

Bigger is Better

(a guide to selecting your wall prints)

I am assuming that you have wall space to put photos on. If you are limited in space you are limited! Nothing wrong with that. But don't put one photo up – do a collage of a bunch of photos and make it interesting – really make that visual impact even if it's in a small space!!

You have a family photo session scheduled. You spend hours shopping for and debating over what outfits to put everyone in. You email your photographer to get his/her opinion on clothes. You stress over whether it is worth the meltdown to make your daughter wear her pretty shoes instead of her converse. You email your photographer and worry about where to have the session and about the time of the session and whether or not the kids will give themselves a black eye the week before. You convince your husband to actually *appear* in the photos with you guys. You do SO much to prepare. So where is the thinking about what comes AFTER the session? You know – the *ordering* part. If you are going to spend all of the time and money preparing and then hundreds, if not thousands of dollars afterward, don't you want something that makes you **happy** when you look up at the wall? Don't you want gorgeous awesome big reminders of that session you sweated over?

There are two versions of prints when you order or when you print for yourselves if you buy digital files: desk prints and wall prints. Those are what they mean – prints that are sized to go on desks, and prints that are sized to go on walls. Nothing smaller than an 11×14 should ever go on your wall. EVER. Sorry, it's a truth you might not want to hear but it's really for the best. Unless you're doing an arrangements of a few 8x10s together, set the hammer and nails down and walk away! Trust me, you will be so, so happy you did. Plus, remember all of those ~~horrid~~ awesome posters we all decorated our college dorm rooms with? Those were all 24×36 and we never hesitated to put those up!! (Okay, **I* didn't...*)

Here is a nice layout of prints I put together for you. For size reference, this is a regular full sized sofa, right around 84" wide. All the same image. Can you tell which is the 8×10?



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SURPRISE!!! Not one single print up there is smaller than an 11×14. Really!!! Here is the same photo with the image sizes labeled for you:



Now that you've seen that – want to see what it looks like with the ~~wimpy little~~ 8×10 and 5×7?



Now, this doesn't have the exact same impact when they are all arranged in a group. So let's take them one at a time. Imagine you have your session. You have a wall over your couch. Or in your dining room, or your bedroom, etc. You have regular 9 ft ceilings and something to hang the prints *over.* So you say to yourself – "Self, I want a BIG print to hang. I know, let's do an 8x10!!" Okay. Here is what that scenario looks like:



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Considering all of that wall space and all of that furniture underneath there, the overall effect is kinda wimpy, huh?? Well guess what. **I tricked ya again.** I know, you really *should* expect it by now. 😊 This is an 11×14. Want to see what one measly little 8×10 **really** looks like? No fooling this time. This is what an 8×10 “big print” looks like on a regular wall over a regular couch:



Yeahhhh. Not so good. It is completely overwhelmed by the wall and the furniture and totally disappears. So let's step that up. I have already shown you the 11×14. That is the *minimum* size that should go on your wall unless you are doing a whole grouping of images. So let's go back to that conversation you were having with yourself. "Self, we want BIG. The 8×10 was teeny. The 11×14 wasn't much better. Dare we try a 16×20?! NO, no, no! A 16×20 is huge!! We can't put that on our wall!" Let's see about that:



Again. Taken in context with the whole wall and the whole couch, it's not really that much. It's actually quite nice. But in the whole room, it's still small. SO let's be super bold and daring and try the ::gasp:: 20x24!!



It's nice and all, but we can do better. Let's see what a 24x36 looks like, shall we?



Now THAT is a nice photo!! It fits well on the wall, it fits well with the scale of the furniture and the room. I'd be really happy if people got that size. Just for fun, though, let's look at the 30X40. Slightly bigger, yes, but I have to say that this is the size I would go with!



For a slightly different visual where you can see how all of these line up comparatively, I stacked them all together at the same bottom left corner.



You can really see from the 5×7 to the 30X40, how they compare and how there is such a drastic difference.

Left to right again – 5×7, 8×10, 11×14, 16×20, 20×24, 24×30, 30X40

Now let's pause here for a moment and be 100% honest. No matter what I write here, no matter how much I try and convince people, a majority will still be put off by the last two sizes. I have had a handful of clients go this big and it was awesome. But the rest, they stop at 16×20. (Though I have had several come back to say they wish they had gone bigger... I digress.) Most people will not go bigger than a 16×20. It scares them. So to those people who it scares (and why is that, again??) consider doing something different – one bigISH photo surrounded by smaller ones. Here are some images, arranged over the couch for a different look. It still makes a

Personal Touch Photography by Taria Reed

visual impact, but because the biggest print is *only* an 16x20 and I have surrounded it by four 5x7 prints, it is less intimidating.



But come on, you know me, right?? (Okay, most of you – some of you are new to me I am sure so, welcome!) That display up there so would not be enough for me. I look at that arrangement and go, yeah, that's nice. It's pretty but it's not enough WOW. I want that WOW factor in there when people walk into my house. And I love my family. I love my family pictures. They make me SO happy to see and I want them big. So this is what I would suggest, one gorgeous 20x30 gallery wrapped canvas flanked by two 16x20s.



It doesn't look that huge does it? Yet just hearing the sizes probably made you shudder a bit. Admit it! 😊 Now here is a little secret – I wanted to add the 10x10s onto the ends – two on each. But I thought you might faint. You see, most people like the idea of big prints but when you unwrap an 18x24 or a 20x30 or even a 16x20, it is a scary thing. But then you put it on the wall and all of a sudden, you realize hey, that lady was right!

Bigger really IS better!! 😊