

## The Story Behind the Horse Portraits

**Equine photographer Lauren Blaha shares the secret behind her stunning senior portraits.**

*Lauren Blaha*

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The October 2016 issue of Horse Illustrated features stunning portraits of senior horses captured by photographer Lauren Blaha. We asked Blaha to share how she got those shots.

This style of portrait is my absolute favorite for its simplicity in highlighting the natural beauty and personality of the horse. To achieve it, I simply rely on the natural play of light. By standing the horse facing out of the doorway to a long barn aisle or an indoor arena, you can see with the naked eye how the light fades backward into the building until it is completely (and naturally) black. I do a few touch-ups in Photoshop when necessary, but for the most part it is done by manipulation of the natural light and camera settings.

To achieve a variety of poses with horses, I arm myself, an assistant, and the horse's owner with plenty of patience and plenty of peppermints. I use a basic knowledge of the animals' conformation, breed, and discipline to inform what poses are most appropriate and flattering for him. Safety and patience are always paramount, so we take lots of little breaks to walk – a horse's personality shines brightest when you are able to achieve balance between contentedness and interest.