



FASHION BRAIN ACADEMY

12 Tips for Working with Models for Your Photo Shoot

When I had my womenswear line, the photo shoot for my collection felt like a necessary evil. Something I had to suffer through to get to the good part – selling and marketing my line. Who knew I was about the only designer in the universe that felt this way? Seems like all the rest of you just love the idea of your photo shoot, although it causes a lot of stress. Especially finding models and working with them,

Here's a list of best-practices for working with models during your photo shoot.

1. Ask your models to arrive wearing wear a zip-up hoodie. This way they can get their hair and makeup done and it won't be wrecked when they change.
2. You'll need to feed the models but make sure it's something clean and easy to eat. No chicken! It can leave a greasy residue that can smudge their outfit. Better choices are fruit, crackers, and cheese with toothpicks.
3. Bring straws so your models can drink without having to re-touch their lipstick all the time.
4. Bring a pair of white sport socks for you to throw on as you walk across the backdrop. The photographer won't want you getting things dirty with your shoes, not to mention that this will slow down your shoot.
5. It's common for models to bring a few pairs of their own shoes with them to help you style the shots. Don't just expect they'll do this! I know a designer who assumed the model would bring shoes so she didn't prepare any shoes on her end and it wasted a lot of time.
6. Bring nail polish remover. Sometimes models show up with hot pink nail polish and it doesn't go with your look so be prepared.
7. Make sure you see samples of previous work from your hair and makeup people before you book them. What you consider "soft and dewy" makeup compared to what they think can be drastically different. Photographers are often great about recommending hair and makeup people.
8. Discuss with your photographer the rate for the shoot as well as the rate for photo editing. I hear about problems concerning these issues from clients every week! What

starts out as a \$350 shoot turns into triple that once the photos are edited and everyone ends up mad at each other.

9. Even big model agencies like [BMC](#) and [Ford](#) often have “fresh faces” who will work for free to build their portfolio. It can't hurt to call around and ask and try not to be intimidated! They can be brusque on the phone but I guarantee you there are models out there willing to work for free or for trade.
10. Model Mayhem can be useful as well – <http://www.modelmayhem.com/>. Like anything, there are people on the site who are reliable and then some that are flaky. I've heard of a lot of designers who found hidden gems on Model Mayhem.
11. Allow time for the photographer to get the pictures back to you – usually about a week, sometimes longer.
12. Keep in mind that many models (if you don't book through an agency) will work for trade. If you can offer them a dress (or 2) in exchange for their work, that can do the trick.