball Bar

Neon, hands touching across machines, playful competition. Trendy and timeless! Works best in 70's clothing or short white elopement dress.

Nature, But Not the Obvious Way

Foggy Morning Field

Early fog, muted colors or Victorian cosets and white cotton flowy dresses, stillness. Very Victorian, very editorial. Like being in a film.

Fire + Smoke Session

Controlled fire pit, smoke bombs, long dresses moving through haze. Dramatic and unforgettable.

Tall Grass / Prairie Wind

Movement over scenery. Long fabric, wind (leafblower lol), quiet intimacy. So so stunning! State park locations.

Very anti-AI Cool

Camcorder / VHS Session

Mixed media: stills + camcorder frames. Nostalgic, imperfect, emotional. Hugely trending!

Disposable Camera

I will shoot professionally, but also hand you disposables to document each other. Results feel personal and raw and a huge bonus that I will develop your film for you!

Flash Editorial

Simple background, bold outfits, flash photography. Feels like a magazine spread but in your house or hotel.

Travel-Stories

Train Station Love Story

Vintage Suitcases, departures, arrivals, kisses in motion. Emotional and cinematic just like me lol!

Road Trip Story

Gas station snacks, maps, roadside stops, messy joy. Convertible or vintage vehicle. My favorite car is an old Chevy C-10! Feels like freedom.

PLAYFUL • INTERACTIVE • MEMORY-MAKING

Baking Blindfolded

One of you blindfolded, the other guiding—making a pie from scratch in a beautiful kitchen. Messy, intimate, and hilarious. (I have access to gorgeous shoot houses.)

Drive-In Movie Theater

Classic cars, nostalgia, and movie-night romance. Yes, they still exist. Bring your car and always remember that first car you bought together or that family classic that you pull out of your Dad's garage.

Kitchen Haircut

One of you cutting the other's hair in the kitchen while dinner cooks on the stove. Music playing. Hair on the floor. Laughter when it goes slightly wrong. It's intimate, nostalgic, and feels like something straight out of a memory rather than a photoshoot. Perfect for couples who value simple moments over grand gestures.

MOODY · ALTERNATIVE · NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART

Party All Night

Foil fringe backdrop, empty beer cans, pizza boxes, dried flowers, cigarettes, chaos. Gritty, raw, and real.

Junkyard Love Story

Cute elopement dress meets rocker styling. Texture, grit, contrast—and stunning results.

Neon + Noodles

Chinese food, neon signs, risky ramen, “show me your noods” energy. Comfy undies under neon lights. Only for couples who truly do not care what anyone thinks.

Boneyard Beach

Driftwood, skulls, florals, long black dresses, and hauntingly beautiful landscapes. Goth babes, this one's yours.

Shopping Cart Chaos

Unexpected, playful, and surprisingly beautiful. Pizza and baby's breathe flowers stuck in all the crevices. Movement, laughter, and unexpected beauty.

Laundromat Glam

Sequins, dramatic outfits, bold props, and fluorescent lights. Weird, editorial, and unforgettable—perfect for alternative couples.

CINEMATIC • FASHION-FORWARD • SLIGHTLY UNHINGED

♥ **Super Goth Woodland Fairytale**

A dark, enchanted forest with a long black fairytale dress, dramatic movement, and moody light. Think modern witch meets high fashion editorial. I can send dress rental links.

🚣 **Canoe Filled with Flowers**

A canoe floating gently on water with flowers spilling over the edges. Romantic, painterly, and unreal. Pro tip: florists often give a deal when this is paired with wedding florals.

🎳 **Retro Bowling Alley**

A vintage bowling alley with neon lights, a short white elopement dress, playful veil, and retro vibes. Fun, graphic, and full of personality. Rental dress links available.

🖼️ **Art Museum Session**

Timeless and elegant. A tailored suit and long silk white dress, clean lines, quiet romance, and cinematic compositions.

💧 **Retro Pool Day**

A Florida retro hotel, oversized pool floaties, a pastel suit, and mid-century vacation energy. Flirty, fun, and bold.

🍊 **Orange Grove Romance**

Soft light, citrus trees, and neutral tones. Long flowy dresses or vintage dapper attire. Simple, nostalgic, and very Florida.

📖 **Bed of Books**

Yes—a *literal bed of open books*. Overhead drone shots, wildflowers, a veil, and a dramatic dress (black or white). Perfect for literature lovers and main-character energy.

🚲 **Bicycle Date**

Short white dress, boots, baby's breath-filled baskets, and movement. Effortless, playful, and timeless.

YOUR WEIRD IDEA

If you have an idea you're almost afraid to say out loud because it's too weird, too niche, or too you—tell me anyway.

Those are usually the best sessions.

STORY-DRIVEN · THEME-FORWARD

Safari Session

Wild Florida drive-through safari with open Jeep, feeding giraffes, jungle-inspired outfits. Joyful, unexpected, and cinematic.

Vintage Carousel

Dreamy dapper clothing, tweed vests, vintage white dresses, soft motion, and nostalgia. Perfect for couples who love Dapper Day vibes.

Surf Session

For couples who surf, don't mind swimsuits, and are willing to kiss underwater. Movement, play, and pure joy.

Our Love is Cinematic

Your favorite movie or show-inspired storytelling.

Circus Fantasy

Vintage circus romance with truly unforgettable styling. Red dress or burlesque showgirl styling, vintage dapper looks, and old-world circus romance.

Schoolhouse Story

Perfect if you met young. Vintage school desks, chalkboards, or even a rented historic schoolhouse. Bonus: desks can later become wedding décor or a guestbook station.

LET'S BUILD SOMETHING THAT FEELS LIKE YOU

Contact me to book your own story telling engagement session. We will start with a getting to know you questionnaire that you will fill out together or a fun phone call.

The best sessions aren't copied from Pinterest.
They're built around your story. ♥



The Tattooed Bride Photography



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