

rick boern

PHOTOGRAPHY

Tips + Directions
50 Dedham Ave Needham MA

But first, I have a huge favor to ask

I have asthma and allergies, so please do not spritz perfume the day of your session. I promise you that coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath will absolutely dampen my creativity. Please be sure to remind everyone in your group coming to the studio of this request. If someone comes in wearing strong perfume they will likely be asked to reschedule for a different day. Thanks in advance for your consideration.

Parking

Unless you have a secret desire to be towed DO NOT PARK BEHIND MY BUILDING. Those spots are monitored by a private security company who are remarkably efficient at enforcing violations.



However, you can park just steps from the studio. See green areas on map above. Both areas highlighted in green are free 2-hour parking lots. There are even two free EV charging spots available in lot behind CVS.

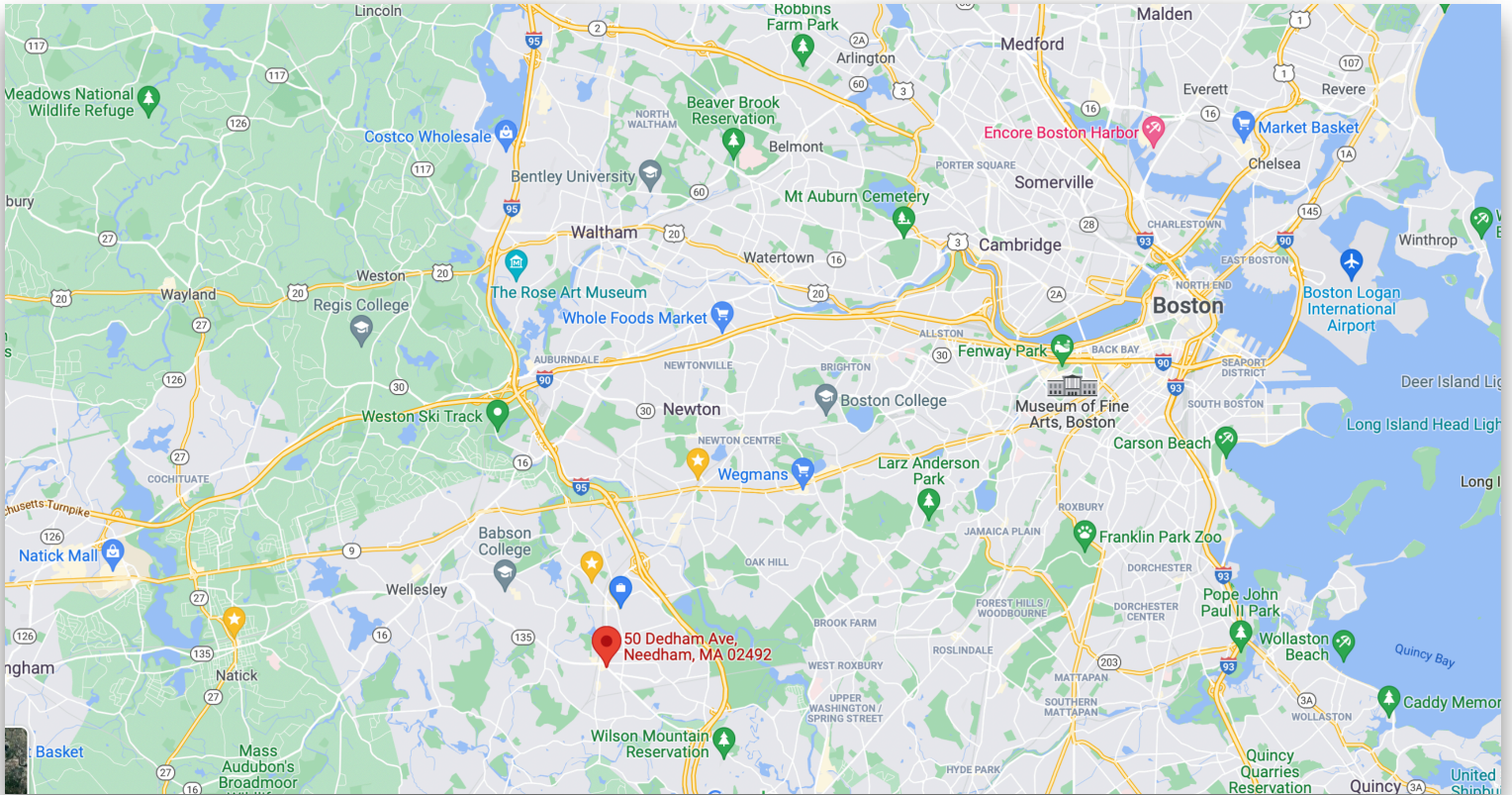
Where is the studio located?

We are in the heart of Needham Center, about a block from where Great Plain meets Dedham Ave. The address is [50 Dedham Ave, Needham, MA 02492](https://www.google.com/maps/place/50+Dedham+Ave,+Needham,+MA+02492). You will see the number 50 at our door.

See the photo below. Use the entrance under the awning with my name on it. The other door is the lobby to the residences and will not take you to the studio.



We are located 30 minutes from downtown Boston



Here's a close-up of Needham Center. Grab lunch after the shoot at The Farmhouse, Little Spoon, Hearth Pizzeria, Sweet Basil, Masala Art, Needham Pizza, Latina, French Press Cafe or Cook!



What should I wear?

I get this question a lot. My best advice is to be true to your sense of style, but bring options just in case. If you consider yourself a fashionista, disregard my advice and simply scroll down to the next question.

For everyone else, bring as many outfits to the studio with you as you can carry or roll. The more, the better. Pack something black, something grey, and something that makes you look and feel like a rock star.

Men taking executive headshots should avoid collars with buttons, mainly because I personally don't like collars with buttons. It's not a crisp look and although you don't know me you can trust me. Crisp good, wrinkled bad. If you don't have a decent business shirt that fits to your current physique, feel free to use your headshot as an excuse to get a new one.

Be sure to take everything you plan to wear to the dry cleaner, get a haircut about a week before the shoot, go to bed early the night before, drink lots of water. If you need guidance with your wardrobe, visit [Simon and Sons](#) on Needham Street and ask for Paul. Tell him you have a headshot with me and let him do his thing.

Broadly speaking, individuals with pale skin tones should avoid wearing white business shirts, especially in New England during the winter. Light blue is a better choice. If you have darker skin tones or if you just returned from vacation, a white shirt would be great. But as I said at the start, be true to yourself and your sense of style. You do you. Bring choices because I have opinions and I'm here to help...whether you ask for it or not.

It's also a good rule of thumb to stick to solid colors. Busy patterns, designs, logos, and graphics are distracting. A great portrait leads the audience to the individual, not to their choice of clothing.

And even though I just said solids are best, there truly are no rules! I photographed a family who wore various colored plaid shirts (and although we were laughing at the time) the images turned out great once we converted it to black and white. It actually worked. Rules are meant to be broken, so bring options.

Finally, consider where the images will land and who the audience will be. Is this going on your company's website? How is everyone else dressed? Are you new to the job market? Do some research and see what others in your field are wearing. Research the competition. Bring everything. Suitcases welcome.

Women taking executive headshots should bring their best outfits to meet top clients. Something conservative with a jacket, something long sleeved, be careful that the material isn't too shiny, yes to subtle jewelry (unless going big is your thing). Bring clothing that makes you feel good and if that doesn't nail it, bring something black, something gray, something blue, something fun! Be aware of bringing different necklines. Long sleeves are better than sleeveless because of the cropping but if you have insane arms from being in the gym all year and you want to show them off in your headshot, let's do it! I cannot stress this enough, bring options.

For families and groups, or if there's going to be more than one person in the shot, I suggest trying to make sure the colors worn are similar in appearance. Ask yourself if the clothes share a similar value, which is defined as the relative lightness or darkness of a color. If the photo were shot in black and white, all clothing would look similarly light or dark. Another way to gauge the value of color is to squint your eyes. The goal is to not have one item of clothing overpower another, we want to have balance, and to not have any person or item of clothing become the focal point of the image.

I could go on and on but hopefully you got the point to bring a range of outfits, be true to yourself and your brand, go shopping if you need to, and definitely be ready to have some fun.

Should I take off my glasses? Will there be glare or reflection?

If glasses are not a dominant part of someone's appearance they can certainly be left out. Glasses create glare that may or may not be fixable in post-production, but don't let that stop you from keeping them on if you wear them all the time. If it's possible to easily pop out the lenses and just wear the frames, then great. But only do it if you know you can put them back in!

Finally, be sure your glasses are super clean and I will do my best with the lighting to reduce the glare. I have spray cleanser a microfiber cloth for any last minute smudges.

Should I get a haircut before my portrait?

If you need a haircut, try to get one a week before your portrait. This assures your hair is neatly groomed, but has "settled" from being freshly cut.

Do you recommend anything in particular as far as hair and makeup for women?

Long hair is beautiful, but stray hair in the face is not. If you're working with one of my stylists, they provide all the hair spray and other beauty products so you don't need to bring anything at all.

If you choose to do your own makeup, cover any blemishes as you normally would. Do not assume that you need excessive powder or cover-up as you may have seen in the movies or on news anchors. Poorly done makeup is noticeable with the camera equipment I use.

The general rule of thumb is “just slightly more than usual.”

Do you have a hair and makeup artist available?

Yes. I’ve spent years cultivating some of Boston’s best professional on-site hair and makeup artists who I cannot recommend highly enough. The goal of using a professional is to create a natural yet *finished* look. Plan to reserve an appointment well in advance as schedules are typically tight and it may be a few weeks. If you need something done on short notice, it is best to email or call me directly if you don’t see anything online.

Depending on the type of shoot, allow approximately 2 hours for hair and makeup and your photo session combined. My artists can create a natural look or NYC fashion runway model. Or both in the same session if we have prior warning. Whatever you need they can do. They all work on national ad campaigns, celebrity shoots, and take care of high net worth individuals all the time. They have assisted me with thousands of headshots and family portraits at my studio and on-location over the past 15+ years.

As a rule, men don’t typically require a lot of makeup but if you know you have shiny skin or you just want a little help, let us know. We can either schedule a full session for you, or we can fit you in before a female client. We can quickly apply a light powder and then remove it after the session is complete.

How do women prepare for the hair/makeup artist?

Arrive at the studio with clean, dry, manageable hair and a clean face. Feel free to bring a separate set of clothes when sitting in the makeup chair and be a few minutes early as we normally schedule a full day of back to back appointments with our artists.

What about nose hair?

I can't tell you how happy I am that you asked me about nose hair! I use one of the world's leading high resolution cameras that reveal every tiny little detail inside your anterior nasal passage. Isn't that awesome?

If I had a penny for how many times I was asked to remove nose hair in photoshop, I'd be a wealthy man. Instead, go on Amazon, invest \$11 in a nose hair trimmer and get busy. Yes this goes for you ladies as well. And while you're holding the buzzer in your hand, feel free to go on the hunt for other rogue facial hair. I guarantee your partner or future partner will thank you for it. And you're welcome.

What time should I arrive for my session?

It was the great Vince Lombardi who famously said:

"If you are 5 minutes early, you are 10 minutes late"

Arriving five minutes late to your session leaves everyone else feeling rushed. The team schedules clients back to back all day long, so please be considerate of the people who follow your appointment. Leave enough time to find the building, use the restroom, get changed, etc. I recommend arriving 10 minutes before your scheduled session. There's no need to arrive more than 10 minutes early, or you might end up waiting on me. All missed appointments without 24 hour notice are billed the full session fee.

Can I take pictures during a session?

Although it should go without saying, please do not take photographs during the session without permission. Not only could you inadvertently set off studio lights, you could distract someone or ruin a shot we are in the middle of creating.



I always shoot tethered to a computer in the studio and images pop up on the screen every few moments. Those images on the screen are protected by copyright. Unauthorized capture taken with any camera, even an iPhone, is in direct violation of copyright protection laws and would be the basis of a lawsuit. That is the official way of saying please ask me before taking any photos of the computer screen or studio with your iPhone. In this case it would be much better to ask for *permission* than forgiveness.

Can I post my images on Social Media?

Absolutely. Follow me on Instagram, friend me on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn. If you want to post your final edited images online that's awesome. Please tag me, say something nice, and write "photo credit: Rick Bern" when you do. :)

How many photos will we get to see?

I typically shoot 70-80 images per hour and select the top 40 for you to

choose from. I'll have more images to show with larger extended family sessions, far fewer to share following time spent with your pet hamster. When shooting headshots I try to help the client directly after the shoot to make selections so we can cut turnaround times down and get the images online as fast as possible. For family portraits, we meet back at the studio on a later date when you can view images in a 30 minute presentation.

If we schedule a family or group portrait, will you take photos of each individual plus various combinations?

Yes, your family portrait will include as many combinations as we can do during a one hour session.

What information should I provide you before the day of the shoot?

Before our headshot session take a moment to consider what you want to accomplish from the shoot:

Are you boosting your LinkedIn profile to get back into the workforce or are we doing a full rebrand with a new role or career?

Did you just get promoted from within the ranks or are you a new face to the organization who needs to win over the hearts and minds of thousands of new employees?

Is your company a start-up that is about to go public? Is there a new website about to launch? Or has this company been around for 30 years?

Will you need a conservative look for your website and a few casual shots for speaking engagements? Or vice versa?

Who is your target audience and what are we communicating to them about who you are?

For a family portrait session ask yourself what will make you the happiest in the end. Before we meet, send me a picture of the walls where you want to hang the portrait.

Do you prefer formal, relaxed, casual, playful, spontaneous, natural family pics? Discuss ideas with me before the session so I get a sense for what style you like and dislike.

I really do love when clients email pictures. Images of past portraits help me understand your taste in frames. The more information you can offer the better, the more involved in the process the better, and in the end you will get what you love.

Are you comfortable photographing children and pets?

As the father of two young boys and an Australian Labradoodle, I am *completely* at home photographing kids and pets. In a former life I was a clinical social worker and in the context of family portraits I promise you this training comes in quite handy.

The secret is that these are not my children or my pets, so I am able to resist the temptation to bargain, beg, bribe, and over-promise to get what I want. I am simply there in pursuit of the ever elusive authentic expression so I ask that you let me do my job. If I need help (which I sometimes do) you will hear me ask for it. Trust me, I am not shy.



Bottom line: The more comfortable the kids (or pets) feel, the better the expressions will be.

How should I prepare my pet for a pet photo session?

Be sure your pet is well groomed, well exercised, well-hydrated. Please do not come to the studio to brush your dog and give them water. Do that before you leave the house so we are ready to go when you arrive.

Please keep in mind I have asthma, so dog hair flying through the studio is a problem. Schedule a grooming the morning of the shoot and plan to come directly from that appointment to the studio. This will minimize the hair issue. Heavy shedders or high strung animals are likely best captured outdoors.

Feel free to bring your pet's favorite snack to the session in a sealed baggie without the animal's knowledge. Hand it to me quietly when you arrive. Always be sure to enter the studio quietly and with a calm tone to keep your animal calm. If your dog is high energy or anxious, please schedule your session late in the day to allow for them to exercise. Also leave enough time for them to settle down afterward and reach a calm state before walking into the studio.

What can I do to help when you photograph my child or pet?

During the session, I ask parents and pet owners to remain quiet and let me do my thing. We all want your kids and pets to feel comfortable and act natural. Please read my thoughts on Parental Cheerleading below.

A few words about "Parental Cheerleading" and "Say Cheeeeeese!!"

This should come as no surprise but prompting kids to "Say Cheese" or "Smile for the Camera" will definitely NOT produce a genuine expression. If it worked, professional photographers worldwide would have caught on by now. In reality, "say cheese" produces the exact opposite

expression from the one I'm trying to capture. Let me repeat, saying "cheese" produces the exact opposite expression from the one I'm trying to capture. Once more time for the cheap seats: Please don't tell your kids to say cheese because it will ruin all your pictures.

If the goal of hiring a professional to take your family photos is to have that person capture the energy, spirit and soul of your child or pet, please know that too many voices giving direction can make our job near impossible. When a child or pet hears more than one voice giving direction, they quickly get overwhelmed. I am not looking for kids to please their parents, perform for an audience, or in any way be confused as to what I want from them.

With enough patience I promise I can get where I need to be on my own. Just hang in there and be patient. Quiet and patient.

One last thing. If I make a joke and say I'm going to place you in a "time-out", it's my way of saying "I've got this". Have I kicked a parent out of the room during a session? Yes I have, so don't be that guy!

I'm driving myself crazy trying to find the best location to use as background. Where do you recommend we take our photos?

This is another question I get asked...a *lot*. While I'm more than happy to travel to your vacation home on the Vineyard or the Cape, I'm just as happy to meet at a nearby park or your backyard. I enjoy getting outside but don't let yourself get crazy. Why? Because there's beauty everywhere, you just need to know how to capture it

I was in beautiful Beacon Hill recently shooting a senior portrait and just to make a point I took this shot between construction and a dumpster. Location isn't everything.



Do you accept credit cards?

Yes. I accept cash, Venmo, ApplePay, personal checks, and all major credit cards.

If you have any other questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me by email at info@rickbern.com and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

Thanks!
Rick

50 Dedham Ave
Needham, MA 02492
(617) 504-7005

info@rickbern.com
www.rickbernphotography.com

rick  bern
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