

Not sure if getting a pet portrait is right for you and your dog? Below is a step-by-step guide on what to expect from first point of contact through to receiving your final products. Please also refer to the FAQ section on my website.

CONSULTATION

At our initial consultation we will grab a coffee and talk about your dog, so I get a feel for what type of dog s/he is. We will also discuss what kinds of products you are interested in, and look at the products I offer as well as the packages to find something that suits. This helps me create a better picture for the day of the session, allowing me to capture the perfect shots to fit with your needs. We will compare diaries and find the perfect time to meet up for the session.

PREPARATION

You are about to immortalise your best friend on print for life, so it would make sense to get him to the groomers before the session. I can recommend Oh My Dog on Carrington Street in New Plymouth.

Similarly with the collar, choose one that is your favourite and make sure it is clean on the day! If you prefer for the collar not to be in the final images, then please discuss this with me beforehand and we can look at options of thin and plain collars to wear on the day.

Consider which toys your dog enjoys, and bring these along too! They will be used to get his attention, but you might also want to have some photos of him playing with them. Again, this is up to you. He may even have a 'cuddly' that you'd want him to be photographed with!

If your dog normally wears a harness, consider just a collar for the photo shoot, unless you specifically want him photographed wearing the harness. I will always remove the lead in post-processing for a more natural look.

Where I am photographing more than one dog, I will require a dog handler for each dog. You will appreciate this takes the pressure off yourself to be in more than one place at once, and makes for a calmer and smoother session. Consider who might be best in this role.

SESSION

Once we meet up at the shooting location, I will scope out the best spots to start photographing. I will require your input throughout the session by way of holding your dog on the lead and generally being in control of him. You may need to place him in certain positions or have him sit, lie down, or stand as per my direction and, of course, the dog's ability. I will always go along with the dog's mood. If he is still in training and hasn't mastered the above actions, then we will work around that. I have never-ending patience, however if the dog shows any sign of irritation or needs a treat or run around, then we will immediately stop and give everyone a break.

I will spend a lot of time on my belly down at doggie level. This is another reason that I cannot hold or control your dog and it's important that you have control over him at all times.

Please bring the thinnest lead that you own, ideally in a plain colour, so that I can more easily edit this out in the final images. If you are confident in your dog's recall, we will do some off-lead photos at the end.

Treats are always useful to help the dog stay 'focused' as the session goes on. He may not be used to having you give him demands every couple of minutes, when all he wants to do is go for this walk you promised him!

It is important that the dog does not get stressed or irritated during the session as this will clearly reflect in the final images. Please refrain from repetitive commands, squeaking and calling, especially once he is roughly in position. I will make the funny sounds that get his attention and have him looking square at me. It can be frustrating for all if people are calling him from all directions, everyone with best intentions of having the dog 'listen to them'. There should only ever be one person in control of one dog.

We will spend around an hour wandering around the area with you, getting different shots. Sitting, standing, lying down, will all sorts of backgrounds.

FOLLOW UP

After approximately two weeks we will meet up at our pre-booked Ordering Session and you will get the chance to ooh and aaah at all your fully edited photos! I will then guide you through the sometimes overwhelming job of narrowing down to your absolute favourites, and put together a plan of which images you wish to have printed, and in what format.

My dog is not very obedient or has to stay on a lead, can I still book him in?

Yes! Yes! Yes! Most of my sessions are done with the dog almost entirely on lead the whole time. With the magic of Photoshop I will make it disappear for the final image. So depending on the location and you and your dog's training levels, it can be done either on or off lead.

How many photos can I choose from?

Following our photoshoot I will have between 30-50 images to show you at the ordering session.

How long until I can see them?

Please allow up to two weeks for me to fine-tune each image and have them ready to present back to you.

How do we book a session?

Drop me a line! If you are looking to book a photo session, please either email or phone me anytime. I am available on certain days of the week and also on weekends, so we can negotiate a time by phone.

Do I have to have my dog groomed professionally?

Whilst this is not compulsory, it most certainly is recommended. These photos will showcase your dog at his/her best and will last a lifetime, so you don't want bits of dirt hanging off him and hair going in all directions. I can recommend groomers in New Plymouth if you do not already have a regular.

I only want a couple of digital files, is this possible?

Unfortunately this is not a service I currently offer. Whilst I understand that the digital image is very popular and easy to share among friends and family, I am all about the tangible product to enjoy and share throughout future generations. However with each order you will receive a social media file of the image purchased.

When do you hold sessions?

The light is best early morning, or leading up to sunset. Therefore I do not encourage midday sessions as a rule. I am available on certain days of the week, evenings and on weekends. Please email me your number or phone me to negotiate a time.

Do you photoshop images?

Yep. I have CCH syndrome (Crooked Camera Holder) and this necessitates that I have to open up and straighten every single photo. While I am there, I will do minor retouches, so rest assured that that piece of fluff that landed on your dog's ear will not be seen. I will also remove that fly on his bum, the bird poo he almost stood in and the branch sticking out of his ears in that very quick, no-time-to-recompose-image! However, I will not take 10kg off his weight, because I do like to keep it real (and it's those snugly bits you love about him right?).

What if it rains?

I am very flexible and happy to reschedule. Due to the limited locations where dogs are allowed indoors, it is better to reschedule to a better day than limit ourselves to an enclosed area and get fewer photos.

My dog has been diagnosed with a terminal illness, can you book me in super fast?

Yes I can. Please contact me for a chat and pricing options for pets that do not have much time left with you.