



Your guide to professional headshots

BY: ELLA BARRY / ON: MARCH 6, 2024 / IN: FEATURES

We're about halfway through spring semester, which means many of us are applying for summer internships and jobs. It can be overwhelming to figure out your resume, cover letters, [LinkedIn profile](#) and headshot, but we at the Scribe are here to help!

Headshots are important in the professional world. Depending on your career path, you may be asked to include a headshot in your application, and even if you're not, headshots are great to use as your LinkedIn or email profile photo for networking. Employers want to see what you look like, but they also want to know that you are professional and serious about your application, so it's best to avoid selfies and other informal photos.

The good thing about taking headshots in 2024 is you have options, and "formal" doesn't have to mean expensive or taken in a studio. Here are a few ways to get a professional headshot.

Headshot events hosted by UCCS – Free

One of the many perks of being a college student is access to costly services for free or reduced prices. UCCS hosts a few events each semester that offer headshots for students. Because these events are free and highly attended, make sure you RSVP in advance and arrive early.

The college of education will host [Snapshots and Sweets](#) on Mar. 18 from 9-10 a.m. and 5-6 p.m.

The UCCS graduate school will host a [headshot event](#) for grad students on Apr. 2 from 11-1.

For graduating students, attend the [spring graduation fair](#) on Apr. 3-4 and get your grad photos and headshots taken by a professional photographer.

DIY headshots – \$10-40

Another cheap and easy way to get a headshot is to do it yourself! All you need is a phone, a tripod, a neutral background and good lighting. Or, if you have a friend willing to help, you can ditch the tripod and have them take the photos.

You can order a tripod on [Amazon](#) for as low as \$10 plus shipping. You'll need good lighting for your headshots, which means you need to pick the right location, but another option is to use a ring light. You can purchase a small ring light, like [this one](#) for \$20.

Once you've got your phone, your tripod and potentially a ring light, find a good location to take the photos. A neutral background is best, so people can focus on your face and not what's happening in the background.

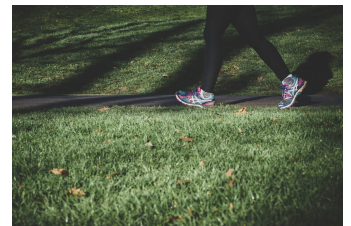
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If you're in need of a blank background, try reserving a [study room](#) at the library or a [meeting room](#) at the career center. Once you've got your equipment set up in the right location, take lots of photos in different angles and poses until you find the photo that you like best.

Students in the VAPA department can also use the visual resource center to check out photography equipment.

Use AI – \$25

One of the newest popular developments in AI that you may have seen is AI-created headshots. The biggest perk of AI headshots is the fact that you can have them within a matter of hours.

With [ProPhotos](#) you can submit existing photos of yourself and let AI generate professional headshots. For \$25 you can get 40 color headshots with three backgrounds. In the AI headshots you'll be wearing business attire, even if you aren't wearing it in the photos you upload.

While AI headshots are cheap and convenient, there are some issues to be aware of, especially the over-editing of your photos. Though this isn't always the case, some AI headshots can come out looking so over-edited that you don't look like yourself anymore, which defeats the entire purpose. Read reviews carefully before you choose an AI headshot website.

Book a professional headshot session – \$60-170

If you're searching for a quick and convenient way to get headshots, book a portrait session and leave it up to the professionals.

The cheapest option for a photo session is through [JCPenney Portraits](#). Photo sessions regularly cost \$14.99, but college students with a valid student ID get one free session.

There are different photo packages available separate from the price of a photo session. While the photographer will take tons of photos, you'll pay to select the ones you want to purchase. One digital image costs \$59.99, three digital images cost \$79.99, and a full digital album with all the photos from your session costs \$169.99.

While this is the most expensive option, your headshots will look professional, and it will be clear that they were taken in a photography studio.

No matter the method you use to take your headshots, it's important to present yourself professionally. Always wear professional attire in your photos, at least on the top half that will be visible. If you need free professional clothing, check out [Clyde's closet](#) in the career center.

Good luck with your headshot hunt, and don't forget to say cheese!

Photo by Cody Lannom on Unsplash.

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Scribe@uccs.edu

University Center Room 106
1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

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