

# engaged

GSQUARED WEDDINGS PHOTOGRAPHY

## THE SESSION GUIDE

WHY AN ENGAGEMENT SESSION?  
CLOTHING TIPS  
THE TINY DETAILS

INCLUDING PETS  
LOCATIONS  
PRINTS AND PAPER SUITES



## why you should have an engagement session

### **Engagements help us get to know your love story.**

While you can tell us a lot through the proposal story, or things you like to do together, watching the two of you interact helps us know how to work with you best. We try to build your engagement session around that love story – whether its an activity or place you love, the place the proposal happened, or something you’ve always wanted to do together. This is all about your love story.

### **It gets you used to being in front of the camera – with us.**

We’re going to be photographing you for (usually) 8 to 10 hours on your wedding day. Your engagement session is a fun trial run, so that we know what you respond to, what makes you feel at ease, and how best to pose you to get the perfect angles to help you look your best.

### **It gives you a taste of our vision.**

Looking at a website and portfolio is all well and good, but until you actually see how your photographer envisions you and your love, and how they edit images of you, it’s hard to have real expectations for your wedding day. We also get to learn what kind of photos you love most, so that we can tailor your wedding day images around that.





### **It helps you learn our process.**

Not only do you get to see how we photograph you, but you also get to see what its like to get sneak peeks, your full gallery and, when applicable, your download of images.

### **It's a day to celebrate your love and your future.**

And who doesn't just want to go make fun memories with the love of their life? Engagements are a celebration! You've found that special person you want to spend your forever with. If you ask us, that's pretty darn special and something to be remembered.

### **You get to know us.**

We're pretty dorky. We have crazy ideas, and we're a little quirky. During your engagement you'll get to see who we are and how we work together – and hear some of our nerdy jokes. You don't have to laugh just to make us feel better either

### **It's a good time to ask questions.**

Things come up after your consultation and booking meeting – we know. We're totally open to answering any questions, helping with wedding plans and ideas, and just listen if you need to vent about wedding stress.





# how it works

## **LOCATION**

We can give suggestions on locations that photograph well, or you can let us know if you have a location in mind. Spots more than 50 miles from Snohomish may incur an additional fee or specific scheduling requirements.

## **SCHEDULING**

Due to weddings, we don't usually schedule engagement sessions on weekends. We will almost always start 2 hours before sunset.

## **WEATHER/RESCHEDULES**

Rain, snow or extreme heat (above 90 degrees) will call for a reschedule. We try to not subject our gear to foul weather unless it's on a wedding day. We usually make the decision to reschedule within 2 hours of the start of the session, or by whenever you'd need to leave. We also ask that you reschedule if you're ill - whether it's a cough, sneeze, or fever.

## **CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES**

We highly recommend following our clothing suggestions in this guide to ensure the best portraiture for your engagement session. We recommend no less than 3 outfits.

## **THE ENGAGEMENT SESSION**

During the session itself, I'll photograph you, we'll chat a lot, I'll ask some questions, and I'll make you do some weird and funny things. The whole goal is you have fun and the time flies! There is usually only one photographer present.

## **DELIVERY OF IMAGES**

You'll get a sneak peek of your session within 48 hours on FB and IG. After that, your digital gallery delivery takes 2 to 3 weeks, and you'll get a link in your email. You can download and print from these photos.

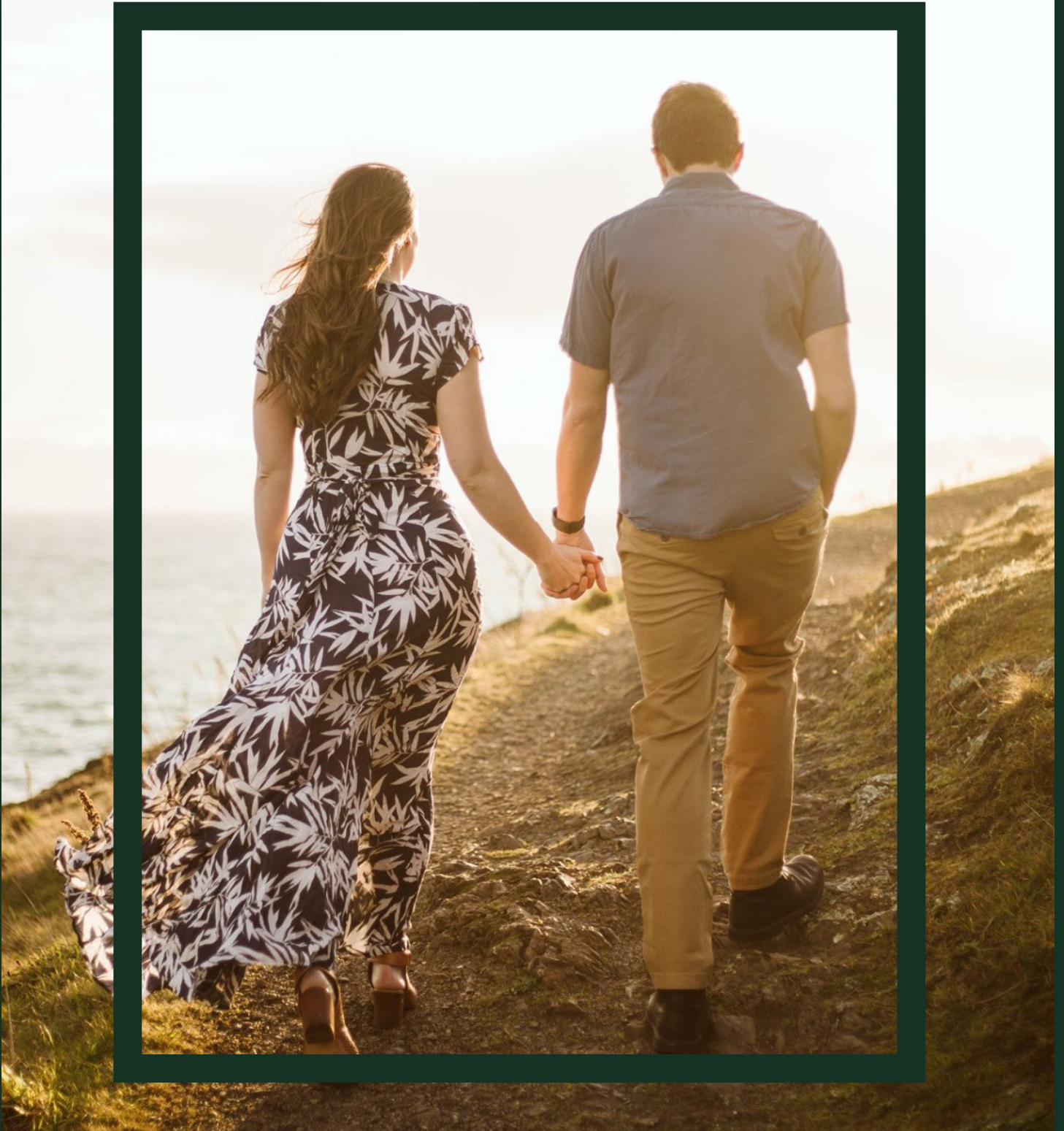






# let's talk clothing

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT LOOK







## clothing tips

We recommend bringing several outfits. Please remember to bring mostly long and leg covering options to help make posing easier and more diverse. Come dressed in your casual outfit first.

1. Dressier is always better. Even if it's not your "norm".
2. Coordinate colors, but don't be too matchy.
3. If you want to do patterns, make sure that one of you is in a solid tone (as in, never both in flannels).
4. We don't recommend both of you wear white tees and jeans or black tees and jeans, etc.
5. Jewelry and accessories are a great way to add some interest.
6. Shoes matter. We will see them.
7. Clean, pretty nails. We do lots of photos of your hands.
8. Clean your ring right before you come for your session.





## what to bring...

The dressier the better. We are always more inspired by more formal clothing, and those photos always look best.

When choosing colors, jewel-tones work best for most environments and all seasons of the year. And make sure you have comfortable shoes to walk around in.

For the ladies:

1. A dressy pants option - nice jeans or slacks and heels.
2. Dressy dress options - one long and one short.
3. One casual option - think about how I'd find you out to brunch or at a micro-brewery
4. A few formal outfits - think black-tie or formal dance. !! this is a must !!
5. Bring something from another season that you love.



For the guys:

1. Jeans - a pair without holes, and then a pair with them if you like that look for the casual outfit
2. Nice slacks and/or dressier pants.
3. A couple of nice button down shirts or polo shirts. Leave the t-shirt for the casual outfit
4. Bring a tie or suspenders to wear with the button down in some photos, and we can have you take that off for another "look".
5. Your shoes DO matter. We will see them.
6. Avoid shirts with logos/graphics. They don't photograph well.





*dressed to impress*



# a few more thoughts...

## **Makeup**

There are a lot of misconceptions out there about makeup. Of course, airbrush is our favorite because it creates a flawless finish, but honestly, you can keep it simple and still look great. Some tips:

- Less is more. Don't overdo it.
- Keep eyeshadow and eyeliner light, and neutral. Dark, heavy shadow close your eye area.
- Check your nails. Make sure they're clean, and that your polish isn't chipped.
- Do NOT overdo the highlighter. It reflects and then you look like a Cullen (or a ghost, you pick)

## **Hair**

Since you'll likely be in a lot of different poses and really close to each other, this is another "less is more" kind of thing. If you want to color or cut your hair, do it at least 7 days before your session to allow time for grow-out. If you want to have your eyebrows, etc, cleaned up, please go to a professional. It's totally worth the trip and the minimal cost. If you really want to wear a hat, bring it with you, but don't put it on right away. We'll want some pictures without it (and please let us know ahead of time so that we can bring appropriate lighting).





# the little things.

## **Intimate**

Let's talk about the giant elephant in the room. PDA. Yes, the kiss and all that other mushy stuff. This is an engagement session after all. Your time to celebrate finding the perfect-for-you person for the rest of your life. To live in your love and all that jazz.

We've got some rules.... ish KISS like you mean it. None of that duck-face pecky crap. It looks ridiculous in photos, and it makes me think you've never kissed before. And also, you have to kiss for more than 3 seconds. At least.... or I will probably make you do it again. Fair warning ? We are also going to tell you to kiss - a lot. And snuggle, and touch, and hold hands. I know you'll feel weird, but honestly, we've seen HUNDREDS of people kiss. Really, it's not weird. It's good. We like that you love each other - makes our job easier.

## **Creative**

Yes, please! We want to shoot at unique spots, with awesome ideas. Want a camping themed shoot, or a kayak adventure? Want to shoot near the Hawks stadium, or in the glass garden? Maybe you really want a farm styled session, photos among the animals at the zoo, or you're a huge travel nut. Did you guys meet on a co-ed softball team, or swing dancing - or you have a mutual passion for anything Star Wars? Whatever it is, we'll bring it to life. We can even help you think outside the box and make this a session to remember.



*and more*

### **Helpful Tidbits**

Plan your engagement session when you don't have any plans afterwards (or at least not within 4 hours). If we get an idea, we want to be able to try it, and time constraints make that harder.

Bring a light snack (nothing that stains), and a water bottle. Sessions can get tiring. Bring comfortable walking shoes. Have a bag to carry your clothes with you.

Sleep well the night before, and make sure you've eaten a good meal before your session.

Plan to change in your car – so bring a blanket to help with privacy!

Don't tan within 3 days of your session, and if you spray tan, go light. Tans make your skin look orange in photos, and flat/dirty.

We are going to ask to borrow your engagement ring, so make sure it's clean. We'll take a few ring shots with it, and give it right back.

It takes about 3 weeks to finish your engagement session photos, and up to 6 weeks in busy season. We try to shoot for less, but with the volume of sessions, we can't promise it.





# posing

The GSquared style is based in posing – even a lot of the moments that appear candid – so yes, we will pose you. We'll coach you into posing, and then ask questions to encourage interaction, laughs, smiles and more ... and then we'll click away.

While we love those candid moments, it's much harder to get them without some direction. We know you (ok, well, most of you) don't want those "cheesy" poses, so we won't do them unless you ask. ?

Another thing to keep in mind: the poses that feel the most weird make for the best photos, so if it feels awkward you probably look awesome.

And please – don't worry or stress that you'll look bad. We'll tell you where to put your hands, how to lean your head, to close or open your eyes, and all of that other great stuff that all of us seem to forget how to do on the spot.

We prefer to call it "Guided Posing". We want you to have fun. We'll probably ask you some questions, I may even give you some secret things to say to your partner that I know will get some smiles and laughs. We're kind of dorky, and I almost always hurt myself on a session. I promise you'll be smiling at the end of the shoot.



# bling & things



## **The Ring**

The only ring we will need at your engagement session is the engagement ring. As we've mentioned before, please make sure it's freshly cleaned. Every fingerprint, smudge and hair will show when we take photos of it.

## **Props**

The other "little thing" is props. If you want to include blankets, champagne, a picnic, signs, or anything like that - please know that you will need to bring those along with you. We don't work with anything like confetti, as it's not good for the environment, and we will need to clean up anything used, as we believe in Leave No Trace.









# fur babies

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tips



for



bringing



pets



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"Until one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened."

*Anatole France*





*Here's to love and laughter  
and happily ever after with  
your dog by your side.*

**Bring a neutral-colored leash & collar.**

Most of the locations we photograph at tend to be trafficked with other people and dogs. A leash is always a good idea to help you know where your pet is at all times. With a neutral colored leash & collar (black, gray, tan, or brown) it makes it easier to leave the leash on your pet for photos too.

**Bring a friend.**

Your pet won't need (or want) to be in every photo. Since engagement sessions usually only have one photographer present, it would be best to bring a friend or family member who can care for your pet while they're not being photographed. It's also best to plan only one outfit to be photographed in with your pet, so your friend can take your pet for a walk before or after you're in that outfit.

**Bring treats or a special toy that catches their attention.**

Since your pet doesn't know me, special treats or toys can help me get their attention without you needing to help. This can make photos easier to get, so you only have to worry about you.

**Bring bags to pick up after them.**

We are big fans of Leave No Trace and being courteous on the trail - and we know you are too! Not every location will have a garbage can, so be prepared for that, too.

**Know what to expect.**

The chances of your pet behaving perfectly are very small - and we don't expect that of them. While we might try to get a photo of your pet looking at the camera, most of them will be of your pet just being themselves.



# locations

CHOOSING THE PERFECT SPOT FOR YOUR ENGAGEMENT PHOTOS





# choosing a location



Deciding on a location for your engagement session can be both exciting and overwhelming. Don't overthink it - we can even get great photos in a parking lot!

We don't recommend that, though, so we will go over a few of our favorite locations in the next few pages. First let's start with a few idea sparks:

- Is there somewhere special to your relationship?
- Is there somewhere you've always wanted to go?
- Is there a specific look you want for your photos (mountains, trees, water, or city)?
- Is there a specific prop you want to use (like dirtbikes) that might require a certain location?
- Is the location open and easily accessible when you want to have photos done?





## deception pass

We love Deception Pass, and it's always our first suggestion for an engagement session location.

It's one of the most incredibly beautiful places that isn't too far off of the beaten path, doesn't require a ferry, and has plenty of parking any time of year.

It also has a great mix of beach, forest and PNW perfection you just can't beat. Closeby is Rosario Beach and Bowman Bay, so we can hit multiple locations and get multiple looks in one photo shoot.

We even have a favorite cove that seems to always be empty of others, even if the beach itself is full.

While our primary parking lot is often closed in winter, the lower beach stays accessible through the upper lot, so we don't have to limit where we work.



## gold creek pond

The perfect still water at Gold Creek Pond reflects the gorgeous peaks and forest all year long.

While this is primarily a spot we suggest in the spring/summer/fall, this spot is equally beautiful when it's filled with snow - although that hike is a bit longer and more treacherous as the spot gets snow early on in the season.

During the easy months, there is a large parking lot and the main view is an easy walk of 5 minutes on a paved path. There are forests and views all around the pond itself, and the path is fully paved with a few outcroppings.

It's a popular spot for photography, so it's not a place we recommend going on a summer weekend evening.

The light in the summer sets to the left of the pond and behind the treeline, so it's great for earlier than sunset evening sessions.









## forests

If you're seeking out a wooded look, we suggest:

Washington Arboretum

Farrel McWhirter Park

Centennial Trail

Nakashima Barn (this also offers great grass fields)

Meadowdale Beach Park (a long wooded trail with a long hike down to the beachfront - only recommended if you can hike uphill without strain)

Forest Park



## venues

Many venues in the area will rent out their space for sessions. Some of our favorites include:

Pemberton Farm

The Lookout Lodge

Marionfield Farm

Gray Bridge

Pine Creek Nursery

You can always check with your wedding venue if you'd like photos done there - many of them will allow you to use it for free for your engagement photos.









## waterfalls

We have some beautiful waterfalls in the PNW. These are spots I'd mostly recommend for summer engagement sessions as the rocks and hikes tend to get more precarious once wet season begins:

Franklin Falls

Cherry Creek Falls

Wallace Falls

Whatcom Falls

## lakes & rivers

Lake Fenwick

Lake Wilderness

The Pilchuck in Machias

Tipsoo Lake

Diablo Lake

Rattlesnake Lake (not the ledge)

## beaches

Iverson Beach

Dungeness Wildlife Reserve

Double Bluff Beach

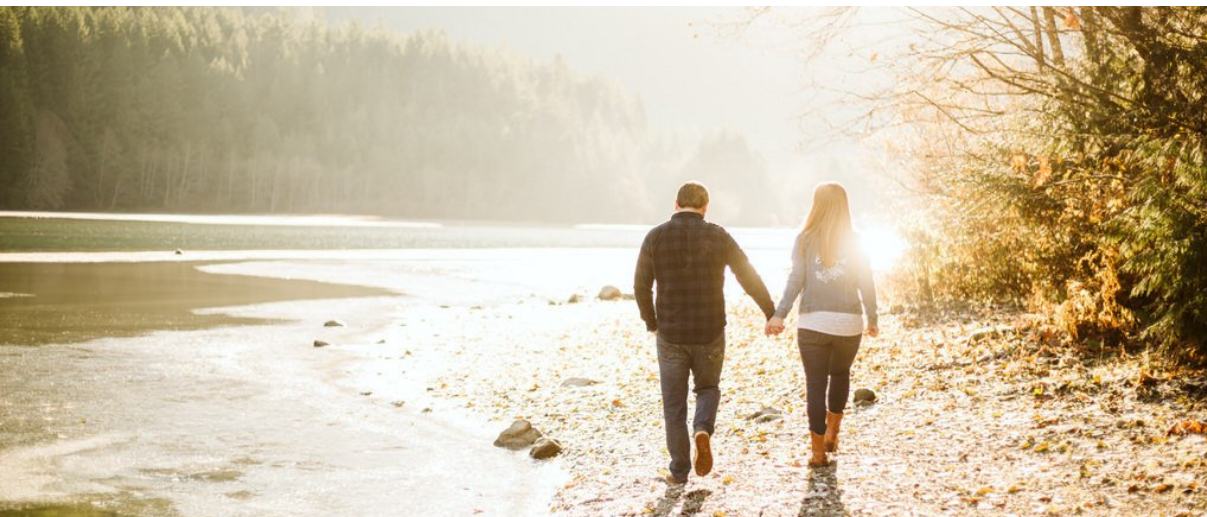
Discovery Park

Rosario Beach

Bowman Bay











### **Delivery of Images**

We usually post sneak peeks of your session on Facebook and Instagram within 48 hours. After that, it normally takes 2 to 3 weeks for your gallery to be completed and sent over to you in an email. Engagement session delivery is done via a digital download, and you can save the photos to your computer or device for easy sharing and printing. Your print release is already included in your wedding photography contract.

### **Where to Print Photos & Canvasses**

Locally, we highly recommend ordering prints & canvasses from Costco. If you would rather order online, we recommend MPix. We edit with both of these places in mind. While you can order prints from anywhere, keep in mind that places like Walmart, Walgreens, and Shutterfly aren't truly offering professional quality printing and your photos will likely come out muddy in color and orange/green tint.

### **Where to Order Save-the-Dates & Invitations**

Minted is our favorite location for your paper needs, and we highly recommend (and LOVE) their save-the-dates, invitations and full paper suites.

### **Where to Order Guest Books & Photo Books**

Our preferred print house for Photo & Guest Books is ZNO. Their quality is great and they have an easy to use design format with lots and lots of options! Sometimes we have discount codes, so ask us before you order.

























# GSQUARED WEDDINGS

PHOTOGRAPHY



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