The Family Photo Prompt Card

20 laugh-on-cue prompts & a 10-step timer setup for unposed portraits

Set up your smartphone camera, pose your family naturally, and capture genuine mid-laugh portraits. This guide gives you the exact technical setup and age-based prompts to get everyone laughing on cue.



Key Portrait Settings

Count of 2
Shoot before 'three' for genuine laughs

2x lens
Shoot at chest height to flatter

20 percent
Extra space around group for cropping

10 seconds
Timer setting with burst mode enabled

1 hour
Shoot before sunset for golden light

Anchor With Physical Touch

Eliminate awkward spacing by ensuring every hand is on someone. Relax fingers completely over shoulders and bring hands to the front of waists to drop tense shoulders naturally.

Camera Setup: Steps 1-5

1. **Mount the phone** Secure it on a mini tripod at adult chest height to keep proportions realistic.
2. **Switch the lens** Select the 2x optical lens to flatten perspective and flatter faces near the edges.
3. **Turn off flash** Disable the flash to rely entirely on natural, flattering golden hour light.
4. **Frame for cropping** Leave about 20 percent extra space around your group to crop out distractions later.
5. **Lock the focus** Tap and hold the screen on your standing spot until the AE/AF Lock banner appears.

Camera Setup: Steps 6-10

1. **Set the timer** Configure the native smartphone timer to exactly 10 seconds before joining the group.
2. **Enable burst mode** Turn on burst mode to capture

Tripod Height Guide

Find your row: **Tallest adult height**

Tallest adult height	Your pick	Why
5'2" to 5'5"	48 inches	Keep lens angle level
5'6" to 5'9"	52 inches	Keep lens angle level
5'10" to 6'1"	56 inches	Keep lens angle level
6'2" and taller	60 inches	Keep lens angle level

Environment & Posing Checks

- ○ Verify the sun is directly behind their backs for rim lighting.
- ○ Create a staggered triangle arrangement with the tallest adult highest.
- ○ Face a light-colored building or path to bounce ambient light.
- ○ Seat toddlers in the foreground to build the wide triangle base.

Toddler Prompts

- ☐ Tickle the toddler's ribs right at the two-second mark.
- ☐ Bounce them gently on a knee for physical movement.
- ☐ Wrap arms around their tummy and give a cheer.
- ☐ Squeeze the toddler much tighter than feels natural.
- ☐ Play a high-energy game of peek-a-boo from behind shoulders.
- ☐ Deliver a silly sound effect to mirror their energy.
- ☐ Anchor them on a blanket and tickle them together.

Kids Prompts (Ages 4-8)

- ☐ Give a silly physical task before the shutter fires.
- ☐ Tell them to squeeze parents' waists as tight as possible.
- ☐ Have them whisper a secret joke to the person next.
- ☐ Ask them to fake a loud, dramatic laugh together.
- ☐ Prompt them to playfully bump shoulders with their siblings.
- ☐ Wrap arms around a parent and drop tense shoulders.
- ☐ Tell them to look at each other and laugh.

Tween Prompts

- ☐ Whisper the smelliest word they know into a sibling's ear.
- ☐ Ask them to subtly rebel by faking an exaggerated smile.
- ☐ Lean casually against a tree and tell a sarcastic joke.
- ☐ Prompt them to gently rest hands on a sibling's shoulder.
- ☐ Ask who has the worst morning breath for genuine laughs.
- ☐ Casually embrace while you deliver a loud, energetic prompt.

Location Ideas & Notes

Enjoy your beautiful, unposed family portraits and the memories you captured together!