

Getting Started

Both experienced and novice photographers and artists hire models for testing, to get experience, or to build their portfolios. Magazines, newspapers, billboards, catalogs, product literature and TV commercials use models to show off or accentuate merchandise or products such as

- a kid showing off a toy or eating cereal,
- a macho guy on a horse showing off the new jeans, or
- a pretty girl standing next to a new car .

While most people have dreams of becoming a glamorous high fashion model working for top designers, the requirements are very strict (**5'-9" minimum**) If you have pretty eyes, slender hands, great legs, or a size 5 foot, you can get very steady work as a "parts" model. And what about the "housewife" making orange juice or vacuuming a floor, or maybe the little kid playing with a new toy, or the elderly gentleman pondering an insurance policy. These are "character" models. Thousands of character models around the world earn several thousand dollars a year posing for products or catalogs. Plus, many photographers also hire models for fine art and figure studies, stock prints, etc The **point** is, whether you're

- young or old,
- skinny or "plus sized",
- tall or petite,
- black, white or polka dotted.

there is a spot for "**YOUR**" look !!!! First find it, then get going !!!!

The most successful method of beginning as a model is to go to a reputable photographer in your area, and have him or her shoot your "**PORTFOLIO**" (usually 10 to 15 color 8 x10's), which you will then select the 5 best shots for your "composite". A composite is simply an 8-1/2" x 11-1/2" sheet, folded in half with 4 or 5 of your images, and the personal information about you. The only mandatory thing about a composite, is that all the pictures should be totally different. Different clothes, different hair (especially), different makeup, and a **complete different look or "feel"**.

Like a **Photographic "Resume"**, the pictures in your composite will show the agency the way you look and photograph. What's more, they are precisely what the agency sends out to clients that hire models! Some runway model agencies will tell you that a portfolio or composite isn't really necessary - and that may be true - FOR THEM!!!! But walk into most agencies and the first thing they will want to see is your composites and portfolio.

Unfortunately, the expense is mandatory, and always up to the model. If you really want a career in modeling, you'll have to put out money to make it happen. Without the composites and portfolios, the agency will blow you off. They simply don't have time to explain to every newcomer that walks in the door (and there are hundreds every week), what he or she needs to do to get into modeling. But when you walk into their office with a stack of composites and your portfolio under your arm, they are MORE than happy to talk to you because they know you're **serious!**

Talk with other working models, or professional photographers that work in the modeling industry. **There's no better way to learn than from the people that have come before you.** LEARN TO HANDLE REJECTION !!! The hardest part of the modeling profession is being able to take rejection. You must be thick-skinned when it comes to model calls, casting calls or auditions. You will be rejected more times that you will be hired, and this is totally normal due to the number of people in the industry. **DON'T GIVE UP !!!** Once you start getting a few jobs, more people that do the hiring will know about you and things will get much better! Remember that YOU ARE UNIQUE! One thing we try hard to impress on all our models is to not be discouraged if you walk into a modeling call and see dozens of beautiful people that you think are much prettier than you are. Modeling is RARELY a beauty contest!! The casting directors are looking for a specific LOOK - and you may be exactly what they are looking for!

AFTRA AFTRA (American Federation of TV and Radio Actors) is the union that represents most actors in TV shows, videos and commercials. There is an overlap with SAG, (Screen Actors Guild) which represents talent in movies, etc. Generally speaking AFTRA deals with video and SAG deals with film, but each may be involved with either. A project is either AFTRA or SAG, but not both.

ART DIRECTOR The person from the advertising agency who is responsible for the art/design of the project.

ARTISTIC NUILITY Artistic nudity is a form of nudity that is quite tasteful in the nature of poses, but is still revealing. Photographers who do this often work in black and white or with unique lighting scenarios. Generally speaking, these are the types of photos that are intended for gallery display rather than in magazines.

AUDITION Interview with a photographer, art director, casting director or client where they evaluate you for a particular opportunity. Where specific talents are required, it is not unusual for you to be asked to perform. As an example, for acting, one might be asked to read lines from a script.

BIKINI AUDITION The same as an audition except that one will be asked to appear in a bikini so that the client may evaluate your figure.

BIT The term applies to a role as an extra where the actor is asked to do something specific on camera for which there are no lines. As an example, if one were an extra acting as a doorman at a hotel, went up to a car, opened the door so an actor might exit, that would be doing a "bit."

BODY CHECK For an assignment where shape is critical, a casting director may want to view your figure. This will often be done in a bikini. In some cases, a body check will require nudity (if the assignment requires nudity). It is important to never disrobe at an audition unless you were informed in advance of the nature of the assignment and have discussed the requirements with your manager and/or agent first.

BODY DOUBLE Normally in feature films, when a featured actor/actress is either unwilling or unable to show their body, an alternate person is used without showing their face, and filmed in such a way as to suggest it is the featured character. NOTE: While body doubling often involves nudity, many times it does not. As an example, an actress may need to appear pregnant when she is not. An actress might need to appear in a swimsuit, but for a particular reason, she may not so a body double might be used.

BODY MODELING This is where shape and form are essential. It isn't necessarily, and often is not nude. Examples posters you see for beer or tools. You will see a model dressed in a sexy swimsuit.

BOOK Another term for "portfolio" which is defined here in detail.

BOOKER A person who works for a talent agency and actually books jobs for models.

BOOKING A term used synonymously with "a job that has been offered to the model and accepted."

BOUDOIR A style of print that is normally a lingerie style or an implied nude glamour or similar shot in an indoor, bedroom setting.

CALL BACK After auditions have occurred, the casting director will often narrow the field of candidates for a particular assignment. You are then being called back for further consideration to help the casting director make a final selection. A call back will often entail a more specific process such as a body check, screen test or wardrobe check.

CASTING CALL A notice put out by a producer, art director or casting director of an opportunity in a film, video, commercial or print project.

CASTING COUCH A term from the early days of the entertainment industry. It basically means that a producer is soliciting sexual favors in return for a part in a film or a print project. This needs to be emphasized. This is a big business. Nobody is made famous because they sleep with a director. There is just too much money involved. If someone propositions you in return for a job, get up and walk out. That is the smartest move you will ever make!

CASTING DIRECTOR The person in charge of, or responsible for casting a project. Most commonly, a casting director is used in film and video, but are sometimes used for print projects.

CATTLE CALL An audition where dozens of models are brought in and paraded by the casting director to seek out a particular look. It could also just be a notice of an opportunity where the casting director is trying to get the largest participation so that he can select someone who has just the right look and talent.

CLOSED SET A set that has been closed to public access and is likewise closed to anybody who has not been given a specific authorization to be present.

COMMERCIAL MODELING This is modeling in which a product is being presented and it is the central focus of the photo. A shot might be generic, such as a model outdoors walking, yet the photo would be commercial if it were used in advertising or marketing.

COMMERCIAL NUILITY Commercial nudity is similar to implied nudity except it is intended for the commercial, rather than the glamour market. Examples would be Calvin Klein ads where the model is topless but wearing jeans, panty hose ads where the model is nude in panty hose or soap commercials where a model is taking a shower but nothing shows. This can be contrasted with Maxim magazine, where again, the nudity is non-revealing, but is clearly more glamour than commercial.

COMP CARD A card with photos on it as well as your stats and contact information that is submitted for consideration when casting projects.

CONTINENTAL This is a term that is being seen more frequently. It originates in the United Kingdom and generally signifies a pornographic assignment.

DEFERRAL This is another term for "Deferred Compensation." In this form a payment, all or part of the monies due a model or actor are deferred until a certain event. Most commonly, talent is paid a percentage of future earnings. A word of caution, while deferral agreements sometimes sound appealing, legalistic definitions of profit or a production that is unsuccessful means that, in reality, most of these arrangements will not result in payments to talent.

EXPLICIT NUDITY This is a level of nudity that is somewhat less than what would be considered pornographic. The term "explicit" means that you will be asked to reveal your genitals fully.

EXTRA A person with a non-speaking part in a film or commercial. They may be part of a crowd or non-descript in the distance. If they are alone on camera performing a specific function, they are considered a "featured extra."

FASHION MODELING The modeling of clothes where the clothing is the central focus of the photos.

FIGURE MODELING This is a form of nude modeling normally used for art rather than glamour.

FULL NUDITY With full nudity, you are expected to completely disrobe and your body will be fully exposed to the camera. Unless you have been warned in advance and have agreed to it, poses should be tasteful and should not include graphic views of the genitals.

GIG A slang term for a job or a booking.

GLAMOUR A broad term of modeling where the model's appearance, rather than the attire or product is the central focus of the photo. There is a misconception that glamour modeling involves nudity. A glamour shot could be nude, but it could also be taken in formal evening attire. It is the presentation of the model, not the wardrobe that makes a shot glamour.

GOLDEN LIGHT The period at dawn or dusk when the outdoor photographic light takes on a golden hue, which is ideal for taking pictures.

GO-SEE Similar to an audition. You go and visit a client to investigate what a particular assignment entails.

GUILD Guild is term used to identify most of the unions dealing with film/video. Good examples are the Screen Actor's Guild, the Writer's Guild and the Director's Guild. There is no union representing models because there is no conglomerate group that employs them as there are studios in the film business. In several cities there are companies that call themselves the Model's Guild (Seattle Model's Guild, the Model's Guild of Los Angeles, etc.). Although these are official sounding names, these are just private companies that have no official affiliations. These companies should be evaluated on their own merits and not by their names.

HONEY WAGON The portable restrooms brought to locations by film companies to provide for the comfort of the cast and crew.

IMPLIED NUDITY Where implied nudity is required for a shot, you will generally be asked to disrobe fully or partially. While the standard is subjective, a photographer will normally not reveal nipples or genitals in the photographs. In some cases, buttocks will be shown. The essence of implied nudity is that the photograph is suggestive but not revealing.

IMPRESSION That is the term that reflects one viewing of a print advertisement by an individual. Thus if four people see an ad, that would be four impressions. The number of impressions may not necessarily equal the number of copies printed. For example if you printed one hundred posters and each was seen by three people that would be three hundred impressions. Impressions are important because the rates paid to talent for national advertisements, etc., are often based upon the exposure measured in the number of impressions.

LICENSE When a photographer takes a photo of a model, he almost always owns the copyright to a photograph. If a model is given and wants to use pictures she has been given from a photographer, she needs to ask him for permission to do so. The giving of permission is a license by the photographer to the model to use the photos for a specific purpose. Some photographers have detailed, legalistic forms for this purpose, others just grant the consent in a note or e-mail. Photographers also give clients a license to use the photographs that they have taken.

LINGERIE MODELING This term would seem self-evident, but it is not. Lingerie is a broad term signifying modeling in undergarments or sensual sleepwear. However, the model needs to realize that lingerie varies from quite modest to very revealing. Always inquire as to whether it is sheer or tasteful lingerie when considering an assignment.

LOOK The unique appearance of the model.

MEET AND GREET A first meeting with a client where you are not auditioning for a specific assignment. Instead you are introducing yourself to a client with the hopes that you will be considered for a future potential assignment.

MUST JOIN This is a union term applies to film and video. For simplicity we will use SAG as an example. If you are not a member of SAG but have already had one speaking roll in a SAG project, you will be required to join the union before you can appear in a second SAG project. You can also reach a “much join” status if you have appeared in SAG projects as a SAG extra and have accumulated a certain number of vouchers.

OPEN CALL An audition that is not by invitation or appointment, but instead is open to anyone who wants to try out for a particular opportunity.

OPEN SET A set that is open for anybody who has access to enter. Sometimes an open set is open to the general public, but it is usually just open to people who happen to be in the studio, on location or on a studio lot.

PARTS MODELING Modeling of a specific body part such as hands or legs. A model normally specifies which body parts she is interested in working with.

PER DEIM A payment given to a model who travels to cover her daily expenses. A model could be given a flat per deim to cover all expenses including lodging, transportation, meals and incidentals or just specific things like food. In the latter case, the client might choose to pay things like lodging separately.

PETITE This is a misunderstood term. Generally speaking, large agencies look for talent to be 5'9" or taller because that is what is needed for fashion and runway. There is a smaller market for petite models, but there are opportunities for them with agencies. A petite model is normally one who is 5'6" to 5'8". In addition to fashion, petites often find work in the commercial area. A model shorter than 5'6" is considered sub-petite. Sub-petites have the greatest opportunity in glamour and body modeling.

PLAYBOY STYLE This is a commonly used term to describe a tasteful style of nude modeling intended for print or Internet publication. The term is vague and often leads to misunderstandings. The reason is that Playboy Magazine has a constantly evolving style. Generally speaking, it means full nudity where the legs are kept reasonably together and there is no overt sexual activity. Our advice is when accepting Playboy Style assignments; discuss clearly what is expected to ensure that you are not being asked to do more than you feel comfortable with.

PORTFOLIO A book, normally 8" X 10", 9" X 12" or 11" X 14" filled with photographic examples of a model's work.

RELEASE The document a model signs after a paid shoot giving the photographer permission to use the photos that have been taken. When a model has been paid to do a photo shoot, she will almost always be asked to sign a release, therefore, the model should always ask about this before accepting a booking and should read the release before shooting begins.

RESIDUAL A payment made to talent for subsequent use of a material after its initial release. It normally applies to film/video. As an example, if an advertisement were to run on TV for six months and the producer chose to renew it for an additional six months, the talent would receive a residual payment to compensate them for the additional use.

RUNWAY MODELING Live modeling on a stage or walkway where clothing is the central focus of the show.

SAG Screen Actor's Guild – SAG is the union that represents most actors in feature films (as well as some industrial films and TV commercials). The other dominant union is AFTRA (American Federation of TV and Radio Actors). AFTRA concentrates more on TV commercials and television programming.

SAG ELIGIBLE In order to join SAG, you must first be given and actually accept a speaking part in a SAG project. Once you have appeared in a SAG project, you may join, if you choose within a specified period. During that period, you are free to do either SAG or non-SAG projects. AFTRA has similar requirements. You can also become SAG Eligible by appearing as a SAG union extra and accumulating an appropriate number of vouchers.

SASE This is a common term that many people don't understand. It means “Self-Addressed, Stamped Envelope.” Basically, if you are requested to provide SASE when you are submitting photos for a project, it means that the casting director won't send your pictures back unless you send a preaddressed envelope with postage already affixed.

SHEERS Modeling in clothing or drapes which are sheer or transparent. Generally the model will be exposed to the camera through the material. The model might be topless or completely nude beneath the sheers.

SIDES A portion of a script that is given to an actor to read at an audition.

SPOKESMODEL An assignment where a model promotes a product at a tradeshow, convention or similar.

STABLE The roster of models represented by an agent.

STATS The statistics for a model. Normally this is height, weight, hair color and measurements. Age is also included in some cases, but is not necessarily required.

STYLES Types of modeling that a person would be interested in. Examples would be fashion, glamour, parts, implied nudity, etc.

SUBMISSION The sending of your zed card to a project for submission.

TALENT SCOUT Someone who works for the L. A. Dodgers looking for baseball players to sign. This is a dangerous term and models need to be skeptical of anyone calling himself a talent scout. Generally speaking, larger agencies don't go scouting talent. Enough people come to their door to keep their stable full. While managers and agents occasionally want to expand and thus seek talent, few companies have the need to employ full-time people to seek models out. Don't expect to be "discovered." While it happens, very rarely, success in this business comes from hard work and perseverance.

TEAR Also referred to as a "Tear Sheet." This is anything that has been published in print in which a particular model or photographer is featured. It is referred to as a "tear" because it is most often a page that has been torn from a magazine.

TFP The term means: "time for prints." A model works for a photographer without a cash payment. Instead, the model is given a pre-arranged number of prints and/or enlargements as payment for her work.

PLESS As the name implies, you will be expected to remove your top and the full breast will be exposed.

TRADE SHOW A show where companies in a particular industry gather to demonstrate or promote their products.

U5 The term means "Under five lines." It is a term used by the acting unions to designate a speaking part in which the actor delivers less than five lines. The term may be significant under some clauses of the SAG or AFTRA contracts.

ZED CARD This is a misused term. A true "ZED" card is similar to a comp card except it is usually shorter than a comp card and folded into three sections. When looked at from above, it looks like the letter "Z." ZED is how the letter "Z" is pronounced in England where the ZED card originated. People often use ZED card to refer to a comp card, but the useage is actually incorrect.

Fashion/Editorial modeling is completely different from commercial print and other areas of our industry. The requirements are night and day different. Fashion/Editorial photography is the type you see in magazines such as Vogue, Glamour, Elle, G.Q., American Male, etc. Fashion deals with fashion, not products such as aspirin, or computers.

In the fashion/editorial world of modeling, the specifics for women and men are basically the same for most of the agencies. Women should be at least 5'-9" tall and between 14 and 22 years of age. Men should be at least 6'-0" tall and over 17 years of age. Professional portfolios are not necessary when submitting to an agency for representation. If you are selected to work with a fashion agency, the agency will help you build the right look for your portfolio and composite or zed card.

How do you know if you are suited for high fashion?

The best thing a person can do is ask a professional. Either send a current photo or set an appointment with the agencies to see if you are suited for their clientele. Not every agency is looking for the same look at the same time, so don't be afraid to visit or sent photos to more than two or three.

How do you get an appointment to see the fashion agencies?

Most of the agencies have "open call times." These are days and times when you can actually stop in and talk to someone and have them evaluate your photos. It is important to remember that agencies are very busy, so don't just pop in without a call time or scheduled appointment as they cannot stop doing their job everytime someone walks in the door.

What is the best way to submit your photos to an agency?

When you send your photos to an agency, remember that they may not be returned. The best thing to do is: always send a S.A.S.E. (Self addressed stamped envelope) with your photos, but make sure that the envelope is big enough to send your photo back without folding or bending it. Always include your name, telephone number, address and some specifics. Height, hair & eye color along with measurements. Women: Bust, waist, hips, shoe and dress size. Men: Suit size, dress shirt size, waist, inseam and shoe size should be written on the back of each photo submitted.

How do you know if an agency is legit?

Always get references if you are not sure. If an agency is legit they should have no problem giving you reference names of people who can be contacted. Also, the best information comes from other models within that agency. Don't feel intimidated by asking questions to other models. You can also call the labor board and get information on the agency and find out if they have had a lot of complaints or problems.

What type of fashion photos do I need to take for my portfolio?

Always have the agency help you with the type and look you need to build your book. Never take it upon yourself or allow the photographer to tell you what you need. The agency deals with the clients and knows what their needs are, you and the photographers don't.

The following is a summary of what a manager or agent will expect you to pay for, after you have been accepted. Shop comparatively for the best price.

A portfolio, or "book" is a collection of pictures of you. It should be taken to every "go-see" (a type of "job interview" for a model booking.) Portfolios are books that should be developed over time, and by several photographers. In the case of child modeling, parents should update the child's portfolio & resume when any changes occur in the child's appearance (loss of a tooth, growth, etc.)

A "card" or "composite" is one or more pictures of yourself and a resume. The picture/s can be taken from your portfolio. Your agent or photographer can recommend a reputable printer who will make up a card for you at a reasonable fee. The fee will cover a specified number of black and white printed cards, with one or more pictures of you and your vital statistics. This card should be left at every firm to which you are sent on a "go-see." New models need not spend a large amount initially for elaborately designed or full color cards. Your card should represent you in the most flattering way possible. Along with your portfolio, your card is the most important piece of information about you.

Your 'biography' or resume is a summary of basic facts about you: your height, weight, coloring, age, clothing sizes, and the name of your manager or agency. In addition, you should list your professional skills, talents, abilities, training, hobbies, interests, and any past modeling experience.

Headshot's are usually used in the acting & entertainment industry, while zed cards, composites & tearsheets (actual ads showing you in a publication) are for modeling. If you've been featured in any type of commercial advertisement, definitely obtain several tearsheet copies for future distribution & reference.

A headsheets is a collection of pictures & names of models and talent who work through one particular agency. This sheet is distributed to clients, and showcases a variety of talent available for assignments. Most agencies and managers charge their models to be included on a headsheet, but costs can vary widely, depending upon the monetary involvement of your agency. Be sure to determine the fee before you agree to be put on the headsheet. An agent should always obtain your consent before including you.

Union requirements

Any model who makes more than one television commercial is required to join a union, either SAG (Screen Actors Guild) or AFTRA (American Federation of Television & Radio Artists). Initiation fees vary from \$250-\$1200, with annual dues ranging anywhere from \$35-\$150 per year. These are approximate figures. Your agent or manager will provide you with more specific details on unions, or will direct you to the appropriate source. Models who work only on print jobs or who do runway/showroom modeling and high fashion modeling are not required to join a union. Make sure that you can support yourself

until you begin to make money from modeling jobs. In some instances, unless specified, you may be responsible for financing your own transportation, food expenses, hair, makeup, hotel & motel accommodations, housing and rental costs.

Procedure

First, choose several agents or managers that you wish to approach. Find out FIRST whether they are 'exclusive' or 'non-exclusive' agents. An 'exclusive' agent contract will only allow you to work with that one agent specific to a region or market, usually for a relatively lengthy period of time (usually one to 3 years). A 'non-exclusive' agency contract will open you up to signing with several agents at one time, giving you the option of being exposed to several assignments from each different agent. In the vast market of modeling assignments that exist in the LA area, we recommend dealing with 'non-exclusive' for one very important reason. It is a fact that not all agents are exposed to 100% of the assignments available in this HUGE market and region. Each agent likes to think that they can 'monopolize' a given area, and possess 'exclusivity' within that market, but the simple fact is, this is NOT true. Why do you think there are over 500 agents in this area? There's just TOO MANY assignments available in this region for any 1 particular agent to handle. Some of those 'exclusive' agencies get SO BIG, that in many cases, you will become 'just a number' to them, losing any 'personal or 1 on 1' assist that you would have ever hoped to obtain. In some cases, the sheer volume of models on their database can literally 'bury you' in some pile of 'non-working talent', resulting in you never getting an assignment. And what has that done for you? You've just signed up with an 'exclusive' agent for a few years who will never offer you an job. This is a sad fact that happens to many 'talented and promising' models in the industry. And your Grandma was right when she told you: "Honey... Don't put all your eggs in one grocery bag... you drop that one bag, you lose THEM ALL. If possible, before signing any binding contract, we suggest that you have a lawyer check out the legality and 'small print' of all contracts for 'loopholes' that someone unexperienced may overlook.

Check to determine what kind of information your agent wishes you to submit. If the manager requires a photograph, you may send snapshots or professional photos. Most reputable children's managers will ask parents for at least a snapshot of the child before making an appointment.

All models should specify the birthdate, height, weight, clothing sizes, and hair and eye color on a typed biography or resume which is attached to the back of the photograph. If the agent feels you have potential, he or she will ask to see you, to do further screening and perhaps offer a contract. If an agent does not contact you within a reasonable time, we recommend that you call them up and request scheduling an interview time.

No legitimate agency should charge a prospective model to have photos taken. An agent may recommend the services of a specific photographer, or you may solicit the services of your own photographer. We highly recommend that you make sure whatever photographer you end up choosing will indeed be competent in supplying the type of images that agencies require (check his portfolio). It's a sad fact that the average phonebook photographer will usually have no clue as to what type of images a model and talent agent will need.

Once accepted by an agency, you will be sent on "go-sees" for various bookings. No legitimate agency should ever take an advance fee from you for any reason, be it for a so called 'registration', 'consultation' or whatever. And let's not confuse agents with those 'radio advertised model prep schools, model searches & conventions', such as John Robert Powers, John Casablancas, O'Brian Rottman, Barbizon, IMTA, Model Search America, Pro Scout, Model & Talent Expo and others. They will definitely charge you 'up front' fees, and usually make promises of movie castings, agency interviews, with possible supermodel status and stardom in your future. Because they are not agencies in their own right, can never provide you paid assignments. All they will ever be are EXPENSIVE middlemen between you and a legitimate agent. There are many recommended sources for obtaining lists of available agents in your area. Your public library is a good place to start.

Some agents pay models shortly after a job is completed. Other models must wait until the client pays the manager. In any case, the agent's commission is deducted before you're paid. Be sure to ask which payment method your agent

uses. Also make certain that you inquire into the length of time between the completion of a job assignment and receipt of your wages. In general, find out as much as you can about the business practices of an agent while at the initial interview.

While it is true that all models will need to have photographs made at some point, non-reputable managers will often high-pressure you to have these made immediately, through a specific photographer. Usually, such managers require a deposit for the photographs, and require you to pay the balance before you ever see the photos. **DO NOT DO THIS!** Some non-reputable managers and agents make their money on photograph fees alone, or 'kickbacks' from photographers. Some non-reputable child managers also engage in this practice.

If sexually harassed on ANY interview or assignment, contact the Sex Crimes Unit of your local police department. Don't be embarrassed and don't hesitate to file a complaint.

Even the very best agencies are constantly on the lookout for fresh, new faces. If you should be stopped on the street or in a public place by a person who claims to be or represent a modeling manager, ask for a business card with name, address and phone number of the manager or agent. Never give out personal information about yourself until you have had a chance to do a little background investigating on who you are dealing with.

Trust your instincts. Sometimes you just know when a business deal seems beneficial, or on the other hand, possibly harmful. Check with your parents or trusted friends, or with others who have had similar experiences. If you meet the basic requirements for a model, and you want to pursue this as a career, but remember, it takes time & hard work to achieve success. Don't get discouraged, for you will get several NO'S mixed in with some of your YES'S. Newly-successful models appear each year, and the next one could be YOU.

(an observation from a experienced model)

While on assignments, building your portfolio, or doing your headshots, I believe that professional hair stylists and makeup artists should always be used. This is such a big deal to me. Even beginning models & photogs should spend the money to hire someone or learn a bit about hair & makeup themselves. This can make or break an image in my opinion. (so true)

(a photographers concern towards modeling)

Observationally, I would like to say that there are perverts with cameras out there who have labeled themselves as pro or serious amateur photographers who are screwing things up for the true artists of this profession. There's some sleezy jerks out there with more cash and testosterone than they know what to do with, so they buy a crappy camera (or an expensive one they have no idea how to use) and use this as an opportunity to meet women. It's a shame, but it's all too common. I've even spoken with models that say they endure the constant lame flirtation going on throughout the shoot just so they can get paid and get hired by an attending agent, promotor, or some other 'real' photographer with some legitimate assignments.

Here's some information that was left on our messageboard a few years back by an individual who identified himself as NOR, concerning a modeling convention he attended. Take heed, and if you ever get involved in such an event as this, you can't say you weren't 'advised'...

Here's the deal on Model Search America, ProScout, Manhattan Model Search, IMTA, and others... the actual chances of you getting discovered at one of these events are VERY SLIM to NONE, unless you are the 2 or 3 percent who THEY FEEL have what it takes. Out of 1000's of people attending these conventions & competitions, over 95% of these people will not make it. Most of these people were invited, 'chosen', or got picked from the preliminary stage of the event as a means of bringing in a gigantic cash flow to the event, the people who put up these events need LOTS of money to rent the facilities, organize the events, fly in the agents & provide them with accomodations, and they need it for advertizing, SOOOO, they are NOT very selective at all when they start picking people during the 1st interview you have, wherever it may be, they NEED to pick alot of people... no matter how butt ugly and outta shape they are. Why? Because this is

what generates the revenue they need so badly. Also keep in mind that the private information you leave on their registration forms is sold to marketers looking to solicit materials to individuals within your interest group. You can thank them for lots of unwanted junk mail coming your way.

NOW, out of these 1000+ short and stocky people that will not make it AT ALL, they will also pick some people with good potential to make it in the industry... probably 10 or 15 out of a few thousand. The truth is, very few attending will actually have the body or the look needed, there will only be a few here & there scattered in the crowds. Anyways, I hope you understand this, the advertising ads you're hearing on the radio & reading in those 'teen magazines' are asking you to come to a preliminary interview session, which really isn't an interview. This is where they look at you, and if you are not too short or butt ugly, they will pick you. Here's where the catch begins, because you have been picked you feel very LUCKY, but then you realize that A LOT of people are starting to get picked, and they are not being very selective. They are even picking many who are pretty obvious losers, and not photogenic at all. At this point, the interviewer knows very well that they will soon be wasting both their time and money... to the tune of anywhere from 1 to 4 thousand dollars, depending upon whatever convention you attend. After you are picked & shown a very inspirational video complete with loud awe-inspiring thumping music, you're given the actual event date, a few weeks away ordinarily & presented with the price you MUST pay if you want to attend. Because you have been picked, you know you will be picked again, and therefore must attend the event and pay them \$300, I mean after all, you were picked for God's sake! That must mean something, right? FAT CHANCE Freddy, time to buy a clue. If they only invited those 10 or 15 people that had serious potential (height, beauty, photogenic, very fit body), do you really think they could afford putting on this event? No Way Jose... that is why they invite thousands of others to come... it's a serious 'numbers' game... all to rake in the BIG BUCKS. They do have good intentions, don't get me wrong. There's been a few strong talents & supermodel types who have been discovered through conventions like these, but it's the thousands of other 'no potential' losers who unknowingly act as the 'financial supporters' of those who truly have potential. It's like social security tax! Every two weeks you get a lot of money taken out of your paycheck for the welfare and well being of others! The same with these conventions, you pay NOT for yourself... because chances are you WILL NOT get picked, but you pay instead to make things happen for those who fit the industry standards and really look good. YOU are the one that pays for all the agencies like BOSS, ELITE, M&P, IMG, FORD, CLICK, TAXI, NEXT, WILHELMINA, LA MODELS, come together in one place & only pick those tiny few with sparkling potential. NOW... here comes the part I hate the most... let's say you do have potential... let's say you're a guy... you have always been told you should model... girls drool over you... people always notice you when you walk into a room... you are tall... 6'2, 185 lbs.. fit, 32" waist, brown hair and green eyes... great jaw structure... VERY photogenic..and you are young enough to make it in the biz... 23 for a guy is a decent age, for women, FORGET IT IF YOU ARE OVER 21! Bueno, you have potential, now comes the agent photo reviews where you get to shine before the agents, and show your stuff. The agents line up along a long table & watch while one by one, hopeful models walk on 1 by 1 with 2 of their pictures held up so the agents can see and review them. Now, remember there are 1,000's of people for these agents to see, and they are already tired, hungry and bored, but they have been paid to SUFFER THRU the hundreds of wanna-bees and losers to get to the few with potential, so they are stuck there, playing the game. Now, each person goes by, first #1 model, then #2, then #3, then #40, then #100, then #600, then #1300. Let's say you are that promising guy that is tall, young & attractive and you are #1757 amongst the massive crowd... by the time you are in front of the agents face, and showing your pics, they are pretty 'burnt out'. Keep in mind that these agents have already seen 1756 people before you and their vision is getting PRETTY BLURRY, they are tired and everyone is starting to look the same... case in point... have you ever tried shopping for a perfume or fragrance in a mall, and wanted to try every sample before buying one? Didn't they all start to smell the same after a short time? There you go! This is what the agents feel like, and you being #1757 out of 2 or 3 thousand doesn't help you out at all... in fact, it hurts you tremendously. PEOPLE, keep in mind, these agents are only HUMAN BEINGS, not GODS! They make mistakes & overlook some potential out there, it happens

all the time. Many of these conventions plan their events in ways that can actually TRAP a participant from ever leaving, once they get you there. This eliminates any chance of them having to give you a refund, or a close relative stopping by to rescue you. Seems that all attendees who sign up from the western states are only invited to the NEW YORK conventions, while those who sign up from the mid-west & eastern states can only participate in the LOS ANGELES convention. This makes it almost impossible to leave the event, since you flew out & were picked up at the airport by one of their representatives. I saw dozens of these wanna-bee models, crying on payphones next to the restroom. Conversations like: Gee Mom... my name isn't on the call-back list on the wall... I am so disappointed. Sorry you maxed out your VISA card for this. I'll find some kinda way to pay you back. To really succeed in this industry, you're much better off FINANCIALLY and EMOTIONALLY to attend a private 1 ON 1 interview with local agents. So there's the facts, it's not a 'complete' rip-off because you do learn a small amount about the industry when you are there, and you are provided a very brief opportunity to be seen by few agencies, but remember everything I discussed with you above, it's the truth. Take care and good luck with all your ambitions.

What does it take to be a model?

Most modeling takes some basic training on movement, posing, and acting. This can either be acquired through "test shoots" and workshops, or through personal development at modeling schools. It really is a difference in ambition. It is very easy to get instruction through a modeling school -- but you have to pay hard-earned cash to get the training. On the other hand, getting "on the job" training is free, but you may have a hard time finding someone willing to invest their time, money, and equipment in working with you.

Besides some basic training, models do have to "look" appropriate for the type of work they are trying to get. This does not necessarily mean that everyone in modeling looks like they came off the set of "Baywatch." Quite to the contrary, many models get lots of good pay because they have a certain special look or even "weird" appearance.

In any advertising that is trying to use humor -- strange looking people are often featured -- just to catch the attention of the reader. Of course a lot of modeling work is selling "sexuality" and "sensuality," so models have to be comfortable with their body and not be afraid or ashamed of showing it off.

One thing that all models need is a portfolio. A portfolio is a book of photographs and "clippings/tear sheets" from newspapers, magazines, and catalogs that the model has appeared in. The portfolio is a visual resume of what the model has to offer and what types of experience the model has. Often, a model can't even get an interview for a job until their portfolio and resume has been reviewed and approved by the client. However, in order to be taken seriously, you need professional quality photos in a portfolio. If you only have a bunch of snapshots, then anyone seeing your portfolio will think that you're only a part-time amateur. If on the other hand, you have high quality photographs and several "clippings" of ads you've appeared in, you've won the trust of the client -- he/she knows that you are serious and professional.

Normally a portfolio should have 10 to 20 prints of your best quality shots. The photos should be from a variety of locations, and outfits, and photographers. A great portfolio can get very expensive -- because hiring professional photographers and getting professional photos printed costs money. Also, your portfolio needs constant updating each time you change your "look," or at the minimum every 6 months. Every time you change your hairstyle, change your hair color, add or lose weight, or change your body toning (through exercise or lack thereof), you need updated photos. Since you are often "hired" based on your portfolio, if they hire a "blond" and you show up a redhead -- you've wasted everyone's time and money.

Because portfolios are so expensive (usually between \$200 - \$1000), many models choose to trade their time modeling for professional photographers in exchange for portfolio prints. Once you become more experienced (and your work has been in catalogs and magazines), photographers will be willing to provide you with free shots for your portfolio. Why would a photographer do this? Well, the first reason is because everyone wants to "know" a celebrity. If you are a fast and rising star, it's worthwhile for the photographer to take some time and energy and get some photos of you so that years later he can claim to have "discovered him/her -- see I've got pictures!" The other reason is that almost every photographer has "personal work" that they do just for fun. Often times these are nude photo studies, lingerie glamour photos, or humorous photo setups. Since the work is for the photographers "fun," he/she will want to find models who are willing to pose for that work without getting paid their normal modeling rates.

However, finding a good quality photographer when you have no experience is a lot harder. Since there are so many people who want to be models, and since a beginner needs a lot of "training" before the photographer can get good shots, often times the photographer will require that the model do posing for the photographer's projects in order to get the free portfolio prints. Many of these projects are glamour prints (steamy lingerie and semi-nude poses) and nudes. Others may be "stock" photos (which the photographer will sell to companies needing a certain type of shot for a story or

advertisement. Still other projects are "mock" setups to include in the photographer's own portfolio to try and get additional paid work.

If the model is truly serious about modeling, then they will be willing to do the posing for the photographer's personal projects. If the model is not, then he/she should be willing to pay for the time, expertise, and materials required for their photos. REALIZE that any experience you get in front of the camera will be helpful, because you'll become more relaxed in front of the camera, and you will have more opportunities to study "how you look" on film. Try to work with photographers who can give you a "look" or type of shot which will enhance the pictures in your portfolio (don't work with photographers who don't have the skills to turn out great photos which will help your portfolio).

If you're interested in swapping your time for a photographer's, always realize that the "swap" has to be fair in order to work. The photographer is already bringing years of experience, thousands of dollars in equipment, and hundreds of dollars in film and processing to the deal. If you are not willing to do the types of poses the photographer wants you do do, why should he trade all of his "worth" for poses he doesn't even want? On the other hand, if you're able to give the photographer what he/she wants, then they will be very happy to work with you when you need "update" shots for your portfolio (your hairstyle or coloring has changed, etc.).

Not Getting Discouraged, but Being Realistic

One of the hardest lessons in modeling is that the competition is fierce, and for each prime "job," a model will have to compete against hundreds of others. Most often, the model will not get the job. That's just life and the odds. If nothing else, modeling requires that a person be smart and determined.

You also need to be realistic, though. There is zero chance you'll go from a nobody to supermodel fame. You'll have to do a lot of work (possibly all for free) to get some samples in your portfolio. You'll maybe have to do some jobs you would rather not do (either because you have to travel, or because of nude or revealing poses, or you "lost" money on a paying job -- because you had to take off a day of work at your other job). But unless you stick with it and pay your dues, you'll never have a chance at realizing your dream.

Life is neither fair nor easy. The exception to the rule is the "superteen," who gets picked as one person in the whole country that a modeling agency will throw all of their resources behind to promote into being the next "supermodel." This person was lucky, and is not that much more attractive and talented than the next. They "won the lottery." Out of millions of hopeful models, they "got picked." (And the agency who picked them will ENSURE they are successful, so that the agency won't look foolish.) If you too want to "win the lottery," you should realize that most people who gamble end up losers. On the other hand, most people who work hard end up successful. Which path is the best for you?

Where can I get jobs?

The best place to start looking for jobs is with your friends and family. Does anyone own or manage a business where you can be featured in the advertising? Does anyone work for a fashion or clothing store whom you could convince to let you organize a fashion show (starring you, of course)? Does anyone set up booths at trade shows where a spokesmodel would be effective at getting attention at the booth?

After hitting up friends and family, you may need to start approaching some of these businesses on your own. You may be asking yourself "Why not just sign on with a modeling agency?" Because the successful models know how to hustle and sell their own skills. You will need to build up practice before you sign up with an agency that will STILL expect you to hustle but will also be taking 20% of your paycheck. Besides, you'll be much more interesting to legitimate agencies if you can demonstrate that you've already had work experience and have been able to find your own jobs.

Another area to check is working with professional photographers. Often times, if you're willing to pose for free, you can negotiate having them use your photos in their advertising. Perhaps, if you're interested in posing for glamour type of work (pin-up style, "Playboy," and humorous type images), the photographer may even be willing to give you a percentage of any publication royalties if your photos are published. Even without royalties, it's very useful to get your face in magazines and on postcards and greeting cards. These not only give you more samples for your portfolio -- but they give you national exposure. And remember that fame is ALL ABOUT face and name recognition--and nothing to do with how tall you are, or how thin your waist is, or what color you dyed your hair. If someone sees your photos in enough magazines or postcards - you'll definitely seem "famous" to them!