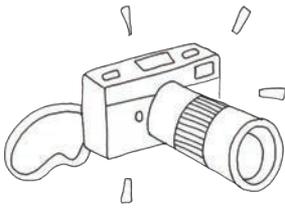


- RINEKE DIJKSTRA -



**HOW DO YOU TAKE
A NATURAL PORTRAIT?**

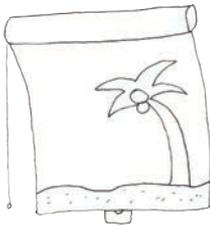
WHAT YOU NEED



CAMERA:
PREFERABLY A VERY GOOD,
HIGH RESOLUTION MODEL



A PERSON TO PHOTOGRAPH



BACKGROUND OF YOUR CHOICE



NATURAL LIGHT

TAKING A NATURAL PORTRAIT

Learn to look beyond the pose, and discover how to take natural self-portraits.

- Study photographic portraits in a museum, photo books, or photographic portraits you find online. Pay particular attention to color, pose, distance, and how the portrait is framed. What appeals to you and what doesn't? When does a portrait resonate with you? What elements can you use for the portrait you're going to take?

- Think of someone you'd like to make a portrait of. It could be your best friend, a classmate, or perhaps someone you've seen on the street for the first time. You could also find a model through social media. Or would you like a portrait of yourself as you really are?

- Observe your model carefully. Does he or she convey a particular mood or characteristic? Connect with them; chat for a while. Is your sitter shy, bold, dramatic, gentle, or cheeky? Which emotion comes through strongest? And how will this influence the way you'll portray your sitter?

- Next, you need to find the right background. Perhaps a garden full of flowers, or maybe a wall? Any background is fine, but choose carefully. The busier the background the more it will divert attention away from the sitter's face. A neutral background could be more powerful. You can always remove any unwanted elements in the background.

- Put your model at ease. Let him or her find a pose that feels natural and comfortable. You don't need to offer many suggestions. Smiling's not necessary. Say something like, "Yes, that's great, hold that pose for a moment." Brightly patterned blouse? Swap it for a plain one. And make sure the light is right – think about the play of sun and shadow.



· The standard camera lens generally corresponds to what your eye sees, which makes it the most natural kind of lens. If you're using a wideangle lens or telephoto lens, you'll need to stand closer to or farther away from your model. What lens will you choose, and why? Photography takes time and patience; you can't rush it. And always keep an eye on your model. The unguarded moments can be important. That's when your sitter's "mask" might slip. Click away! Photos of people looking too posed are often less interesting.

· Take full-length shots of your model as well as close-ups.

· Check your results from time to time. Are you pleased with the composition? The colors, the proportions? Keep experimenting until you're satisfied.



BRIGHTLY PATTERNED BLOUSE?
SWAP IT FOR A PLAIN ONE.



TIP

"You need examples so you can stand on your own two feet later on. When I was a young photography student, I learned a lot from looking at the work of other photographers. Rembrandt was, and still is, one of my inspirations, too. The people he painted are so real. He captures the moment, stripping away all the tricks and artifice. Photography's always a bit of a quest: to take a really good photograph you often have to take a lot of bad ones. Develop your own approach to light, or subjectmatter, for instance. And it's handy to have confidence. At first, I didn't dare ask anyone to pose for me. Make a genuine connection with people, because that's what you're asking them to do for you. During a photo shoot, the fewer people I have around the better. Otherwise it's too distracting."

RINEKE DIJKSTRA Years ago, Rineke Dijkstra made a self-portrait after swimming thirty lengths.

There, in that swimming pool, her photography style was born. Too exhausted to strike a pose, she stood rather awkwardly. And it worked.

Rineke makes portraits of people on the beach, adolescents in the park, matadors after a bullfight, and new mothers. All the portraits are taken in an everyday setting. Every person is photographed at the moment they break their pose, or haven't yet found one. Rineke's approach to taking photographs has taught her to look much more closely. In the body language of the people that Rineke photographs you can see their confidence and the circumstances they live in.



Kolobrzeg, Poland, 26 July 1992, 1992