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**The perfect shot checklist**

1. **Lighting.** Set your camera to “slow synchro” to combine natural and flash lighting. (Tip: Tape Scotch brand Magic Tape over your flash. You’ll soften the flash yet still light your shot adequately.)
2. **Location, location, location.** Use a focal point, such as a chair, dining table or holiday tree, to position people for a photo.
3. **Get comfortable.** Make sure everyone in your shot is comfortably situated. (No squishing!)
4. **Take your time.** After each picture, review your shot for composition. Look to see that poles aren’t “coming out” of Grandma’s head.
5. **Avoid getting star struck.** If your photo subjects have that waited-too-long-dazed smile, ask them to look away briefly and then return their eyes to the camera with a fresh, natural expression.
6. **Remember the rule of thirds.** Mentally divide your photo into a 3 x 3 grid or nine squares. Rather than try to centre your shot in the middle square, aim to place your subject just off centre for interest.