

Hand drawn Portraits

Photography Tips
from



Amanda Hare

ABN 37511 011 263

Amanda Hare
PO Box 2127,
Werribee, Vic, 3030
Phone 0411 299 340
E-mail ahare.portrait@gmail.com
<http://amandahare.myartsonline.com>

Tips on Reference Photography

Using Light

- Use natural daylight whenever possible.
- Use light to help define your sitter's features. Try putting your sitter in a position so that the main light source is at your sitter's side.
- Have your sitter positioned in full shade.
- Be aware that shadows from hair may fall onto your sitter's face or neck.
- Overcast days are the best type if photographing outdoors. The clouds tend to reflect (sun) light more evenly than on a cloudless day.

Avoid

- Using the flash as the light unnaturally hits your sitter, removing natural shadows which are needed to show depth and detail in your sitter.
- Aiming the camera at the main light source as this will cause your sitter to be a silhouette and may cause flare on your photograph.
- Having the sun in your sitter's face is uncomfortable (they may end up squinting their eyes).
- Putting your sitter under a main light source (if unnatural light is being used), as this will cause unwanted and unnatural shadows to appear especially under the eyes, nose, lips and chin.
- Positions where a shadow is cast across only part of your sitter (including positions in the shade of buildings, plants and trees). *Remember no background is drawn with your sitter, so half a shadow cast on your sitter will look strange especially when you cannot see what is causing the shadow.*
- Having your sitter in a position or location where no light falls onto your sitter or your sitter's face is very dark.

Character

- Encourage your sitter to feel comfortable. Have them stand or sit in a position that is comfortable for them.
- Check your sitter's hair, clothing and jewellery are tidy.
- Encourage your sitter to make eye contact with the camera lens.
- Encourage your sitter to tilt their head slightly. Have them lift their head up or down. A photo where the sitter's full face is visible is preferred.

Taking the Reference Photo

- Try to have the main light source behind or beside you.
- Take several photographs.
- Make sure you turn the camera so the photograph layout works with the shot you are taking.
- Have the sitter's head, neck and shoulders fill up the camera's view finder. But make sure you don't cut off their head, chin or face (even if wanting a 'character portrait'.) Remember your focus is your sitter not the background.
- Often it is easier to take photographs of the sitter in front of a plain (any colour) wall as there is no background to distract you from the overall

appearance of your sitter.

- Does your sitter wear glasses? Check whether your sitter wants the glasses on in the portrait. Be aware that light may reflect off your sitter's glasses. Be aware that some glasses have transition lenses. When outdoors these lenses work like sunglasses. Try to get photographs of your sitter with and without their glasses on in the same position.