

Color, contrast, and brightness

- Photo must be in color and should reproduce skin tones accurately
- Photo should not be over- or under-exposed
- Facial features should be clearly evident

Correct contrast and color
Proper exposure



Contrast too high



Incorrect color



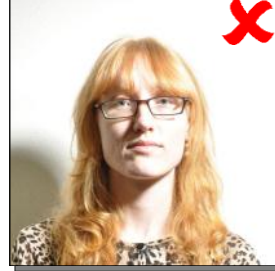
Underexposed



Not in color



Overexposed



Lighting

- Illumination should be uniform
- Photo should not contain any shadows on face or background
- Photo should not contain any shine or "hot spots"

Uniform lighting
No shadows or "hot spots"



Shine or "hot spots" on face



Shadows on face and background



Glare on glasses



Shadow on background



Too dim lighting



U.S. Passport Photograph Acceptance Guide



U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Consular Affairs
Passport Services
Washington, DC

U.S. Passport Photograph Acceptance Guide

Guidelines for Accepting High Quality Photographs for U.S. Passports

Technological advances have changed the way passport photos may be taken *and* the way that the U.S. Department of State processes the photos. This brochure is meant to help Passport Acceptance Facilities staff ensure that:

- Customers are accurately represented and
- Photos are free of common defects that cause delays

The photograph you accept as part of the passport application is a key part in determining the identity of the passport customer. Remember to carefully review the customer's photograph based on the guidelines here and in the Passport Agent's Reference Guide (PARG). Photographs that are not acceptable could potentially delay the customer's passport application process.

For more information about photos and applications for children, please see the U.S. Department of State brochure entitled *U.S. Passport Photograph's Acceptance Guide – Children's Photos Addendum*.

This brochure is designed to unfold into a small, wall-mountable poster, useful as a practical reference. Please take the time to become familiar with the information provided. With your help accepting good quality photos for U.S. passports, the Department of State can process the applications efficiently. As a result, we will both



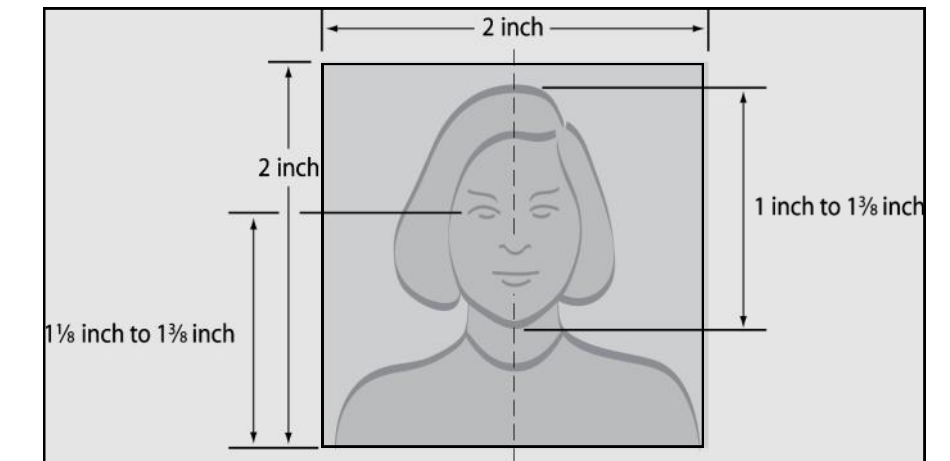
- ✓ Indicates that this example photo should be accepted as part of an application for a U.S. passport.
- ✗ Indicates that this example photo should not be accepted as part of an application for a U.S. passport and a new acceptable photo would need to be submitted.

Quality and composition

Only one (1) passport photograph should be submitted with a passport application.

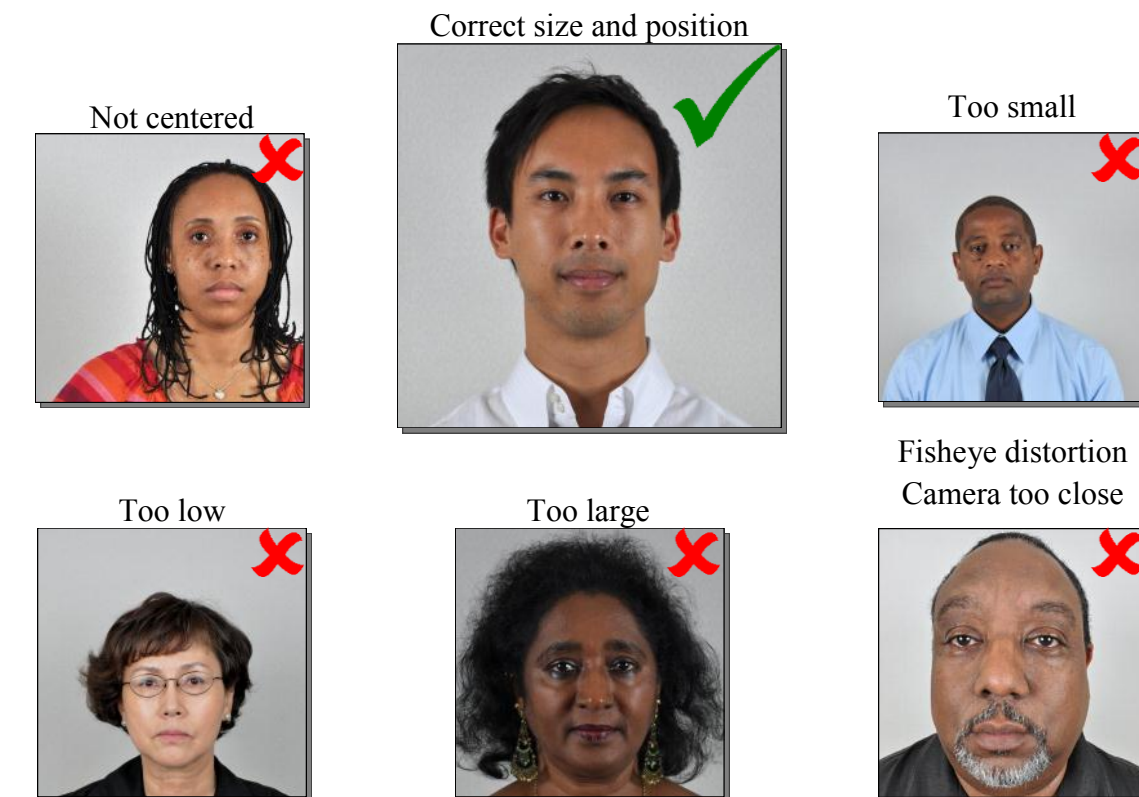
The passport photo must be:

- In color; printed on photo quality paper; 2" x 2" (50 x 50 mm) in size
- Sized such that the head is between 1" and 1 3/8" (between 25 and 35 mm) from the bottom of the chin to the top of the head; see template below
- Taken within the last 6 months to reflect current appearance
- Taken in front of a plain white or off-white background
- Taken in full-face view directly facing the camera
- With a neutral facial expression and both eyes open
- Taken in clothing normally worn on a daily basis



Head size and position

- Must meet Quality and Composition requirements
- Shoulders should be square to camera; head should be facing forward
- Picture should not be taken too close or too far away from the subject and meet size requirements



Glasses

- Clear lens glasses should be free of glare or reflections
- Tinted/dark lenses may not be worn (unless for a medical condition)
- Pupils and irises must be clearly visible; glasses should not cast any shadows on the face and their frames should not obscure the pupils or irises of the eyes.
- Slight upward or downward tilt of glasses may remove glare
- Removing glasses will correct problems caused by glare

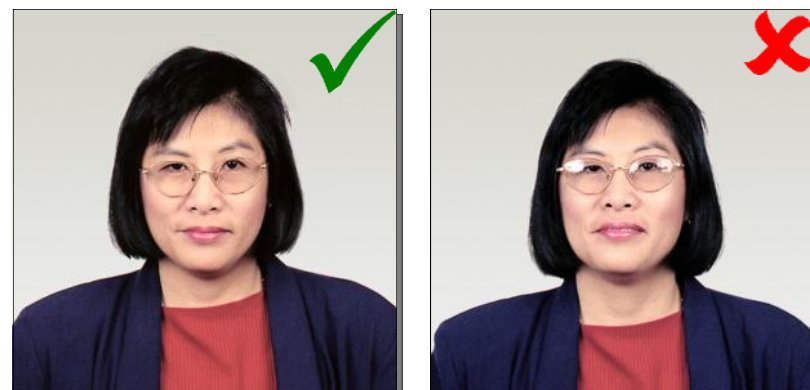
Clear lens glasses with no glare.
Subject's pupils and irises are clearly visible



Taking a photo of a subject wearing glasses that does not produce glare and/or shadows may be difficult. Even when glasses are worn every day, it is acceptable to remove glasses for a passport photo.



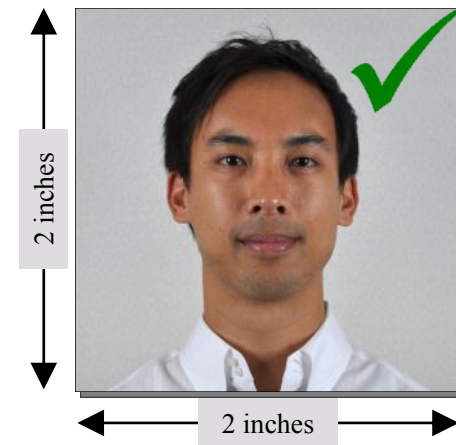
Glare on this example disappears by tilting the head or the glasses slightly



Resolution and photo size

- Photo should be sharp without visible pixels or printer dots
- Photo should be in focus
- Photo should be 2 inches by 2 inches (50 mm by 50 mm) in size

Clear image with plain background



Visible pixels



Out of focus



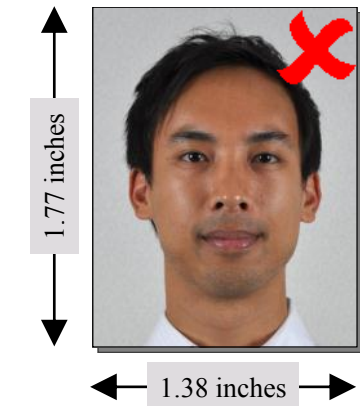
Blurry: Camera moved during exposure



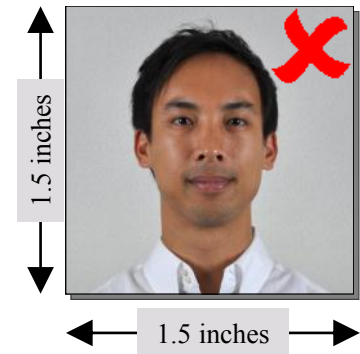
Visible printer dot pattern



Incorrect photo size



Incorrect photo size



Pose and expression

- Neutral facial expression is preferred; natural smile is also acceptable
- Both eyes must be open and clearly visible
- Customer should be facing the camera and looking straight ahead

Neutral (non-smiling) expression is preferred

Only a non-exaggerated expression is acceptable



Natural smile is acceptable



Head is tilted



Head is tilted forward



Head is turned



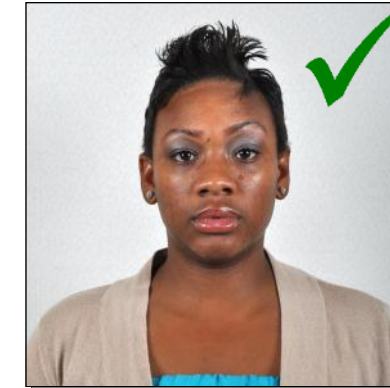
Background

- Background should be uniform
- Background should be plain and white or off-white
- Background should be free of shadow
- No other person should appear in the photo

Non-white background



Plain background with no shadows



Background is not plain



Background is not plain



Shadows on the background



Another person is in the photo



Obscuring the face

- Pupils and irises must be clearly visible
- Full face must be visible and free of shadows
- Hair, hats, or clothing must not obscure the face

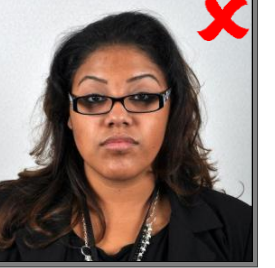
Full face is visible
No shadows



Hair obscures face



Pupils and irises not clearly visible



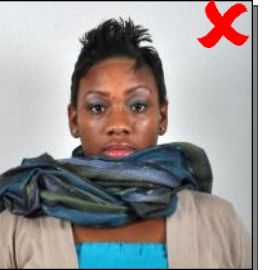
Pupils and irises not clearly visible



Shadows on face



Scarf covers portion of face



Attire

- Uniforms should not be worn, except religious clothing worn daily
- No hats or head coverings, except for religious purposes (signed statement regarding religious headgear may be requested)
- Full face must be visible – no shadows or clothing should obscure the face

Scarf worn for religious reasons
Full face oval is visible



Headscarf covers and shadows the face



Scarf covers a portion of the face



Hat on head



Headscarf covers a portion of the face



Non-religious head covering

