

Tips for Taking Reference Pictures

It's very important to have high quality reference photos. The quality of your pet's portrait dependent on your photos: the clearer the images I have to work from, the better the portrait I am able to produce.

The photograph has to be clear, up close, and of a pose that is typical of your pet. Please send me multiple pictures as well.

Lighting

- The best possible lighting is achieved outside in natural light. Avoid direct sunlight as this will make your pet squint, create dark shadows on the face, hide important features, and discolor the fur. If the sun is out, put your pet in the shade and stand with your back to the sun.
- The perfect lighting is a bright but overcast day. Again, stand with your back to where the sun would be if it were out.
- If taking a picture outdoors is just not possible, try posing your pet next to a window with the light coming from the side. Morning light is best.

Position

- Photograph your pet at their level. **Photos pointing down don't look right.** Position yourself right down on the floor: if need be lay down.
- Avoid straight on or completely side view shots: slightly angled poses make better portraits. Have someone next to you draw your pet's attention by holding a favorite toy or treat directly over your shoulder, near the camera.
- If your pet won't hold still and / or is small enough, have someone hold them in place - being careful NOT to cover up major markings or body parts. I can leave the hands and arms out of the painting.
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Personality

- Try to capture the personality of your pet. Give them time to get comfortable and have an extra person there to focus the attention with a toy or treat to the direction of the camera.