

# *1<sup>st</sup> birthday session:*

## *Tips for a smashing success!*

### *Before you arrive*

- ♥ **SOME KIDS HATE CAKE SMASHES!** – The harsh truth is that not all babies love to smash their cake! Some babies hate getting dirty, and get overwhelmed at having their hands all up in cake. I usually give a spoon and a fork to keep them occupied which helps!
- ♥ **ARRIVE WITH BABY SATIATED, BUT NOT STUFFED** – Babies should be fed, but also hungry enough to still want to eat. Too full or too hungry means they're unhappy! We rely on mom and dad to find the balance.
- ♥ **CHECK FOR ALLERGIES** – Do not trial and error with cake the day of. Introduce cake and ingredients (eggs, milk, flour) to your baby's diet before the session to rule out allergies. Consult your doctor if you are unsure how.
- ♥ **GIVE SWEETS A TEST DRIVE** – Lesser importance than allergies, is testing out cake itself! Most baby food is rather bland so babies are quite shocked (in a bad way) if they've never had it. Try it out in the week or two prior.
- ♥ **GIVE THE BAKER ENOUGH TIME** – Don't wait to the last minute to order your cake. A reputable baker will need anywhere from a few days and possibly up to a few weeks. Make calling around to find out a priority.

*Persimmon Lane*  
P H O T O G R A P H Y

# Cakes

- ♥ **YOU BRING THE CAKE** - All cakes are ordered/baked and transported by the client. PLP does not supply the cakes, but below are some tips to help you prepare!
- ♥ **ORDER OR BAKE WITH ENOUGH TIME** - Order your cake several days in advance to give the bakery time to create it.
- ♥ **CAKES; LESS IS MORE** - Stay away from bold colored icing and go for basic white/off-white as colors will stain as well as detract from your child's facial expressions. Chocolate is a bad idea as it can appear to look like a diaper accident! Avoid it! You can bring color in via (tiny) sprinkles, a bright topper, or having light color airbrushed on by the bakery. The below cake is a perfect example of a simple cake.
- ♥ **COLD CAKE = CRANKY BABY** - If your cake is refrigerated or worse, frozen, take it out with enough time for it to acclimate to room temperature. Tiny hands digging into cold cake and icing is a no-go for most babies.



# Outfits

- ♥ **SIMPLE IS BETTER** - The focus of a cake smash is usually the act of destroying the cake. Outfits with a ton of texture and detail or onesies with a lot of writing tend to get lost in the photos! You're better off planning to have a favorite ensemble photographed before the cake smash begins. Stick with minimal for the smash itself.
- ♥ **MESSY CLOTHING** - Whatever your child wears is at risk of being destroyed during the session! For this reason, I don't recommend the family dress that's been passed down for 3 generations.
- ♥ **BRING AN EXTRA OUTFIT FOR YOURSELF** - Your child may not love the process of getting dirty. Wear an outfit that coordinates and can get dirty as you may find yourself in a cameo role in their photos!
- ♥ **PLAN ON 3 OUTFITS.** 1 for photographs before, 1 for smashing and 1 to wear home. They can either wear the 1<sup>st</sup> outfit to the session, or change after arriving.



# Themes

- ♥ **CHOOSE A THEME** - I always recommend a theme that is meaningful to you and your family, but it's OK to keep it simple and simply choose colors you love!
- ♥ **HEIRLOOM ITEMS** - I love to incorporate special family items (as long as it's ok for them to get cakey!) Some families bring outfits older siblings have worn, some families bring special silverware, and some clients have even used heirloom toys in our "before" portraits. All of these things are great! Don't stress if you don't have any items or the desire to pull extra items in.
- ♥ **ON PROPS** - I try not to overdo props. Everything is within baby's reach so we try to keep it simple and create sets that are baby proof. (Because sometimes babies are curious, and will act out a scene from a Godzilla movie!)
- ♥ **DESIGNING YOUR SET** - Your smash is curated and designed so that all you have to focus on is the cake and the outfit! We'll discuss the set in the days leading up to the shoot to be sure you're happy before we shoot.





# FAQ's

- ♥ **WILL YOU TAKE NON-CAKE SMASH PHOTOS?** - I always shoot photos of baby BEFORE the session. This is to ensure that you get photos of your child regardless of how they feel about the cake! This is a quick 10 minute session.
- ♥ **HOW LONG WILL MY BABY SMASH THE CAKE?** - Cake smash sessions go quickly and follow no pattern! I've had sessions that were over in 5 minutes, and sessions last 20 minutes! (And everything in-between). Plan for approximately 10 minutes. Usually, the clean-up takes longer!
- ♥ **HOW LONG WILL THE ENTIRE SESSION TAKE?** - On average most clients can expect the whole session to be about 1 hour. However, factor in your baby's willingness to participate or not, which can extend the session. Plan for 2 hours total; the goal being 1 hour.



# What to bring

- ♥ The cake!
- ♥ Silverware – I have baby spoons and forks, but if you have a special set you'd like to bring, then bring it and we will use it!
- ♥ 3 outfits. 1 for photographs before, 1 for smashing and 1 to wear home.
- ♥ Wipes/Diapers (most parents have these in their car/diaper bag already!)
- ♥ Small props/heirloom items. Only bring items that you're OK getting dirty/soiled!
- ♥ Change of clothes for YOU. Your child might get you messy so you may need a spare pair of pants!



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