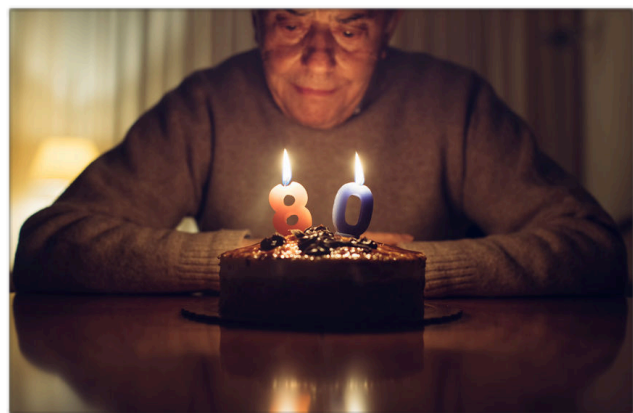


# A New Chapter

By Marilyn Nieves

I'm always on the lookout for photographic inspiration, and oftentimes I don't really have to look very far to find it. Friends and family members having birthdays, buying new homes, getting married, or expecting a baby are just a few of the things that come to mind. These types of milestones and so many other life experiences can symbolize a new chapter in our lives while also providing opportunities we can photograph for stock.

Browse the magazines at the bookstore or your local grocery shop and you'll find lots of advertisements with milestone moments. Why? They are authentic moments we can all relate to. It's easy to put yourself or someone we know in the shoes of the person in the image and relate to the message more easily. This makes it perfect material for stock photography! For inspiration,



let's look at a few examples of stock images that capture the idea of starting a new chapter.

## **"A New Chapter" Images as Stock:**

Graduations are a life event that celebrate the culmination of years of hard work to getting to the next level. It's a happy time for everyone involved. Whether it's kindergarten, high school, college and beyond, each step from one stage to the next is an important moment and celebration we remember for our lifetime.

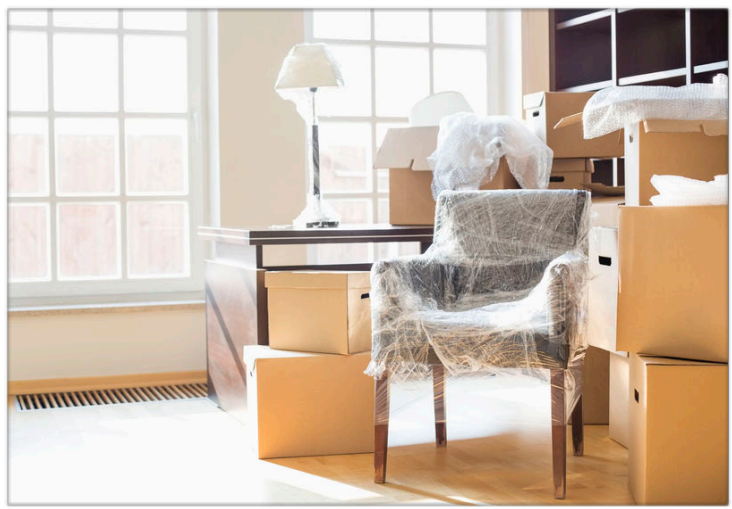
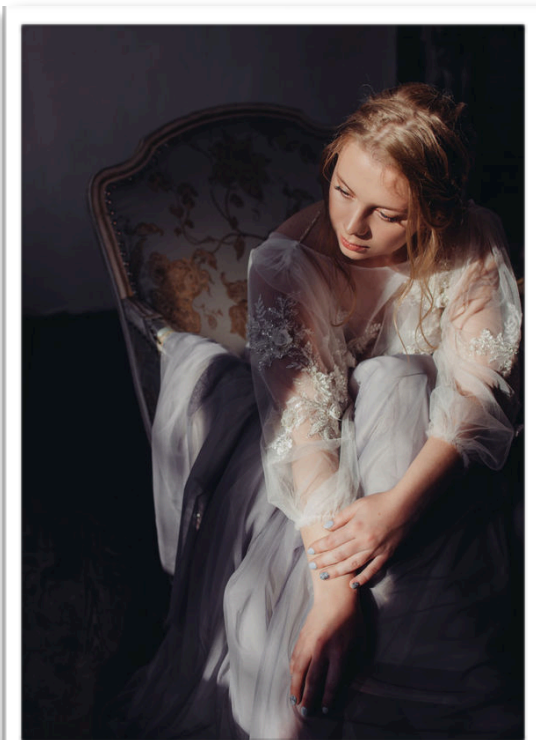
Birthdays are fun and mark a new year of life. From the toddler to our elders, it's a joyous occasion to be celebrated and there are many opportunities throughout the year within our circle of friends and family to photograph these special days.

Moving into a new home or office can be the start of a new adventure. A scene of your family packing boxes can easily tell the story of “a new chapter.”

You can also photograph just the space with the furniture and boxes ready to be moved. It’s always an exciting time to start in a new space.

Weddings also mark a new chapter in life. It’s an event that provides for numerous opportunities to shoot stock, from images of the bride and groom to the still life details and activities happening throughout the day.

Below, a private moment of reflection with the bride makes for a moody photo.







Decorations throughout the venue can be very interesting and tell their own stories. Don't forget the beautiful appetizers, entrees and of course the cake.



## Shooting Tips

No matter which of life's milestones you decide to photograph, there's no shortage of stock photography material within this theme. Here are some things to keep in mind as you dig out your camera.

### **Barter**

Someone you know is having a milestone or knows someone who is having a milestone this year. Reach out to them and ask if they will allow you to photograph them. One way to do it is to photograph their special day or event in exchange for photos and a signed model release or releases.

Doing it this way can be a win-win. Nobody is out-of-pocket, your model and



their family get beautiful photos of their day and you will have some photos you can use for stock.

### **Mind Your Angles**

When shooting images specific to stock, be mindful of your angles when photographing your models within a public space or where there are other people in view. Remember that anyone recognizable will require a model release to submit to any stock agency. Carefully picking your camera angle and shooting with a wide aperture opening, such as  $f/2.8$ , can help to blur out or exclude unwanted elements within your frame.



### **Don't Plan... but Plan**

Aim for authenticity. Although you don't necessarily want to pose your model in some of these life events, you can carefully observe and anticipate the scene, having your camera ready to capture it.

Here is a grandparent's joy at the first sight of the newborn and it made for a very emotive capture. Notice how this image feels genuine and completely unstaged.

In this photo, the dad is positioned to take the first photo of the baby after she is born and it's a great authentic moment of modern times in the delivery room.

## Use Burst Mode

Since many of life's big milestone moments can't be repeated, you'll want to make sure to have your camera settings dialed in and ready to go. Take a few test shots to double check your exposure and focus. I'd also recommend using burst mode so that your camera fires off multiple shots in a row. This increases your odds of catching your subject at just the right moment and facial expression.

## Schedule in Advance

This may seem like an obvious one, but for the most part we know when a milestone is coming. This gives you time to talk and negotiate with all of your potential models and it gives them time to discuss it with anyone else if needed. So, don't procrastinate and start touching bases with your family and friends long before their big day and hopefully you will be granted the opportunity.

## A Different Take on The Same Theme

People shots are always in demand and it's a great way to capture this theme, but you can also photograph still life images for the Challenge. You can think of "A New Chapter" literally or in a metaphoric sense.

A lovely stack of books with a simple background is a literal way to depict the idea of A New Chapter.

You can also get closer and capture the pages turning.





## Tips on Shooting Still Life for A New Chapter

### Use Texture

A textured background or texture on your subject matter can add so much character to a photograph and it does it in a beautiful, subtle way.

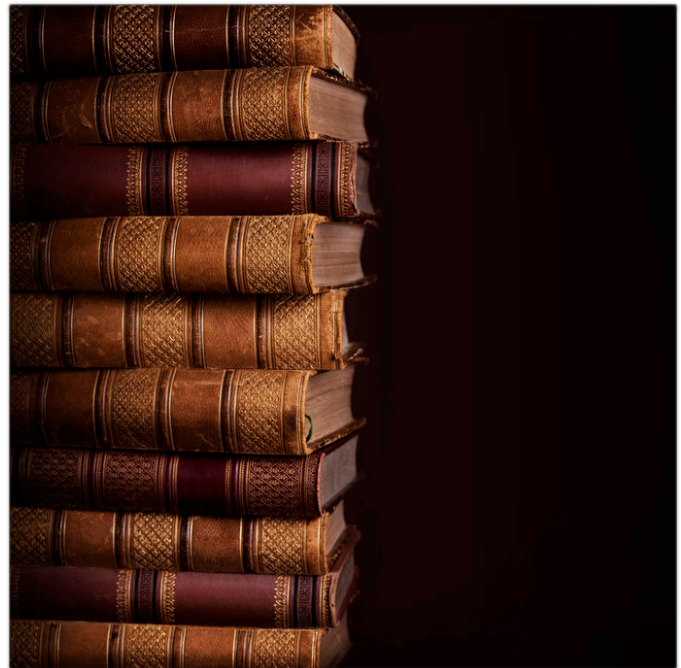
The worn pages and the textured background add a sense of nostalgia to the image above.



### Play with Lighting

A brightly-lit stack of books will give a fresh feeling to your message. Contrast that with a darker, dimly-lit scene that will feel more mysterious or solemn.

The spines on these books have beautiful, rich texture that are also being enhanced by the style of lighting, adding a sense of mystery and curiosity.



### Create a Scene

Don't be afraid to add multiple props but make sure you don't lose the message of the theme by including too much and overwhelming the viewer.

This photo above has several props and has layered them in the field of view. However, the sheet of paper is the focus and center of the image, highlighting the theme nicely.



## Keywords for A New Chapter

When keywording, ask yourself these questions:

- What is the subject matter? (Examples: [Woman](#), [family](#), [young adult](#))
- What specific event is it? (Examples: [Birthday](#), [wedding](#), [anniversary](#))
- What else is in the photo (Examples: [Car](#), [cake](#), [house](#), [books](#))
- What behavior is displayed or emotion does the image evoke? (Examples: [Happiness](#), [cheerful](#), [aspiration](#))
- Where is the setting? (Examples: [Kitchen](#), [outside](#), [nightclub](#))



Be sure to add the most obvious ones for this theme like milestone, occasion and event.

Let's work through a few examples...

This first image can be tagged with the following keywords: [Milestone](#), [happiness](#), [young adult](#), [car](#), [mode of transportation](#), [new](#), [keys](#), [outdoors](#), [smiling](#), [driver](#), [celebrate](#), [hispanic ethnicity](#).



For this next image, we can tag it with: [Birthday](#), [celebration](#), [festive](#), [candles](#), [lit](#), [multicolored](#), [flame](#), [cake](#), [milestone](#), [age](#).

For this last image, some good keywords would be: [Graduation](#), [students](#), [graduation cap](#), [throwing](#), [celebration](#), [milestone](#), [aspirations](#), [looking ahead](#), [future](#), [diploma](#), [achievement](#), [university](#), [education](#), [people](#).



I hope you have fun with this month's theme. Think of what events in your life are coming up that can symbolize A New Chapter and start making a plan to photograph them.

Happy shooting!