

## PASSPORT PHOTOS 101

One really bad thing about a lousy passport photo: You're stuck with it for 10 years. We asked Travel staffer **Anne McDonough** to pop into five shops close to the Washington Passport Agency (1111 19th St. NW) within a two-hour period on the same afternoon. Her mission: to see what developed. If only she hadn't been having a bad hair day . . .

	The Basics	The Experience	Pros and Cons	Bottom Line
	Photo taken at <b>Ritz Camera</b> (1750 L St. NW, 202-861-7710) with a digital camera. Price: Two photos for \$15.81, eight for \$21.09	The first take looked goofy, so we tried again . . . and again . . . but the vendor was patient and the camera digital, so we didn't feel bad. Within minutes we had two photos in a cute passport-lookalike folder.	<b>Pro:</b> Shooting digital means retakes don't cost a cent; having eight images is good for a multiple visa trip. <b>Con:</b> Camera ran out of memory; shots were erased as taken, so there was no way to compare images.	The price was right, and we think the picture sort of looks like its subject. That's the point, right?
	Photo taken at <b>ID Systems</b> (1413 K St. NW, 202-265-6500) with a conventional insta-developing camera (digital camera was broken). Price: Two photos for \$12.50, four for \$19.25.	If we were going for the SPF 200 look, then this is the shot. The process took about eight minutes, from first snap to being handed dry prints.	<b>Pro:</b> Shop opens early. Staffer later told us the pale image was due to variance in film, so shop would comp a retake (normally it shoots digital). <b>Con:</b> Otherwise, to reshoot runs \$5 more.	The cheapest photo of the bunch—even if we did go home looking like Casper the Friendly Ghost.
	Photo taken at <b>DAX Visa Services</b> (1111 19th St. NW, 202-466-8300) with a conventional insta-developing camera. Price: Two photos for \$24.27.	Even a full-blown studio didn't help our cause—we call this one the Prison Break photo. Despite our pleading, we were told that we could get a retake only if the photo was sure to be rejected by the Passport Agency (i.e., if our eyes had been shut).	<b>Pro:</b> Shop opens early, plus it's the closest one to the passport agency (it's even got the same address). <b>Con:</b> That price, which staffer later told us was due to high quality of film. Vanity wasn't deemed a good enough reason for a free retake on this unappealing photo. We blame our own sullen look for this one.	We actually <i>paid</i> to look like this?
	Photo taken at <b>Green Press</b> (1107 19th St. NW, 202-785-3456) with a conventional insta-developing camera. Price: Two photos for \$14.28, four for \$19.56.	The picture was shot and blow-dried before we could say boo. Or even fully sit down for that matter.	<b>Pro:</b> We liked the honesty at this shop. The congenial owner told us later he usually refers squirmy babies and the, ahem, truly vain to digital shops. <b>Con:</b> Sadly, green's not our color. To reshoot, it's \$5 more.	It was speedy and a fair price, but we won't be flashing this shot around.
	Photo taken at <b>MotoPhoto</b> (1105 19th St. NW, 202-293-5484) with a digital camera. Price: Two photos for \$15.85, four for \$21.50.	A peek in the mirror didn't prepare us for the windblown effect we got with this digital Glamour Shot. We were channeling Mona Lisa, but the photog didn't seem a fan. "I <i>told</i> you to smile," he said.	<b>Pro:</b> Had we wanted to reshoot, it would have been free. Plus, you get a bonus enlargement of your passport photo. <b>Con:</b> You get a bonus enlargement of your passport photo.	It's digital and gives us that wry, mysterious look you want in a travel document.

Prices include tax. For more information on passport photos, check out the U.S. Department of State's Passport Services and Information Web site, [www.state.gov/travel](http://www.state.gov/travel), and the Bureau of Consular Affairs Office Web site, <http://iafdb.travel.state.gov>.