



There were many clients who were happy to pay a lower fee knowing they were getting a beginner.

It's also a great idea to pick a dream price point for yourself, and in the beginning inform your clients it is 50% off (or more). That way your clients will know what your eventual pricing will be, but they are getting the introductory price.

To find out if you are ready to start charging, answer these questions for yourself:

- Do you have people that love your images?
- Are they asking you to take their photos?
- Do you get good feedback from your images when you post them on Social Media?
- Have you ever submitted photos to a group for the purpose of getting feedback?
(If not, you may want to consider it.)

Find some friends that will be honest with you and ask them what they think. When you have people praising you and wanting you to photograph them, then it's a good sign that you can start charging.



FROM AMY: When I started my business, I knew my pictures were ok, but I also knew I needed to get them to a professional level as fast as I could. I took a portion of every dollar I brought in to invest in my education and spent it wisely by taking online classes, participating in forums, buying and reading photography books, and upgrading my equipment along the way. It was a big sacrifice of not just my money, but my time. I remember staying up way past my bedtime for months and months taking the time to learn through the internet. It really paid off. My skills grew quickly and so did my reputation as a photographer. As a result of gaining better skills, I was able to raise my prices dramatically in a short time.



FROM KRISTEN: I started charging \$50 for my first session, and I was shooting film! I made a profit of about \$20, and at the time, I was thrilled! Looking back, I made about \$5 an hour, if that! I slowly raised prices, as I became comfortable with my camera, and my work. I eventually got to the point where I was charging more than my frugal self would pay for a trade, but also felt I wanted to charge that in order to compensate my time. It was an interesting thing to come to terms with, but it felt right. I've changed my pricing structure so many times, but I went from film to digital to print packages to digital packages. Times changed, and so did I!

Here are some concepts we feel that are necessary to master your skill set as a photographer. If you don't feel like you totally understand these, then we suggest that you find a way to learn them as soon as you can.

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| • Lighting | • How to shoot creatively | • Exposure |
| • Clarity and Focus | • Lenses: which are best for what? | • Post processing |
| • Rules of Composition | • White Balance | • Posing (for your subject like babies, families, etc.) |
| • How to shoot in manual mode | | |