

CAREER ADVICE

Boost your business prospects with these career-enhancing tips & tricks



THIS ISSUE: Working with models? Rachael D'Cruze gives you the lowdown from working 'time for' to releases and rights...

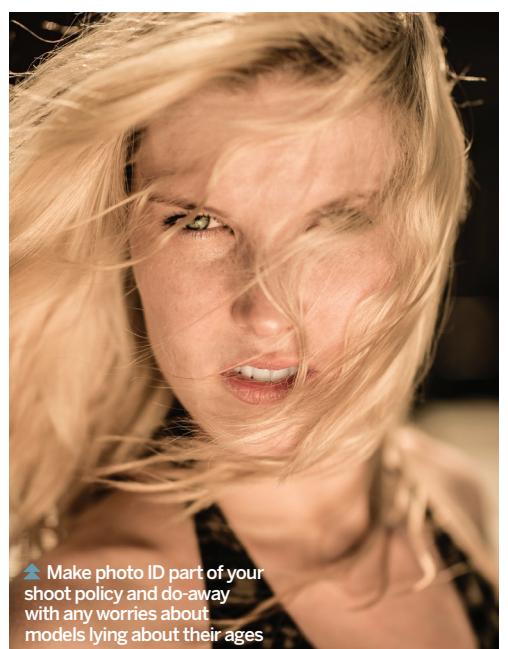
Age worries

I'm concerned about models' ages – I know some underage girls lie about their ages and I don't want to get a (totally unfounded) reputation as a pervert. If girls were to give their real ages, I would still be happy to shoot them provided I got parental permission, as I do fashion portraiture, not nude or glamour. Would this be okay and what can I do to protect myself and my reputation from this worrying trend?

Barney Smythe

A worrying trend indeed Barney. It's extremely difficult to gauge how old lots of models are, and people do lie, so you're right to be cautious. Firstly, to be sure of model's ages, ask to see a form of photo ID, such as a passport or driving licence before you start at the shoot. Mention in your correspondence that this is your policy and that you won't shoot without it. Take copies of ID for your records, or take a shot of the model with their ID, and keep these with the corresponding model release forms.

When it comes to shooting minors, you need to get parents to sign a model release, giving their consent and we advise having a parent present at the shoot too. Never shoot any nude, glamour, or any photos with sexual suggestion with anyone under 18 years old.



Release forms

Model release is confusing me – after reading up the net about whether or not I need to get people to sign one, I've found lots of conflicting advice. Can you shed any light on exactly when I need a Model Release Form?

Hannah Pearson

Indeed, the internet is awash with lots of very different takes on this complex issue. As a general rule, remember that if your photograph of a person (or of copyrighted/trademarked property) is going to be used to advertise something, then the publisher of the photo will need a release from you, to protect themselves from any potential litigation. You, as a photographer, should also get model releases for any photos you intend to advertise your own business with. Model releases are only needed if an image is used for advertising purposes.

▲ Make photo ID part of your shoot policy and do-away with any worries about models lying about their ages

Finding faces

I really want to get into portraiture and possibly even fashion work too, but I'm finding getting hold of willing models difficult. My friends and family simply aren't aspiring model types and I don't have a budget as such to pay an agency. Any suggestions?

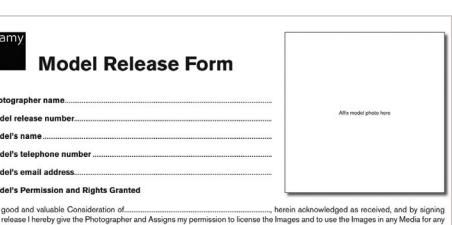
Francis Clegg

Don't worry Francis – not everyone has a bevy of beautiful friends willing to pose for them! The good news is there are lots of aspiring models in the UK who are willing to work with photographers on a TFCD (time-for-CD) or a TFP (time-for-print) basis, to build their portfolios. To attract these models it helps if you have a unique style, or a strong idea for a shoot.

Get a Model Mayhem (www.modelmayhem.com) account, and search for models in your areas willing to work for TFCD/P – it's good for finding make-up artists too. The Casting Call section of the site is also very handy – be specific and if you have a good idea you'll get lots of enquiries from interested models.

It will help to create a Facebook page for your photography, as a business. Post examples of your work including shots of models, friends, weddings etc and mention that you are looking for models – you'll soon start to generate plenty of interest.

▲ When using Model Mayhem, search for models via 'last activity' in preferences, to make sure your browsing those with active rather than dormant accounts



▲ If you want to sell your images, syndicate, or publish them, be sure to get a signed Model Release Form

Keep in mind also the matter of privacy – if you have been hired to take photos of people, a wedding or portrait shoot for example, you aren't allowed to publish these images anywhere, without a signed Model Release Form.

Alamy have a comprehensive model release form available at <http://bit.ly/Bo61i>, take a look to see what you should include.

GOT A QUESTION? Get in touch with us at team@dphotographer.co.uk to submit your career-related questions. Whether you are just

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Send us your questions for some expert advice...



Model behaviour

Up until now I've concentrated on landscape and architectural photography, but I've now got some creative ideas for model shoots. I've got plenty of willing models, but to be honest I'm pretty clueless about how to interact with them on a shoot and would hate to make anyone feel uncomfortable. Any pointers?

Matt Winston

Working with a model for the first time can be quite nerve-wracking, but don't worry, with a little practice it'll soon feel natural. When your model arrives, be confident, welcoming and chatty and they'll feel at ease. Being distant will make your model feel uneasy.

You'll feel more confident if you know you're well prepared – get your equipment, props and wardrobe all ready to go in advance and stick to the plan you've made with the model beforehand.

When you're shooting, be encouraging – direction is vitally important to a successful shoot. Shooting in silence will make your model nervous, so be sure to chat throughout the shoot – tell them how the shots

"Be confident, welcoming and chatty and your model will feel at ease"

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The BIG? Question?

Rachael D'Cruze discusses how and when to make the jump from shooting on a 'time-for' basis to charging for photoshoots and prints

When you first start working with models, you need their time to build your portfolio, so time-for-CD or time-for-print arrangements work well. However, once you've done this for a while and used your images to build a portfolio, populate your website, attract lots of fans and followers to your blog, Facebook and Twitter accounts and generally create a buzz around what you do, it's time to put your business head on.

Pricing models will obviously depend on a number of factors including your genre, your style and your geographic location. However, a universal problem is how to make the transition from 'free' to paid photographer. The key is not to be apologetic about it – you've done your time honing your skills and are now a pro. Get together a price list and publicise it on your website, Facebook etc. Don't be afraid to run limited special offers, such as a £100 portfolio shoot during August offer for example, to drum up business. Models will still ask you to shoot 'time for', but hold your ground, unless it's someone that would really add an extra dimension to your portfolio.

On the other side of the coin, if you are going to start taking paid commercial work, you should be willing to pay the models you book a fair rate.



▲ Making your model feel comfortable is a vital part of being a successful people photographer