

# FINDING FOCUS

A WORKBOOK



IDENTIFY YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY STYLE AND  
SELECT A NICHE MARKET



# DISCOVER YOUR STYLE

Defining your style can be tough, and deciding where to focus your efforts, an even greater task! This workbook was designed to walk you through a series of questions and get you thinking about your photographic style and what you love most. When you're finished, you should have a clear idea of your style.

I hope you find this helpful!

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**FINE ART AND PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHER**

1) What Inspires me? (For me, it's the great renaissance and Dutch painters, the human form, and dark tones.)

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2) If I tried to define my style, I would say it's...? (For me, it's classic, poised, detail oriented and emotive.)

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3) When I'm shooting, what things do I dislike? (For me, it's obtaining permits and permissions, bugs, excessive temperatures and chaos.)

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4) When I'm shooting, what things do I like? (For me, it's a calm atmosphere, with great music, being able to take my time and craft my session.)

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5) Do I prefer ever-changing scenery or consistency in my environment? (This one is tricky, for me it's both. As long as I can maintain control, I like to explore, but with clients, I prefer consistency. It's okay if you like both as well, determine which you prefer with your clients.)

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6) What is my ideal photo? (For me, it's an emotive portrait, a character study with darker tones and perfected details.)

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7) Who is my ideal client? (For me, it's a woman in her mid-twenties to fifties, who honors tradition and wants to display a beautiful image of her family or children on her walls. She intends to leave it up for decades and considers it an heirloom. She hires an interior designer when designing her home, or takes great interest in the design herself and wants no detail overlooked.)

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I'm sure you have heard of an elevator pitch. It's a brief introduction of who you are and what you do but crafted to be specific to a prospective client. I've come up with what I like to call an "Identity Statement." I think finding out who you are is an important step towards selling your elevator pitch. Let's come up with your Identity Statement.

Look at questions 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6. Circle the word that stands out most to you. After you have finished, write these words below.

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Form an Identity Statement for yourself using these words. (Mine is, I love to craft an emotive and detail oriented portrait with darker tones.)

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Take a look at some specific and less specific genres on the next few pages and see if you find the one that most closely matches your identity statement and you may just have a great starting point to finding your perfect photography niche.



*The following is a general listing of niche markets and a few of my personal thoughts from my experience. Niche photography is as vast as the variety of snowflakes. You may find that a niche encompasses a completely different aspect of your experience, but I wanted to offer a jumping off point.*

### **Less Specific**

**Portrait:** Location can be anywhere, the subject can be any age. Includes pet photography

**Event:** Your event is constantly changing and you are always meeting new people. You can interact on your own level. You may choose to be a distant observer, or up close capturing moments.

**Volume:** Dance, Schools, Sports. You are working with a small variety of client types, often technical knowledge is not the most important part, but must have lights and a knowledge of working with many people and posing. Much of the volume business is business, and creativity isn't quite as important as with some other genres.

**Studio:** Controlled environment, same location for most shoots

**Location:** Shoot in your clients' atmosphere, outdoor or inside, your surroundings are constantly changing.

**Natural Light:** Often light and airy, using no artificial light

**Event:** Great variety of environments, often a speedlight or OCF is required. The opportunity to meet and network with many people.

**Commercial:** This genre had a broad reach. Any photography intended to be used in a commercial manner falls into this genre. Product photography, editorials, and fashion can be encompassed by this umbrella. The genre is very controlled and not often candid.

**Family:** A family photographer can encompass families and children at any stage. Often, you are photographing groups and they can be candid or posed.

### **More Specific**

**Wedding:** You capture people experiencing joy. They are beaming and beautiful from the inside out. Lots of subjects, changing environments, natural light or strobes, indoors or out. Opportunity for candid posed and photojournalistic images

**Senior:** On-trend, often incorporates interests, sports. This genre is ever changing and you need to be on top of your game. Single subject and they usually follow directions well.

**Newborn:** Lifestyle or posed, usually in controlled environments. Patience is required, but they are the sweetest!

**Fashion:** Typically involving studio lighting, skin retouching needs to be on point, often emotive and attractive.

**Fine Art:** In my opinion, this is one of the most creative genres. You have free reign. If creativity is your thing, you may want to head this way. Subjects can vary greatly, locations are open for your picking as well, the sky's the limit!

**Sports:** Usually edgy and on trend. Studio lighting is often employed to emphasize contrast, muscles, and sweat. Sports and the Senior market will regularly overlap.

**Dance:** This can from a volume or a portrait premise. These images can be very emotive or energetic. Studio or location are both viable.

**Pet:** If you love animals, your passion may align with pet photography. You treat these as you would portraits and choose natural light or studio light.

**Real Estate:** More technical than other genres, you should understand studio lighting and bracketing. Depending on the scope, you may want a good sense of photoshop and compositing as well. Often working solo, you don't have to interact with your subject more than fluffing some pillows.

**Landscape and Wildlife:** You rarely deal with other people. If you love the outdoors, this is a great fit. Patience is necessary, but you get to enjoy the beauty that God gave us all around.

The thing about a niche that's pretty cool? You can be as precise as you like. Choose a less specific niche, and narrow it down from there. The more specific your niche becomes, the easier it will be to market yourself and you will create a reputation for your brand.

**Take what you've just learned and create your elevator pitch. If someone walked up to you and introduced themselves and asked what it is you do, this is what you would respond with. Its purpose is to be distinct and precise and set you apart from the competition by letting your audience know EXACTLY what it is that you specialize in, what you sell and who you sell to. Reference back to your questions to help you with this, specifically your target client.**

"Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ . I am a  
 photographer specializing in \_\_\_\_\_  
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