

Your Modeling Portfolio - What is it?

It's a collection of your modelling pictures. How many pictures you need varies. You should only keep strong pictures, you are only as good as your worst picture! Models should aim for quality not quantity! Avoid using 2 pictures of the same shoot (same look) Black and White is the favourite of the industry. 9 by 12 inches are the standard size. Your agency will require you to buy an 11 by 14 inches for their book (portfolio). A basic but versatile portfolio would have a casual head shot, styled head shot, body shot (conservative swimsuit or lingerie), a fashion shot (sexy), action shot, an editorial shot and even a catalogue shot. As you gain experience replace the older pictures with newer one. Keep your best picture at the end to leave a lasting impression! Do not wear jewellery for those prints, it takes the attention away from you. The wrong choice of undergarments may show panty line or bra straps and will distract the viewer (on the job, or in interviews it can mean the difference between looking professional or not). Tailor your portfolio for your strengths and the type of modelling you are doing.

Portfolio is a set of professional pictures that helps you in getting the best assignments. Generally in a portfolio 5 rolls are clicked. In each roll one to two dresses are used and the Best 2 pictures are selected. So in all you get around 10 pictures in a 5 roll portfolio.

Portfolio Tips

The tools of your trade are your portfolio photographs and your resume. Portfolio is a model's basic promotional tool consisting of an album showing the best photos from tests and bookings.

At the beginning of your fashion modeling career, your portfolio should include: At least two head shots with two different expressions (one smiling and one serious, or one in the studio and one outdoors). At least two fashion shots (one casual and one a little more formal). If you move well, you might like to include an action shot. At least one full-length shot showing the proportion of your body (feet to knees, knees to thighs, thighs to waist, waist to shoulders, shoulders to the top of your head). You could wear a leotard or a body suit, depending on what makes you comfortable and flatters your figure. A full portfolio consists of about twenty-four 9"x12" photos and tears (from magazines). Remember: it is better to have less photos, but ones that are really strong, than a full portfolio with photos that are mediocre. Every portfolio needs a mix of commercial and editorial shots, location and studio. You will also need at least one great body shot (professional and tasteful - editorial style is best) and one beautiful B&W head shot with minimal makeup.

Get trained in the various techniques required to be learned before going for a folio then Go to an Expert, trained and an experienced Fashion Photographer who could advice you about your best looks and specifically could give you more time as you are a learner, so you require more time to be comfortable with the camera and the shoot (never give shot unless you are comfortable).

A strong portfolio opens doors, a weak portfolio closes them. Your portfolio is often the only thing a person sees before deciding whether or not to contact you, and in many cases you may not be present to explain it (particularly on-line portfolios). There are fundamental qualities that all outstanding portfolios share, and a variety of principals and techniques that can help take your portfolio from average to excellent. If at all possible, your portfolio should be appropriate to the situation and reviewer, and all portfolios should show

creativity, skills, range, thought, and ambition. It is the overall combination of these, plus that "special something," that makes one designer stand above the others.

How many photos do I need to have?

Less is better! You will not impress with quantity - you will make a lasting impression with quality. The purpose of the modeling portfolio is not just simply to show that you are attractive - it is to show your ability to portray different characters, age ranges and importantly personality!

As a new model - 6 - 12 pictures is adequate to present yourself to a new agency. 20 should be a maximum - but only if they are 20 "WOW" pictures. Good pictures don't make the grade.

Should the pictures all be in Color?

Black and White is not only an artistic medium that can be effectively used to create and convey a mood, but it is also a medium that is still very much in use today - so don't be afraid to include a few great Black and White photos in your portfolio.

Your portfolio should be organized and visually appealing

Loose photos, cut up contact sheets, loose slides, torn or bent photos, are signs of a poor portfolio presentation. Just as an accountant wouldn't present his resume on a crumpled piece of paper, you shouldn't have a sloppy portfolio. Your portfolio represents you, make it a lasting, positive impression.

Kinds of Photos

A high quality headshot is a must. After you get some experience, you should have a couple different headshots showing different hairstyles and makeup looks. Your book should also contain shots of you showing the kinds of work you want to do. If you want to be a swim wear model, have swim wear shots, not high fashion, in your book. Versatility is good but don't get caught up in trying to be everything. Stick to what you are suited for and are interested in.

If you take the time to review and select your work, and put together a well thought out book, you'll be rewarded many times over throughout your career.