

STUDIO
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PHOTOGRAPHY



The *Fall* Family Styling Guide

*Palettes, textures, and a coordination worksheet
for portraits made in a Wisconsin autumn*

Coordinate. *Don't* match.

Matching outfits flatten a family into a uniform. What you actually want is for your family to look like they belong to one another — which is a different thing entirely, and a more beautiful one.

This is the part of your session I would normally walk you through myself, on our consultation call. Everything here comes down to a single formula — learn it once and you will never wonder what to wear for a portrait again. Not this fall, and not in ten years.

- I One person carries the anchor**
The palest tone in your palette — a cream sweater, an oatmeal knit. Only one person wears it as their main color. This becomes the eye's resting place in the finished portrait.
 - 2 Two or three carry supporting neutrals**
Camel, soft brown, deep olive, charcoal. These are the connective tissue of the image — quiet, warm, and never competing for attention.
 - 3 One accent appears two or three times — never five**
If your accent is rust, it might be your daughter's sweater, your scarf, and a thread in your son's flannel. Repeated, not duplicated. That repetition is precisely what the eye reads as **cohesive**.
 - 4 Vary the value**
Do not put everyone in the same lightness. A family dressed entirely in mid-tone camel reads as a blur. You want a dark, a light, and a range between them.
-

A photograph on a phone is looked at for two seconds.

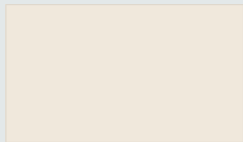
A portrait on your wall is looked at for thirty years.

Three autumns, *not* one

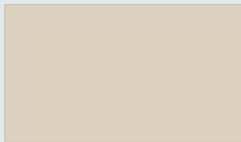
The land changes color three times between mid-September and mid-November. The palette that sings in one window falls flat in the next. Choose yours by **your session date**, not by the season in general — and if you are not sure which window you are in, ask me.

Green Gold

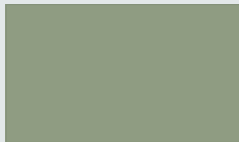
LATE SEPT — EARLY OCT



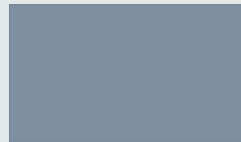
Cream
F0E8DC



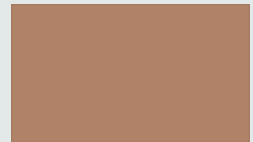
Oat
DDD2C0



Sage
8F9C82



Dusty Blue
7D8FA1

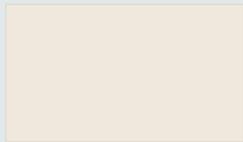


Soft Clay
B08268

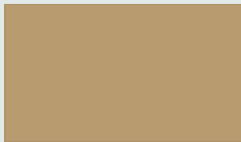
The woods are still holding green, and the wild grasses have gone tall and shaggy with the first gold showing at the tips. Softer colors have room to breathe here. Rust will work, but it can feel a step ahead of the season.

Peak Warmth

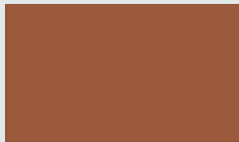
MID OCTOBER



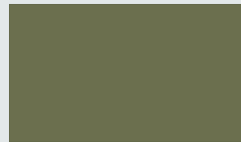
Cream
F0E8DC



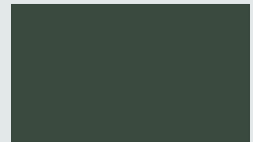
Camel
B89B6E



Rust
9C5A3C



Olive
6B6F4E

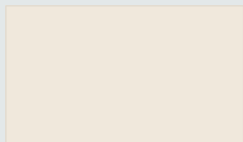


Deep Forest
3A4A3F

The maples turn, the tall grasses run copper and bronze, and the whole property goes warm. This is the fortnight most families picture when they imagine autumn portraits — and the reason October fills first.

Quiet Woods

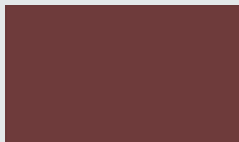
LATE OCT — NOVEMBER



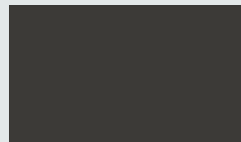
Cream
F0E8DC



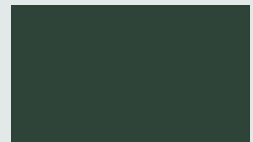
Silver Sage
8A8B86



Burgundy
6E3B3B



Charcoal
3C3A37



Evergreen
2F4438

The color drops. The grasses go silver and lie down, the woods turn bare and architectural, and the light comes in low and cool. Moodier, quieter — and closest to the studio's own register. Some of the most beautiful portraits I make all year.

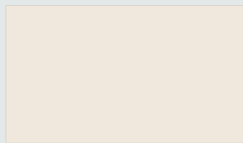
Or go *against* the season

Everything on the previous page harmonizes with autumn. These do the opposite — and that is precisely why they work. Blue sits directly opposite copper on the color wheel, so a family in deep blue or forest green **separates** from a bronze background instead of dissolving into it. If you want portraits that don't look like everyone else's fall photos, start here.

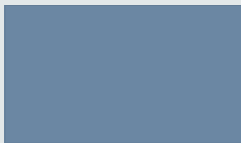
One caution, and it matters: **deep** saturation and **bright** saturation are not the same thing. Navy, forest, and teal are rich without being loud, and they flatter nearly every complexion. Electric blue and kelly green are a different animal — they throw color onto skin. Depth, not brightness.

Deep Water

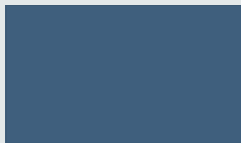
BLUES · ANY AUTUMN WINDOW



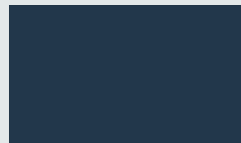
Cream
FOE8DC



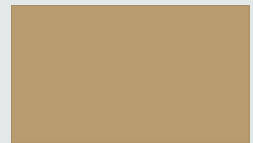
Chambray
6B87A3



Denim
3F5F7D



Navy
22374B

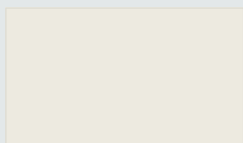


Camel
B89B6E

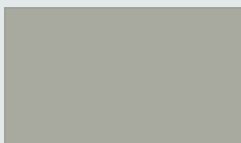
The strongest contrast available to you in October. Keep the camel — one warm note stops the family from looking pasted onto the landscape. Denim and navy hold beautifully in print, and neither one dates.

Wild Evergreen

GREENS · BEST MID-OCT ONWARD



Ivory
EDEAE0



Stone
A8A99F



Moss
5E7A52



Juniper
2F5D57

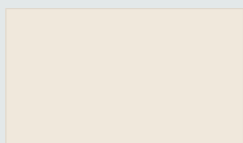


Forest
1E3D33

Once the maples turn, green stops competing and starts contrasting. Juniper leans blue-green, which is what keeps this from reading as camouflage. Exceptional against bare woods in November.

Teal & Bronze

THE STUDIO'S OWN



Cream
FOE8DC



Slate
9FB0B4



Studio Teal
1F8077



Bronze
8A6A3C



Charcoal
3C3A37

My favorite, and the one I will talk you into if you let me. It is the studio's own palette worn out into the field — cool and quiet, with a single bronze note picked up off the grasses. Use the teal once. It does all its work from one person.

Your coordination *worksheet*

Fill one row per person. Then run the three checks at the bottom of the page before you buy anything.

WHO	TOP & COLOR	TEXTURE	SHOES	ONE ACCENT

THE THREE CHECKS

☐	One anchor, and only one. Exactly one person wears the palest tone as their main color.
☐	The accent repeats two or three times. Never once. Never on everyone.
☐	The values vary. Read your rows top to bottom. Is there a dark, a light, and a range between?

If you cannot make the checks work, send me the worksheet before you shop. This is exactly what our consultation is for — I would far rather spend ten minutes with you now than have you spend an afternoon returning sweaters. — Mia

Texture, and what to *leave* home

A flat cotton tee gives a camera nothing. A cable-knit sweater gives it a hundred small shadows — and shadows are what create dimension. At twenty-four inches on a wall, that dimension is the difference between a picture and a piece of art.

REACH FOR

- ☐ **Cable & chunky knit**
The finest fall fabric there is

- ☐ **Corduroy**
Especially on children

- ☐ **Wool & wool blends**
Structure and warmth at once

- ☐ **Flannel**
Soft, seasonal, forgiving

- ☐ **Suede & leather**
Boots, belts, a good jacket

- ☐ **Linen & gauze**
Early season, still lovely

LEAVE AT HOME

- × **Large logos and graphic tees**
A brand name will be the first thing every guest sees on your wall for twenty years.

- × **Neon and high saturation**
They reflect color onto skin. A neon jacket tints a child's face, and it cannot be fully corrected.

- × **Tight stripes, micro-checks**
They shimmer and buzz in print. A wide stripe is fine. A pinstripe is trouble.

- × **Four competing patterns**
One patterned piece per family is plenty. Two, if they share a color.

- × **Brand-new white sneakers**
They pull the eye straight to the ground.

- × **Anything that doesn't fit**
The camera finds all of it. Comfort reads as confidence.

A Wisconsin autumn, *honestly*

Dress for ten degrees colder than the forecast. The open ground here has nothing to break the wind, and it finds you.

Late September

60–70°. A light knit is enough.

October

45–60°, and windier than you think.

Early November

35–48°. Golden hour before five.

Layering isn't a compromise here — it is the point. A cream knit beneath an olive wool coat. A scarf that can come off. Boots that handle wet grass and long growth. Layers give me variety within one session, and they give you a family that isn't visibly cold in a single frame.

BRING WITH YOU

- ☐ **Coats for between setups.** Cold children photograph as cold children. This one changes everything.
 - ☐ **A thermos.** Hot chocolate in the car buys you twenty more good minutes.
 - ☐ **A full change for anyone under six.** For reasons you already understand.
 - ☐ **Boots, ideally.** The grass is tall and often damp. Leather or boots, not stiff dress shoes.
 - ☐ **Nothing that itches, scratches, or pinches.** Let children wear the outfit around the house for an hour first.
 - ☐ **Lint roller, hair ties, a small brush.** Ten seconds of tidying saves an hour of retouching.
 - ☐ **Skip the hair bow** that will be lost in the tall grass within four minutes.
-

*Dress your family the way you would want to be remembered.
That is the whole guide.*

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Where Your Life Becomes *Fine Art*

Sessions are photographed on private land — woods, wild grasses, and open sky, without another soul in the frame. Fully guided from our first conversation to the moment your artwork is hanging on your wall.

Your family isn't a collection of pixels. Every session ends in a custom-designed gallery wall or heirloom album — never a flash drive.

Autumn dates are limited, and October fills first.

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