

Should You Do Engagement Photos???

I would estimate that about 40% of the couples who book me for their wedding also book an engagement session. Now, I'd like to see that number in the 80-90 percentile for several reasons that I will go over below. I'm going to give you the reasons why, and some great ideas of what you can do with the photos from your engagement session. Get ready, because here come my top 7 reasons you should consider doing an engagement session; and spoiler alert, they're all for your benefit.

1. It helps you feel more comfortable when doing the actual photos on your wedding day. Outside of a school portrait or a business head shot, many people have never been in professionally photographed before their engagement session or wedding day. The engagement session will be a will be a low-stress, high excitement occasion. When I show up on your wedding day for photos, you'll be much less anxious about the photo process. Just think of the engagement session as a practice run for your wedding day.
2. It builds a repour with your photographer and helps you see how they work. Every photographer is different and we all have our own pace and way of directing. You'll quickly adapt to their style of the way they shoot and by the end of the session, you will be much more comfortable with your photographer and getting your photo taken. I've said it a thousand times, but on your wedding day, you will interact with your photographer more than any other vendor, guest, family member, even each. When you photographer shows up on your wedding day, it better to be like "hey Bill" rather than, "who is this guy, oh yeah it's Bill, we booked him 9 months ago".
3. It helps you showcase your personalities. Many couples like to include different outfits, their pets or hobbies and interests they do with one another. Some examples I've done are a couple who met over discussing comic books; two self-proclaimed nerds. Another couple met through their biking group on meetup. For those engagement session, the one couple brought comic books for the photos and the other brought their bikes along. Yeah we did all the normal and lovey-dovey photos at their sessions, but by adding those elements allowed each couple went above and beyond and brought something a little more unique to their story to their photo session.
4. It's a practical use for photos you can use for your wedding. You'll be able to use the engagement photos for your wedding announcements, social media, your wedding website, your save the date cards, you can even create wedding décor or a guest sign in book with the photos. Or you can simply make a few framed prints to decorate your home.
5. You'll see what angles and poses you like the best from your engagement session. You can then discuss with your photographer that you may be self-conscious with x, y or z angles or poses. You are the best and worst critic of yourself. Seeing what works and doesn't work for you will allow you to make these changes prior to your wedding.

6. You can utilize your hair and makeup tests to see how it looks in photos. Many brides will schedule their hair and makeup test run just before to the engagement shoot. This will give you a better understanding of how your makeup and hair will look in photos. If it isn't the perfect look you want, there's still time to tweak the work your artists have done prior to your wedding day.
7. Consider it a fun and unique date with you and your wife or groom to be. Do an engagement session in the late afternoon followed up by a nice dinner at your favorite restaurant. I guarantee it will be one of the most unique date ideas you and your partner have ever had.

I like to get to know my brides and grooms as much as possible prior to their weddings. The engagement session is a big part of the time I get to spend with the couple in a one-on-one scenario, or is it one on two scenario? Whatever it is, that is why I include an engagement session in all but one of my wedding collections. Most couples are not really aware the value of an engagement session until after they have it done. When I show up months later on their wedding day, getting their photos taken is literally like riding a bike for them. I see a great difference in the immediate comfort level between couples that have done a session versus those who have not. The couples with whom I've already photograph tend to get right back into the routine of what we did months prior, where the couples who decided to forgo the engagement photos take a little bit longer to warm up before they fall into the rhythm of the photo process.

So, what will it be for you? Have you given much thought on booking your engagement session? I'll assume that's why you find yourself here, on my wedding recourses page right now. Well, I hope I've persuaded you to look forward to you photo session rather than dread it. Yes, it's very intimidating for many people to be in front of the camera, but a good photographer will direct you and make you feel at ease in no time. So, start picking out outfits for your engagement session today and make your wedding planning an exciting process!

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