



FOREGROUNDWEB

About page checklist for photographers

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS FOR CRAFTING AN
AMAZING "BIO" PAGE FOR YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY WEBSITE

Simple at first sight, there are a lot of details that go into building the perfect "bio" page. The process is quite challenging unless you have some guidelines in place.

You might have a hard time writing your bio because they're unfamiliar with your target audience, or because you're just starting out in the industry or in a particular niche and feel you have nothing interesting to write about.

Try following the simple process to get ideas and eventually build your About page:

1. Grab a notebook (or start a digital document) and gather all the pieces of copy that might be used in your bio

Don't worry about text length or quality for now. This is all about preparing a rough draft, about getting inspiration and brainstorming potential ideas.

In my experience with photo website, here are common things photographers put in their bio (depending on their experience level or personality):

Personal background (family, history, personal traits)

Here's an interesting example: *"I've always been a follow-your-heart-kind-of-gal. When I decided to pursue photography, I didn't exactly know where the journey would take me. A few years later, I still can't believe that I'm living out this dream. My happiness comes from slow mornings, new stamps on my passport, and foggy days by the ocean. I am inspired by light, music, travel, and vulnerability."*

Your location

Where you come from & where you live/work now, because many people go to the About page to look for the photographer's location. If you speak any other languages, those are relevant too.

What services can you offer to solve your clients' problems

Besides glimpses into your life, you should also write about your audience, about the benefits they get when working with you.

Even if you're just starting out, explain what services you plan to offer or what type of imagery people can find on your site.

If this is also the page where you list your services (instead of on a separate page), be sure to cover all the important stuff:

- consider addressing costs and/or how payment is handled
- explain how & where photo sessions take place
- how they can book your time or order something from you etc.

What your clients must absolutely know

- Where and how they can reach you
- Office hours
- What they need to bring to a photo session
- What services you don't offer

What's your motivation?

Why are you a photographer in the first place and what drives you to keep going?
Bonus points if you can explain why you chose your photography niche.

Anything that makes you unique as a human

Any character traits and personal skills that you think would be appealing to your audience: communication skills, temperament, sense of humor, decisiveness etc.

Examples:

- *"I am a feeler. I love creating images that tell stories. Because my photography is personal, the best photos are created when the connection between us goes beyond just needing a photographer for your wedding day."*
- *"uhh, so i like to have a good time. i'm quirky. i'm loud. i'm not a basic bitch. i'm Andria. i'm a photographer. a fiance. a workshop leader. a speaker. a vegan. I am not obsessed with photography. it is a part of who i am, just as much as my right arm or my leg is."*
- *"My greatest talents are the ability to mix with any class of people and to get nervous subjects to relax in front of my camera."*

What makes you unique as a photographer

There are probably many other photographers in your particular niche, so you need to try to stand out in some way. That's why it could be useful to write about things like:

- years of experience in your field
- preferred image look & editing style (colorful, vintage, dark, etc.)
- past projects that were out of the ordinary
- mentions in the press (magazines, blogs, podcasts, etc.)
- number of clients served
- photography awards
- any specific gear you use

If you really have little to no experience taking pictures, what sort of style of photography are you most attracted to?

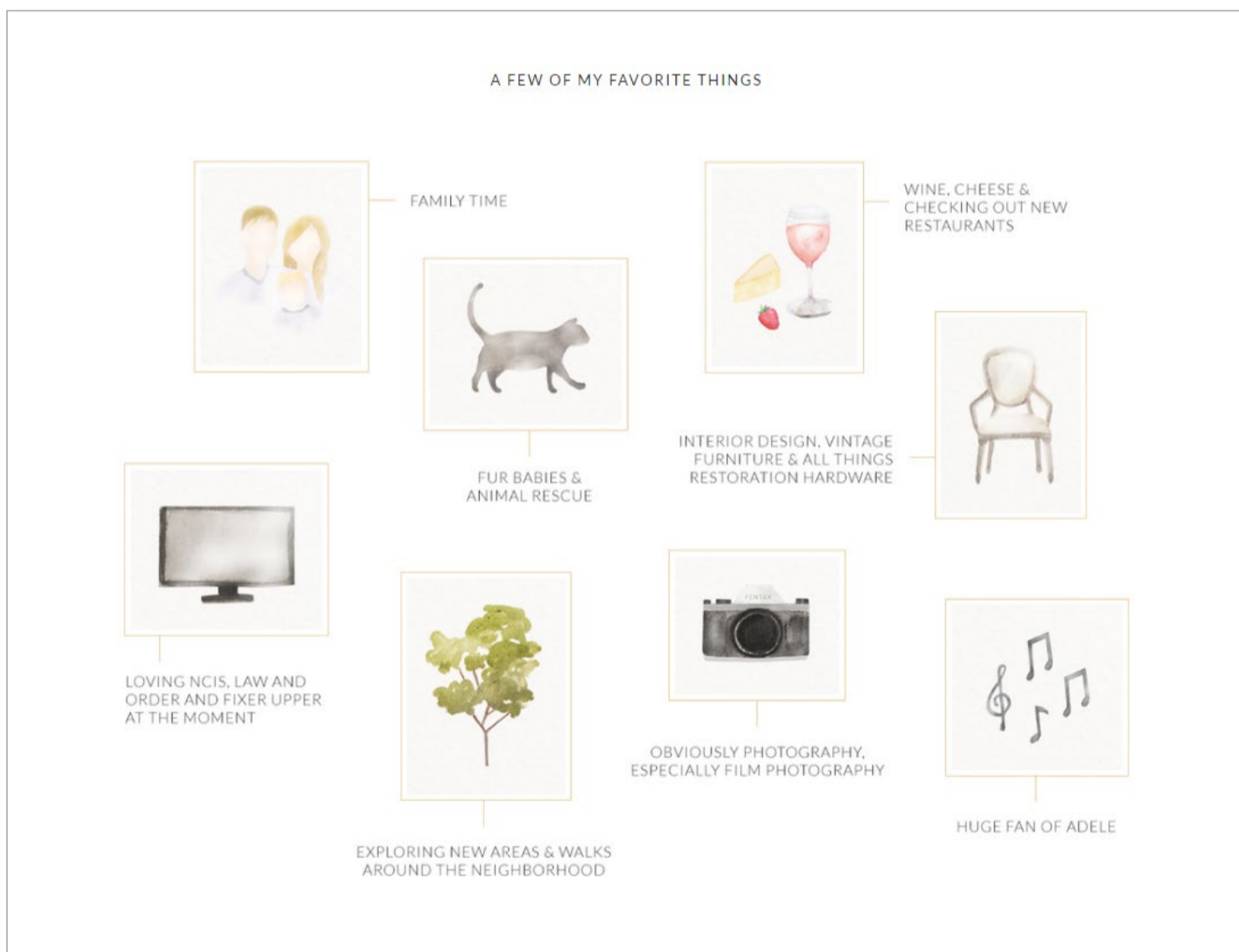
What you're actively learning

This is important. Showing people what you're still struggling can convey honesty & authenticity.

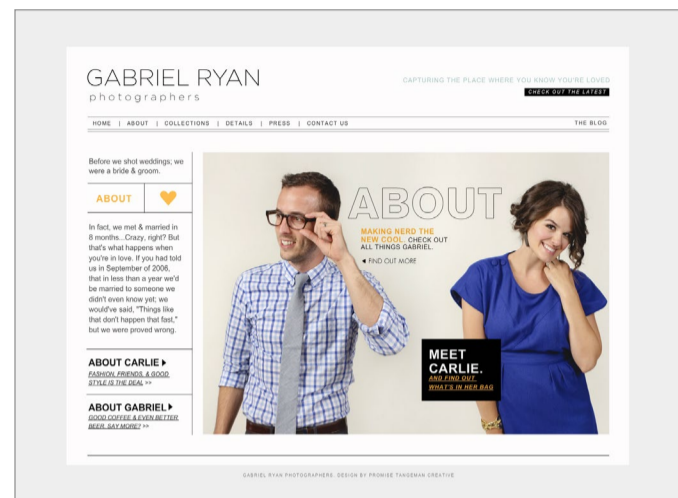
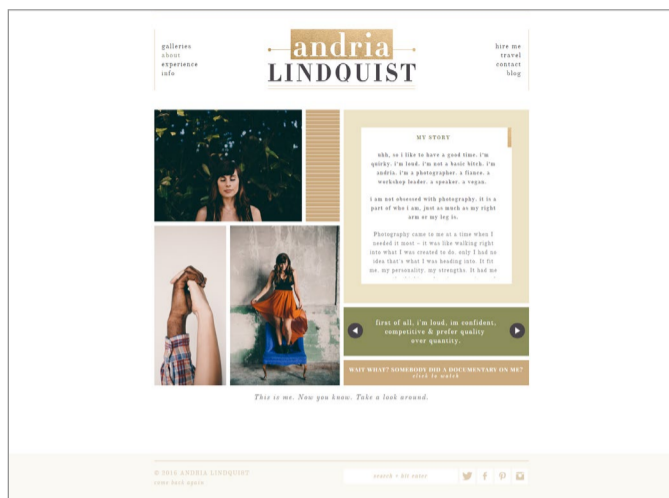
But don't just like out what you're not good at. Frame it in a way where you're showing progress and enthusiasm. Let people know that you're still actively learning, that you're confidently investing time & effort into your work.

List out your personal favorite things

Here's a lovely [example](#) for your inspiration:



Or prepare some fun facts about yourself ([example](#)) or prepare a more interactive About page ([example](#)).



Setting a funnier mood is great, but beware of crossing the border into unprofessional. You have to make things discreet and elegant too, you don't want to appear amateurish.

Memberships, associations, client lists, interviews

If you have them, don't forget to leverage these things, you've earned them!

If you're just starting out and don't have a client list to brag about, don't worry about it, revisit this idea after some time. Sounding confident and user-focused is always more important anyway.

Examples

- <https://www.zackarias.com/about/>
- <http://www.gailwerner.com/bio/>
- <https://www.jeremycowart.com/about/>
- <http://www.ishootshows.com/about/>
- <https://peterhurley.com/about>
- <http://www.nickhallphotography.com/about>

If this is a business/agency website (with a team of people), a list of member profiles ([example](#)) and a strong client roster ([example](#)) are obviously helpful.

- <https://www.alpsinsight.com/about-us/>
- <https://www.whitedoor.co.nz/about/index>

Testimonials

Conveying trust on your site is critical, especially in this age when everybody is fighting for the user's attention.

Testimonials (relevant quotes from happy clients) and social media counts (number of re-tweets, likes, shares, etc.) are the main ways to display social proof.

They help answer the all-important "WHY?" question for visitors, reducing any anxiety they have in working with you.

To make them more honest and convincing, testimonials should include, besides the quotes themselves, the name, portrait & job title of those people. Optional items are their location and a link to their site.

Besides the About page (where they're a natural fit), testimonials also work well on pages where you display and sell your services, or where you talk about your prices!

Social media profile links

People should get to know you better, right?

Then, by all means, let users follow you on any social media outlets you use, by including links to your respective profiles.

Use a bio generator

If you're really short on time, you can buy and use the About Me page generators here: <http://kickassphotographers.com/shop/>

I'm not a big fan of such generators, because you still end up with "boilerplate" text that hundreds of other photographers use. And you're restricted to what they included in their generator template.

Important: you can use a generator like this as a starting point (if you feel it's worth the money), but I still recommend going through this entire lesson to gather more elements you can include on your About page.

So if we step back and look at the “big picture”, the most important thing is to accurately transmit your passion and your personality. Visitors (readers, clients, photo buyers, etc.) need to really see what you’re focused on, what drives your creativity.

Even if you don’t have accolades/awards to list out, crafting a fascinating bio (that’s honest and true to yourself) can be a lot more powerful than a “sterile” list of achievements. So focus on that. **Show people what makes you unique, what you can do well, and they’ll trust you. That’s the purpose of the About page anyway.**

2. Now edit down your bio into something coherent and reasonably-short

First, let's get a birds-eye view. The bio must satisfy at least two types of visitors:

- buyers and companies who scan the page for your skills, accomplishments, location, and generally just looking for facts
- other people looking for a personal connection, reading your history, wanting to see portraits/photos, looking for inspiration

Your (difficult) job is to try to address both audiences in a clear and concise manner, while removing the superfluous.

Editing down a piece of text is often more difficult & time-consuming than writing the first draft. So be prepared to put in the effort.

Length of text

In most cases, a few paragraphs are enough for your bio, this is not the place to go in-depth about your childhood.

If you think a longer and more detailed bio would be relevant, you can place that on a separate page or blog post and link to it from the About page.

Most of the times though, you're saying more by saying less.

For every paragraph of text, you came up with, think: "Is this relevant to my target audience? Does it put me in a good light?" If not, scrap it.

Examples of short-and-to-the-point About pages:

- <https://kettermanphotography.com/About/>
- <https://gracechon.com/about/>
- <https://forestwoodward.com/INFO/>
- <http://www.alvaroleiva.com/info>
- <https://stephaniediani.com/About/Bio/>

First person or third person?

The About page aims to build trust and get people to know you better. You're making things difficult if you're speaking about yourself in the third person.

First-person writing always sounds more honest and humble.

Intro paragraph

The first paragraph is of critical importance. Imagine people that only read this first paragraph and then they move on to another page. What will they learn about you just from these first few sentences?

You get bonus points if you dedicate your opening sentence to your audience's challenges & objectives! This shows them that you care about their needs, that you acknowledge their struggles.

And then state the critical facts!

Quickly explain what, where and how you do your work.

Your intro paragraph basically becomes your photographer elevator pitch, a few sentences describing your target audience and what you're all about, making visitors resonate with you and what you stand for.

If you begin the page directly with "I was born in... and then I went to college in...", people might already feel sleepy :-)

And don't start with "*Hello, I'm John Doe and I...*", that's too cliché.

Your personality

Remember that **you're writing this for humans, not for search engines** in particular. Or at least that's what you should be doing. So it helps to be friendly, confident and clear, showcasing all the communication skills you use when talking to someone face-to-face.

Inside the text, it's usually a good idea to also include some humor, to show your personality in some way: you don't have to go at-length about your personal life, but a few glimpses into your personal preferences would be nice.

And beware of the invisible line between being funny and being condescending. Get feedback from some close friends.

Here's a brilliantly written About page, full of humor and honesty:

<https://www.swirltography.com/about-shirlz-sunshine-coast-pet-photographer/>

The traits and attitude that buyers are looking for

“Attitude is king. Obviously, their talent and ability to take the picture is a necessity, but a photographer’s attitude and personality go a long way. He or she could take amazing images, but if they aren’t fun to work with, I bet I could find someone to replace them.”

- Photo Editor, Editorial Publication (anonymized) - PhotoShelter 2013 survey “What buyers want”

In the same survey, here are the photographer traits that photo buyers most often mentioned: ***Flexible, Receptive to criticism, Committed, Professional, Creative, Collaborative, Fast, Sharp and fully understand the brief, Experts, Open-minded, Humble, Attentive to detail, A problem solver, Able to stay within budget***

And avoid things that buyers don't like: photographers who are: ***Disrespectful, Late and miss deadlines, In a bad mood, “Divas”, Poor listeners, Unable to collaborate, Unprepared, Unprofessional, Unskilled in their art and technical ability, Unable to manage their time well, A “clock-watcher”***

See how many of them you can convey in your writing, while still being honest.

Tone of voice

If your site is full of business copy, people won't relate to your message. Unless you want to reach out to corporate clients – for which it's critical to understand your target audience – being more personal in your writing is a great way to convey trust, to be relatable.

Even if you're very successful, don't brag too much, people can sense that from miles away. Just like talking to a person, you sound arrogant when only boasting about your qualities.

Don't be afraid to show your vulnerable side (you've already seen [Brené Brown's TED talk](#), haven't you?), people relate to that and trust you more.

That's not to say you don't want to convey confidence. Definitely talk about your skills and experience, if they're relevant to your website visitors, but say it all in a friendly and humble manner, while always showing a desire to keep improving.

There's a fine line between confidence and arrogance, so do consider hiring a professional copywriter to help you with your site.

Besides showcasing your achievements and skills, try to also **write about your struggles, about something you're still actively learning**. Clients and photo buyers like to see confidence, progress, and enthusiasm, instead of just self-praise.

Spelling / grammar / semantics

Too many people have writing errors on their site. Due to not being a native English speaker, or out of simple negligence, mistakes fall through the cracks.

You should always double check all your texts and even get someone else to proof-read your content. Then check again, Users are quick to notice mistakes, and they lose trust once they spot too many writing errors, they get put off by the apparent lack of care. This is even more valid today when you have a very short amount of time to create a good impression, surrounded by fierce competition.

3. After the bio text is ready, prepare a good self-portrait

I couldn't have said it better than Jasmine Star did on her excellent [blog post](#) titled "The Importance of a bio photo on a website":

"Studies have shown that humans create trust, firstly, on a visual level. We initially study a person's eyes, then judge his/her overall demeanor. Because a business is largely researched on the web, the best thing a business owner can do is create a peripheral layer of trust in a short amount of time. A photo does this in spades."

Great, so a nice self-portrait can create a lasting impression in visitors' minds and make your site more trustworthy, more personable.

The general rule of thumb is to be smiling in the portrait (unless you're trying to be more creative).

Without a portrait, people can't usually relate to you or your work. It's like entirely avoiding eye contact when meeting face-to-face, it sends out a bad message.

And don't forget to use a professional looking image. I'm not saying it should be sober, just that it's technically well shot. You can't present yourself as a professional photographer with an amateurish portrait shot with a phone.

The photo should be a recent one, by the way. Showing a portrait from 10-20 years ago is a little misleading, right?

You have to get comfortable in front of the camera as well, not just behind it. (An image of you hiding behind your own camera is not an option either, it should clearly show your face).

Getting a strong portrait image is worth the effort, you can then also use it for social media profiles, email accounts, marketing materials, interviews, etc.

4. Build the actual page on your site

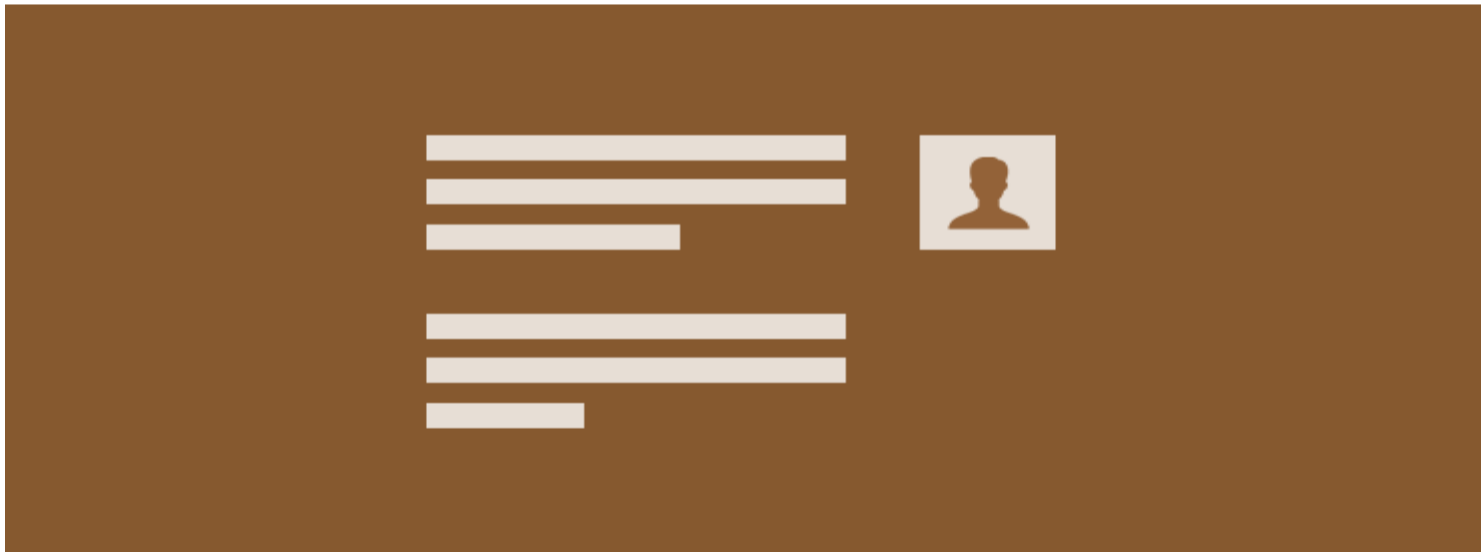
Title of the page

When users reach this page, what do they see at the top? Don't just leave the title "About" or "Bio", people already know they're on that page, they clicked on the navigation link to get there.

Try to get more personal than just *"About John Doe Photography"*, and say something more conversational (*"Welcome to..."*, *"Who we are"*, *"Meet John Doe"*, etc.)

Page layout

Depending on the amount of text you end up with, and the other elements you want to include (images, client logos, award or membership badges, etc.), you might want to use multiple columns.



From something simple like these:

- <http://kupfermanphoto.com/about/>
- <http://www.stevegreerphotography.com/about/>

... to more complex/rich layouts like these:

- <https://www.keanou.nc/a-propos/>
- <https://www.gublerphotography.com/about/>
- <https://www.alaskaphotographics.com/patrick-endres/>
- <http://www.schultzphoto.com/about-contact/>
- <https://www.samanthaohlsenphotography.com.au/about/>

Navigation item

Make the About page prominent in your navigation menu (instead of hiding it in a dropdown somewhere), and call it something straightforward like “Bio” or “About” or “About [name]”. If you’re a group/agency, “About Us” is more appropriate.

Any other “creative” wording only creates more confusion (More info, Learn more, Meet [name], Hello, Who we are, Experience, Skills, History)

As for its position in the menu, it usually sits second (after “Home”) or penultimate (before “Contact” which should be last).

SEO title and meta description

While the “About” page very rarely shows up in search results on its own (unless directly searched for), you still have to give Google something to “chew” on.

Keep the title simple. Something like “About John Doe | City | Business name” or “John Doe bio | Photography specialty”

As for the meta description, aim for a one-sentence summary of you as a photographer, ideally also including your photography specialty and location in it. Inspiration: *“Biography of award-winning Canadian photographer John Doe, specializing in this-and-that photography.”*

A ton more SEO tips here:



5. (Celebrate and) ask for feedback

After reading it out loud (which is a great way to find errors), ask a few trusted friends & colleagues to review your new About page and point out any issues.

Takeaways

Don't neglect the importance of your site's "About" page. It's often the second most visited page for photographers (after the Homepage of course).

Always have a good self-portrait on the page, write a clear and concise bio, and don't forget a prominent call-to-action. *And drop the "keyword-stuffing" language and write in a natural voice, visitors and Google will thank you in the long run.*

Armed with all this knowledge, and having seen what other [successful photographers](#) are doing on their "About" page, it's time for you to revisit your own site with fresh eyes.

How can you improve your page to convey more trust and showcase your true personality & experience?

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