



# The Ultimate Guide to Finding and Using Images in Your Content

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# Crazy Egg's Ultimate Guide to Finding and Using Images in Your Content

You get it, I know. Content is important for marketing your business, ranking in search engines and attracting well-qualified, eager-to-buy customers.

What you may not realize is the value of images in that content.

We're not talking about infographics, videos or memes, here. We're talking about 2D images used to illustrate your content. Take a look at these findings from a study by [Skyword](#):

- Content containing related images get more views and tend to perform better across all content categories.
- On average, total views increased by 94% if a published article contained a relevant photograph or infographic, as compared to articles without an image in the same category.

Notice the stat in the second bullet. Articles with relevant images get **94% more views**—almost double the views without images.

Clearly, content alone isn't the golden goose for your marketing. The real value lies in high-quality content that's enriched with images. Your challenge, then, is to know what type of images work best, where to find them and how to use them properly.

That's what you'll find in this Crazy Egg guide. Use the tips and tactics we outline here, and (finally) take the guesswork out of finding and using images for your content and blog posts.



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# Introduction



# Why You Need Images

You can't get away from using images in your marketing. According to research from [Ipsos](#) 71% of the world's web users share content online and 43% of those share images. In other words, images are the most shared online content item (and we're not just talking about [memes](#)).

Apart from their use as illustration (more on that in the next chapter), images are a great way to:

- attract readers
- quickly illustrate the benefits of your product (for example by using comparison shots)
- direct users' eyes where you want them to go
- make your site more credible
- convey emotion and make your readers feel it too

[Econsultancy](#) research shows that as far back as 2009 nearly 6% of all searches on Google were image related. Fast forward to 2013 and 100 billion images were captured and posted online. With all that competition for customers' eyes, getting the right image is essential. And that's why every single image must pack an incredible punch.

Then there's the question of licensing—how do you choose among public domain, royalty free and Creative Commons images? It's no wonder marketers spend so much time looking for the perfect images for their content marketing needs.

This guide will help demystify the process of finding images and will provide some useful resources to help you discover, select and use the perfect images to enhance your blogging and content marketing strategy.



# CHAPTER 1



# General Guidelines When Searching for Images

In one way, choosing images for publication hasn't changed much from the days when they were just for print. Now, as then, you have the choice of a descriptive image (one that exactly reflects the person or concept being discussed) or a conceptual image (one that alludes to the topic but may include other nuances too).

**Example:** In [How to Kill Your Frankenstein-Like Marketing Campaign Today](#), there are both kinds of images. The lead image is a picture of the Frankenstein monster; a later image uses question marks to allude to the concept of figuring out a marketing strategy.

But one thing that HAS changed is the way we search for images—and that's where spending some time thinking about what kind of image you want and the types of keywords that will help you to find it pays off. Think of this as being similar to the way you would search for information in a search engine.

When searching photo sites for the right image:

- DON'T use a single word as a search term or you will get hundreds of thousands of results. If you simply search for "puppies" you may not easily find the image you want.
- DO use a two- or three-word phrase to find an image that's closer to what you want. Searching for "black Labrador puppy" or "greyhound puppy" will get you closer.
- DON'T be so prescriptive with your search terms that you don't find anything. (Can you imagine finding the right image if you search for "7-month-old Labrador puppy with one white ear"?)
- DO consider related images when deciding on your search term, such as "baby animals."



As a marketer, you are constantly brainstorming creative concepts. Use these same skills to help you find great images.

You can also narrow your search by using the on-site filters that many sites provide to select images that are relevant to your keywords, particularly interesting or recently uploaded. This can help you avoid the cardinal sin of using an image that's already strongly associated with someone else's content or brand.

Image: [Pixabay](#)

# CHAPTER 2



# Understanding Image Licensing

Image licensing can be a minefield. If you don't want to risk a lawsuit, it's important to understand the different rights and restrictions so you don't inadvertently violate someone's copyright when you post an image to your blog or use one in your other marketing.

There are four categories you need to be aware of:

1. Rights Managed
2. Royalty Free
3. Public Domain
4. Creative Commons

Let's look at each of these in turn.

## 2.1 RIGHTS-MANAGED IMAGES

"Rights managed" is a term used in the stock photography industry. Rights-managed images are available from some of the biggest image licensing sites, such as [Getty Images](#) and [Corbis](#).

When you get a rights-managed image, you usually purchase a single-use license for the image and have to decide up front how you are going to use it. So if you used a rights-managed image in a blog post and then decided to turn the blog post into an ebook, infographic or presentation, you would need additional licenses for each use.

The [American Society of Media Photographers](#) says: "Rights-managed stock offers a middle ground between the expense of commissioning a special shoot and the cost of brand erosion if the product's signature image appears in an unrelated context."

The image shows two side-by-side screenshots of stock image licensing websites. The left screenshot is from Corbis Images, displaying a search result for an image titled 'All Aboard' featuring hot air balloons. It includes a 'Price a rights-managed image' section with a license summary table. The right screenshot is from Getty Images, showing a similar image with a price of \$206.00 USD and an 'Add to cart' button.

License summary	
1. Image usage	
Creative image #:	200126491-081
Use:	Web and app
Format:	Web - Social Media
This license allows customers to post RMRR content to social media platforms on a standalone basis, independent of any other web/mobile use for example, as the hero image on their social media page. Customers must purchase separate social media rights to use content for each individual social media platform. Use in paid advertising is not included.	
Do you want to license this image for multiple uses? Call or email to ask about: Digital print, web, mobile, interactive	
2. Usage specs	
Start date:	24 Feb 2014
Duration:	Up to 3 months
3. Target market	
Territory:	United States
Industry:	Marketing, Advertising & Public Relations Services

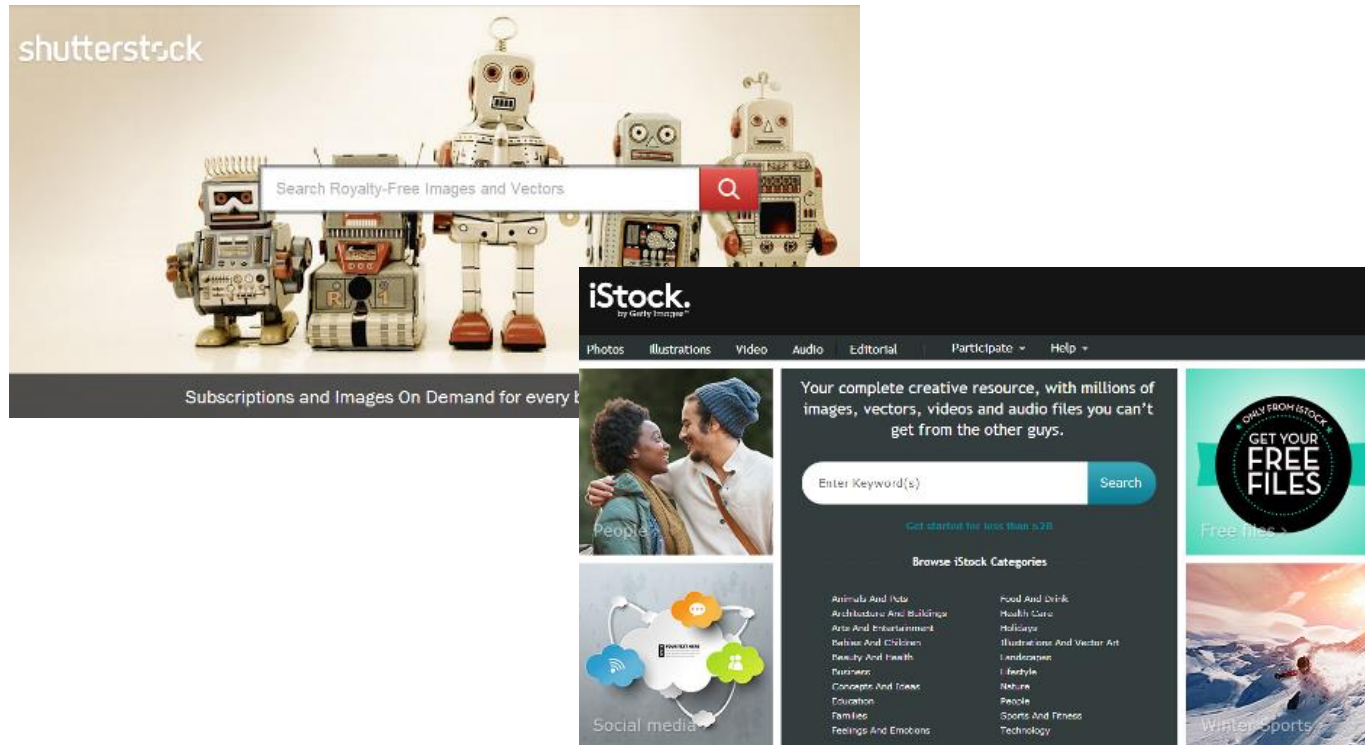
**The advantages** of using a rights-managed image are that you usually get high-quality, professional and semi-exclusive images. You buy the rights for a period of time and for a particular geographical area, and during that time no-one else has access to it for the same use.

**The disadvantages** are that the rights eventually expire and that getting images for a range of content projects could soon add up. Depending on your project, the advantages could outweigh the disadvantages, but unless you're creating a piece of pillar content for your blog, you may not want the expense of using a rights-managed photo.

In our test of a random image from Getty Images, a license to use a single image on the web and social media with exclusivity for three months within the US cost \$206. And on Corbis, it was impossible to find the cost without signing up for an account.

## 2.2 ROYALTY-FREE IMAGES

Royalty-free images are available from sites like [Shutterstock](#), [iStockPhoto](#) and many others. When it comes to royalty-free images, the term "free" is definitely misleading, because royalty-free images are NOT free.





As explained in the last section, with rights-managed images, you buy a license to use the image for a specified use and period. With royalty-free images, no such restrictions apply. You don't have the right to edit the image or resell it, but apart from that you can use it pretty much as you wish (though you will have to check the licensing terms to be sure of any restrictions).

The advantage of using royalty-free images for blog posts and content marketing is that they are much, much cheaper than rights-managed images. Pricing is usually dependent on the size and resolution of the images and some sites offer royalty-free images for as little as \$0.20 apiece.

That's the reason for the main disadvantage of royalty-free images: overuse! Search any site offering royalty-free images and you will find that the same images come up for the same keywords time and again. And that's true for everyone who's searching those sites.

Since everyone has access to the same pool of images, you could easily find that the image you have chosen to illustrate your blog post has been widely used by many others. [Yahoo Small Business](#) recently published an article on overused stock images and it's a topic that's been covered [again](#) and [again](#).

Great images get used and reused till everyone is sick of seeing them, and that's not the effect you want for your blog post.

## 2.3 PUBLIC DOMAIN IMAGES

Public domain images are very blogger-friendly. You can use public domain images without restrictions and without needing to ask for permission, though the Harvard Law School library recommends that you still provide attribution.

The important thing for bloggers and marketers is determining whether the image they want to use actually IS in the public domain.

Public domain images are images where:

- the intellectual property rights have expired or
- the creators have waived the intellectual property rights.

In other words, it's all about copyright.

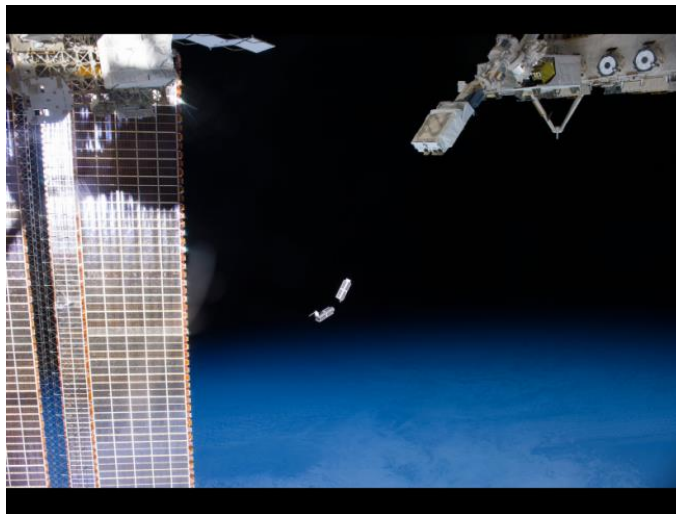


Image: [NASA](#)

It can be difficult to figure out if a particular image is in the public domain, but here's a good starting point:

Under US copyright law, an **image created after January 1, 1978**, is automatically protected from the moment of creation until 50 years after the creator's death.

**An image created after 1923 and before 1978** and not previously registered for copyright gets Federal copyright protection under similar terms.

**An image created prior to 1923** is automatically in the public domain (though some of the older images don't meet the quality standards that modern marketers take for granted).

Here's the text of the [US Copyright Law](#), though it's hard to read. For a slightly easier explanation and more detail on variations in the duration of copyright, check out this [copyright FAQ](#) from the Professional Aerial Photographers Association. (Please note that this applies to images; there are different [copyright terms](#) for different works.)

Public Domain Sherpa has a useful [copyright term calculator](#) so you can establish whether a particular image might be out of copyright. This is geared to the US Copyright Act.

Since many image sites mix several types of images (often stock photos, public domain images and Creative Commons images), it's important to check the licensing before you use an image. It's also worth establishing beyond doubt whether a particular image can be used for commercial projects without a fee and whether the image requires attribution.

## 2.4 CREATIVE COMMONS IMAGES

Most marketers are aware of Creative Commons images. Creative Commons means that the creators of an image (the photographers or designers, in the case of infographics) have given people the right to share, use or build on what they have created.

The advantage of Creative Commons images is that they are free to use and readily available. There are millions of photos ready and waiting to be used in blog posts and other creative projects.

The disadvantage is the difficulty of working out what you can do with particular Creative Commons images. That's because the [Creative Commons site](#) lists six main types of licenses, plus a seventh that relates to public domain works. If you're planning to use a Creative Commons image, you need to be sure your chosen image is licensed for the particular use.

Some features apply to all Creative Commons licenses. For example, all licenses mean that the copyright owners are credited for use of their work. And all licenses last as long as copyright lasts.

Apart from that, here are the main license types:

- **Attribution:** With this license, the creator lets people distribute, remix, edit and build on the licensed work, but the person who uses the image must credit the original author.
- **Attribution Share Alike:** This lets people edit and build on an image, even for commercial use, as long as they use the same license for any new work derived from that image. For example, this kind of license is used for Wikipedia content.

- **Attribution No Derivatives:** The photographer must be credited and the image may be reused for both commercial and non-commercial use, but it can't be altered in any way.
- **Attribution Non-Commercial:** People can use the images for non-commercial purposes and must credit the photographer, though they are not obliged to use the same license for any derivative works.
- **Attribution Non-Commercial Share Alike:** This allows people to build on the original image for non-commercial purposes, but they have to credit the original author and license anything the derived from it under the same terms.
- **Attribution Non-Commercial No Derivatives:** People can download and share images as long as they credit the original author but cannot use them for commercial purposes. Creative Commons sees this as the most restrictive of the license types.

Creative Commons also allows image creators to put their work in the public domain via the CC0 license.

If you're publishing a Creative Commons image on a business blog, the safest thing to do is to use one of the commercial licenses.



It's worth noting that only derivative works carry the Share Alike label and that Creative Commons licenses are non-revocable and not exclusive. [Foter](#) has an excellent infographic illustrating the different licenses and showing how users should credit the photographers.

# CHAPTER 3



# How to Find Royalty-Free Images

As mentioned earlier, one of the perils of royalty-free images is overuse. As Stephanie Hamilton pointed out in a recent post on [overused images](#), the more affordable the photo is, the more likely people are to use it, and those are precisely the images you want to avoid if you are searching for a fresh look for your blog.

You can get around this by being a savvy searcher. That means checking the download stats for any image you like and seeing if the same photographer has a less popular version of the same picture. And as you'll see in the section on Google Image Search, you can also use that tool to avoid being samey.

It's also a good idea to go for one of the big royalty-free image banks that regularly adds to its photo stock. Here are a few to try.



## BIGSTOCK



[Bigstock](#) says it has more than 17 million images. To find a photo there, either start with one of the main categories listed in the home page footer or use the on-site search box to find the perfect image.

Bigstock includes search autocomplete for on-the-fly search refinement. You can also use the on-page filters to exclude certain keywords, to add new ones, to pick a type of image (photos, illustrations or vectors) and to refine by category. You can even filter photos that are for editorial or non-editorial use or that need a model release.

A good feature on Bigstock is the ability to easily select new photos from the top of the results page. If they have been recently uploaded, you may find something that has not yet become popular. You CAN choose popular photos, but it's a double-edged sword.

Search results bring up image thumbnails and you'll have to create an account to see more. If you decide to get an account, you will get access to a free image (selected by Bigstock) every week.

Like many stock photo sites, Bigstock operates on a subscription model, allowing you a certain number of downloads for a monthly fee. You can also buy credit packs, with credits good for up to a year.

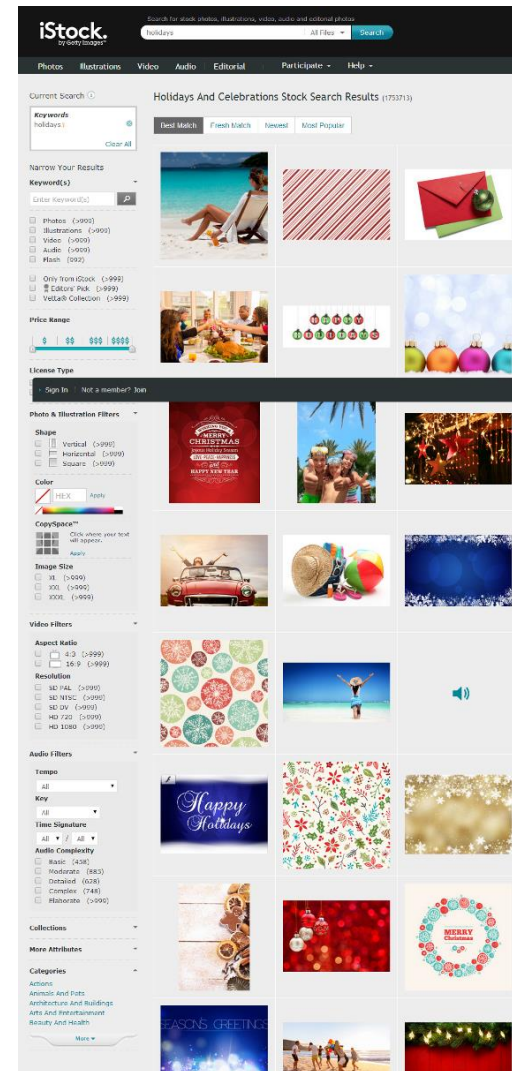
But if you haven't used it before, it's worth getting their 7 day free trial which allows you to choose and download 5 royalty-free images a day. That's an image for your next 35 blog posts before you decide whether to sign up permanently. If you don't subscribe, your account defaults to the free version with a single monthly download.

ISTOCKPHOTO

[iStockPhoto](#) is part of Getty Images, as is its sister site, ThinkStock. It has customizable subscription plans and credit packs (prepayment saves you money). One reason to use iStockPhoto to find royalty-free images is because it has one of the widest ranges of filters I have seen, making it easy to find the perfect image.

And it's not just images; as well as the standard photos and illustrations, you can also search for video, audio and Flash animations. You can refine by special collections, editors' picks or uploads to the site (as opposed to photos from other stock photo sites), and can even choose whether your photos feature people or not.

There are also a number of photo and illustration filters giving fine-grained control over the image that you see. Once you click on an image thumbnail, a larger photo pops out. If you're interested, click on this for details of pricing by size and licensing.



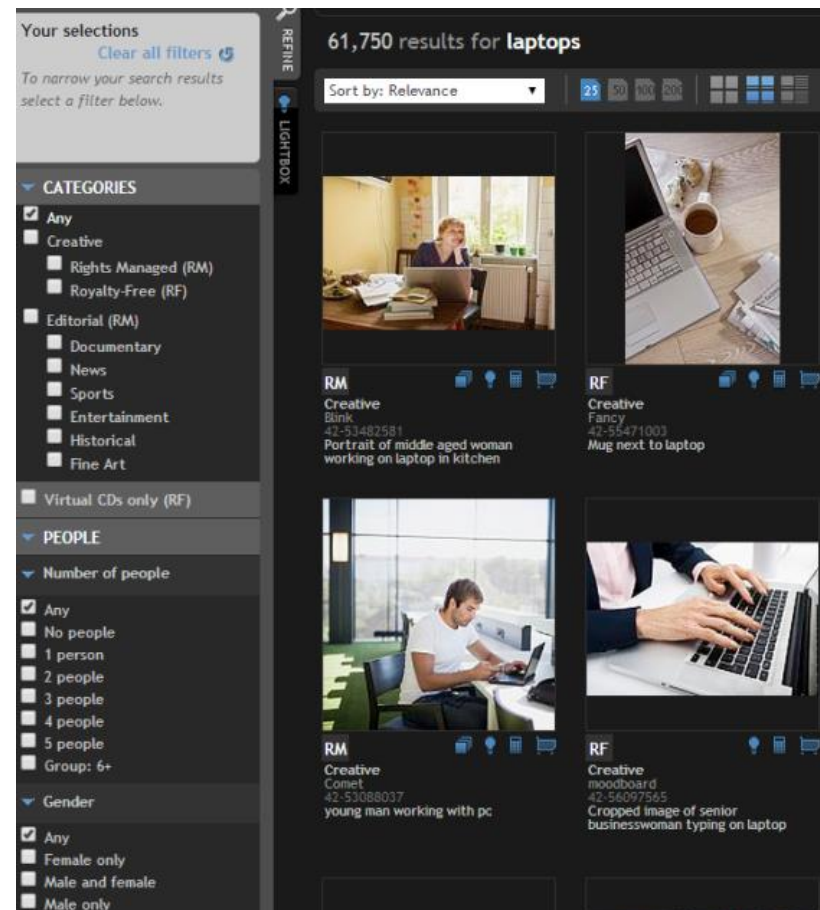
## CORBIS

[Corbis](#) features a similarly rich search box, allowing you to pick photos suitable for a certain editorial type, to choose the number of people, their gender, ethnicity and age, as well as several image attributes. Corbis has a number of subscription options.

Once you find a suitable image, click on the thumbnail for a bigger preview, which includes an image title and description, and details of the desired attribution, model release and the keywords that it has been tagged with. This can help with finding similar images. You will need to create an account to go further.

The images on this site are beautiful, but expect the price tag to be high, as it's not shown on the site.

The resources listed under public domain images can also help you find stock photos, as can some of the Creative Commons image search tools. For even more royalty-free photos, check out Web Designer Depot's [A-Z list of stock photo websites](#).



# CHAPTER 4



# How to Find Public Domain Images

If you have decided to use public domain images for your blog post or content marketing, where do you start?

A great place to begin is with government agencies. If that seems like a strange place to find free images, think again. Works made by government employees as part of their work do not enjoy copyright protection. That's why you see so many beautiful images from NASA and other government agencies. While this does not apply to all government-produced images in all countries, it's a pretty good start.

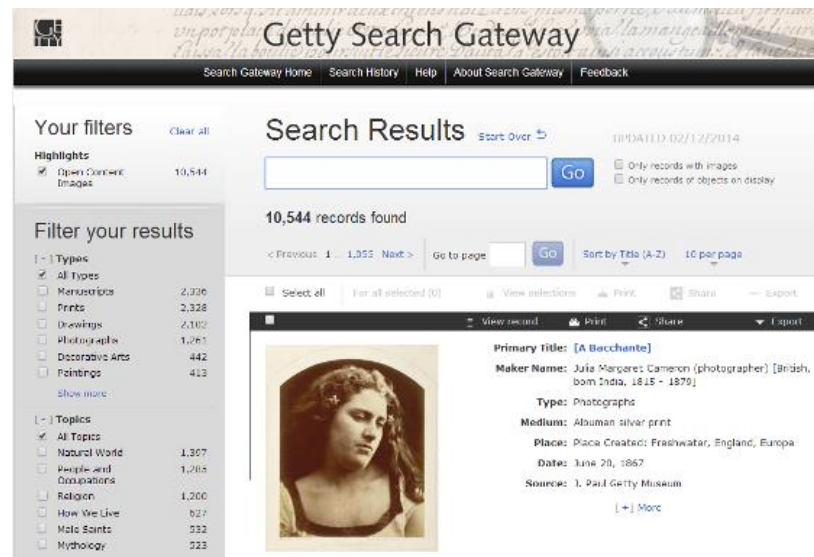
Beyond that, there are several sites that help you locate public domain images. Here are a few of them.

## GETTY SEARCH GATEWAY

Navigate to the Getty Search Gateway and click on [open content images](#). Use either multiple terms separated by a space or phrases in quotes to help refine your search for the images you need. You can also use the filtering buttons at the left to focus on prints, drawings, photographs or paintings or to refine by topic.

Image results show a thumbnail and description. Click on the link at the top to go to the download page. You will have to let Getty know how you plan to use the image via an online form to gain access.

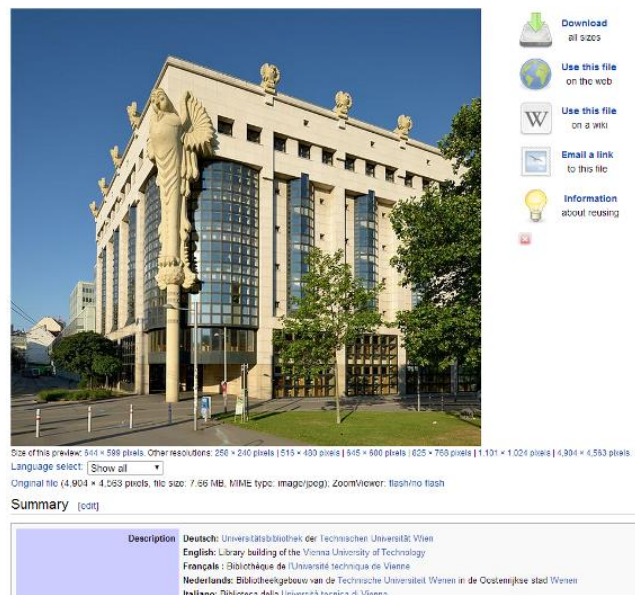
Be warned: Some of these images are quite large. Right click and save, then edit in your image editing program to use.



## WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

To search Wikimedia Commons for [public domain photos](#) you can either use our link or try the on-site search box and include "cc-pd-mark" along with your search terms to identify public domain photos.

Image thumbnails display in the browser window and you can click on the image that interests you to see a large preview and image information. Then either right click on the preview or click on a link to bring up a different size resolution in the same window, then right click again to save.

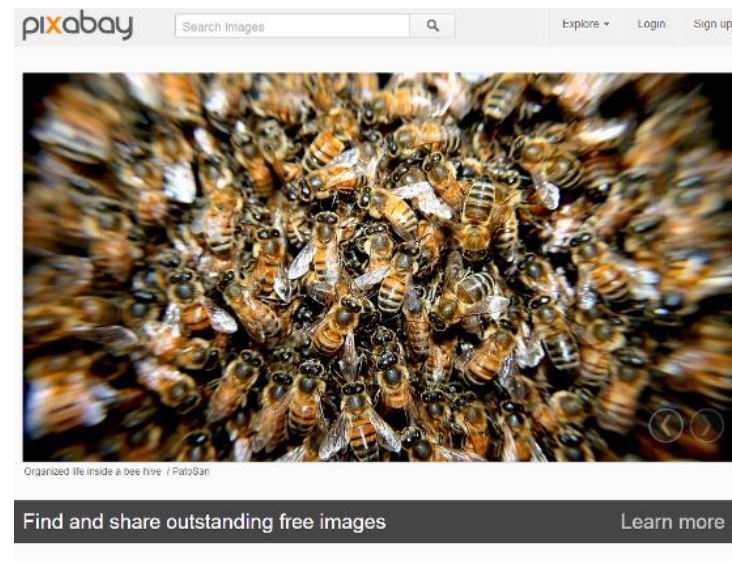




## PIXABAY

[Pixabay](#) is a recent entry into the public domain image space. It has a number of stunning free images available and you can choose from vectors, drawings and photos.

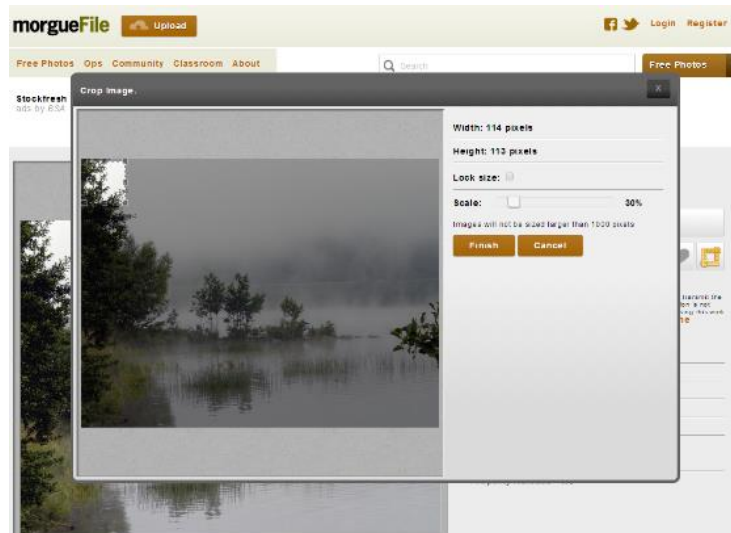
There is no requirement for attribution. Click on any image to see a pop-up box with several image sizes available for viewing or downloading as well as a link to the terms of use and license. This site is easy to use and has a number of images that have not yet been seen anywhere else.



## MORGUEFILE

Finding free photos on [Morguefile](#) is very similar. Click on the "free photos" tab to identify images that are free to use under the Morguefile license. Click on the image you like to get statistics on how often it has been downloaded (which can help you decide whether you want to use it).

You get a direct download link for the image and a snapshot of the license. One great feature on Morguefile is that it includes on-site cropping and scaling tools which allow you to get the perfect image for your needs.



## OTHER RESOURCES FOR FINDING PUBLIC DOMAIN IMAGES

There are dozens of sites offering public domain images, and you can also find these images when using Creative Commons search engines (which we will look at in more detail later). While it's hard to put together a comprehensive list of these sources, the following resources will help.

- The [Harvard Library](#) has a guide to finding and attributing public domain and Creative Commons images. It lists several sites in both categories.
- The [UCLA Library's](#) list of image resources includes several public domain image sources, as well as sites for finding free-to-use image collections and Creative Commons images.
- [Wikipedia](#) has a long list of public domain image search sites, including many government sites.
- [Public Domain Sherpa](#) lists a number of public domain image collections and highlights the licensing and attribution terms.
- [99 Designs](#) lists 21 public domain image sources.
- [GIMP Savvy](#) includes links to several government image collections.
- [Getty](#) has just made millions of images free for non-commercial use, provided you use their embed code.
- And let's not forget Flickr's [Commons](#) page.

# CHAPTER 5



# How to Find Creative Commons Images on Flickr

Flickr is the default image source for many blog owners. It's no surprise. With huge numbers of Creative Commons images available and new ones uploaded all the time, it is almost always possible to find something that hasn't been used a million times.

If you want to find Creative Commons images, the best way to find these on Flickr is via the [advanced search](#) interface.

This allows you to:

- search for word combinations (exact phrase, all words or any words)
- omit search terms
- search by content (not just photos, but also video, screenshots, screencasts, illustrations and animations)
- search by media type
- search by date

Most important, it includes a section at the bottom where you can check a box to search for Creative Commons images. Additional check boxes allow you to specify whether the content is for commercial use or for modification.

The search results give you a huge array of images relevant to your search terms in an infinitely scrolling list. You can refine the search results, choosing to sort by interestingness or recency, though the former can throw up some surprising and irrelevant images.

## Advanced Search

### Search for

*Tip: Use these options to look for an exact phrase or to exclude words or tags from your search. For example, search for photos tagged with "apple" but not "pie".*

All of these words  

☒ Full text ☐ Tags only

None of these words:

### Search by content type

*Tip: Check the boxes next to content you'd like to see come up in searches.*

- ☒ Photos / Videos  
☐ Screenshots / Screencasts  
☐ Illustration/Art / Animation/CGI

### Search by media type

*Tip: Filter to only display either photos or videos in your search results.*

- ☒ Photos & Videos  
☐ Only Photos  
☐ Only Videos  
☐ HD videos only

### Search by date

*Tip: Use one or both dates to search for photos taken or posted within a certain time.*

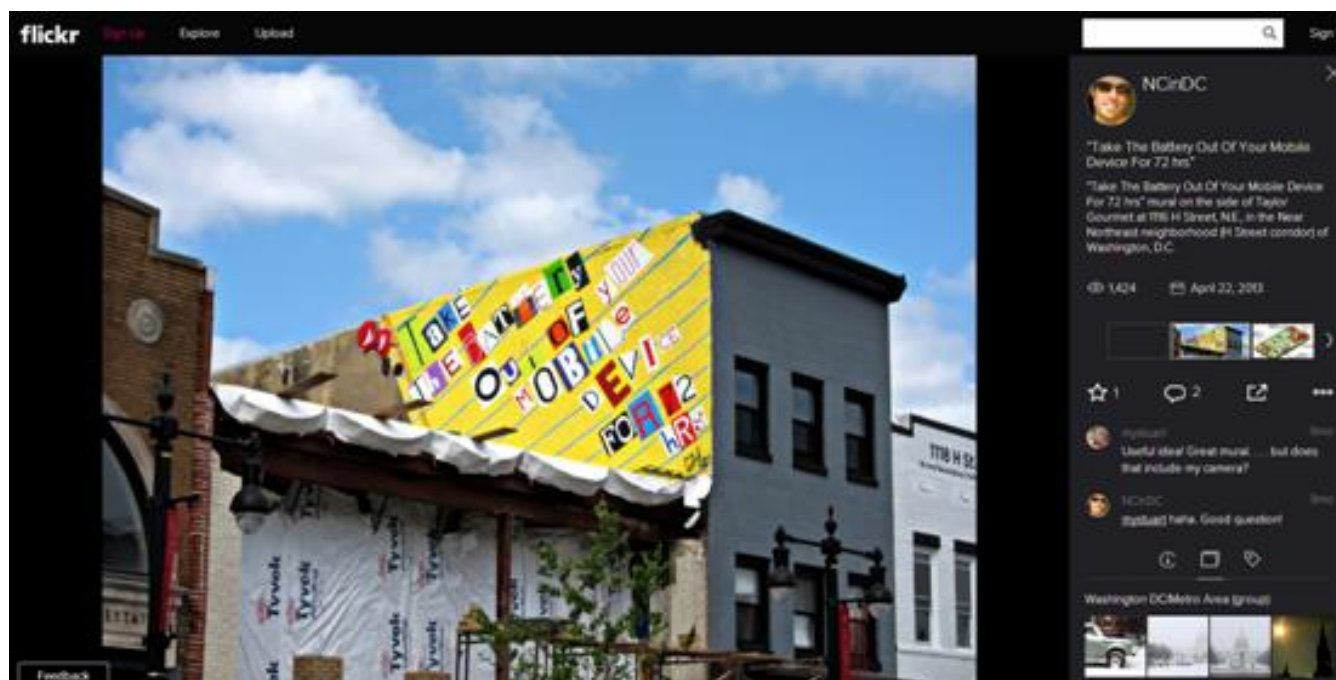
Photos taken  after  before   
mm/dd/yyyy mm/dd/yyyy



*Tip: Find content with a Creative Commons license. [Learn more...](#)*

- ☐ Only search within Creative Commons-licensed content  
☐ Find content to use commercially  
☐ Find content to modify, adapt, or build upon

Hover over an image to see the title and photographer, or click on it for even more information. The right column, next to the main image, shows additional image description and thumbnails of other photos taken by the same person.



Embed code is available via the sharing button. There are also three little dots. Click these to get to the download page, which explains the licensing rights via the standard Creative Commons icons and offers different sizes. Occasionally, an image that shows up in the Creative Commons search may still not be available for use—it's worth double checking the licensing at this point.

### Photo / All sizes

License  Some rights reserved by NCIn2C

Download Download the Large 1024 size of this photo (All sizes of this photo are available for download under a Creative Commons license)

Size	<a href="#">Square 75</a> (75 x 75)	<a href="#">Small 240</a> (240 x 176)	<a href="#">Medium 500</a> (500 x 397)	<a href="#">Large 1024</a> (1024 x 767)	<a href="#">Original</a> (19576 x 28571)
	<a href="#">Square 150</a> (150 x 150)	<a href="#">Small 320</a> (320 x 235)	<a href="#">Medium 640</a> (640 x 499)	<a href="#">Large 1024</a> (1024 x 767)	
	<a href="#">Thumbnail</a> (100 x 73)		<a href="#">Medium 800</a> (800 x 607)	<a href="#">Large 2048</a> (2048 x 1533)	





## 5.1 SEVEN OTHER WAYS TO SEARCH FLICKR

Despite—or perhaps because of—the huge number of photos on Flickr, it's sometimes impossible to find the image you really want, even if you know it MUST be there. In those cases, you can search Flickr Creative Commons content via an alternative interface. There are several to choose from, but here are some that stand out:

1. [Behold](#) is a simple search box on a plain white background, a bit like the original Google search page. Use the check boxes below the search box to filter your search by usage and modification. Although it hasn't been updated in a while, this tool still works well. Interestingly, Behold also has an [image stamper](#) tool which allows you to get a time stamp and prove licensing rights. This could be useful if you use an image and the photographer/creator later changes the rights.
2. [Flickrstorm](#) claims to outdo Flickr itself on bringing up images relevant to your search keywords. A drop-down menu next to the main search box gives you access to the different Creative Commons licensing options. The site loads multiple thumbnails and keeps track of the images you clicked on. You can also add images that interest you to a download tray via a link below the image preview and download the ones you want when you have finished browsing.
3. [FlickrCC](#) quickly finds thumbnails and brings up the one that interest you in a preview window on the same page. You can choose your size from that same page and it also tells you how to attribute the image. With all the info you need on a single page, this can save on mouse clicks.
4. [Simple CC Flickr Search](#) has a very dated interface, but still works well. You can search Flickr images by keyword and by interestingness, posting date or date taken.

While you can find images for modification, the site does not allow you to find Creative Commons images licensed for commercial use.

5. [Compfight](#) used to be one of my favorite tools for finding Creative Commons images. It can be slow to load sometimes, but when it's working, it's useful. Plug in your search terms and use the menu in the left sidebar to refine your results. Please note that the top of the interface shows stock photos, with the Flickr photos below. It's a great way to assess a lot of photos at a glance, and the filtering in the left sidebar works well. When you click on an image, you see licensing info, images sizes for download and HTML code for the attribution on a single page.
6. There's also [Photopin](#), a site that makes it easy to find free-to-use photos on Flickr. Like Compfight, you plug in your search terms and use the minimal filters at the side to find the images you want, making sure to avoid the stock images at the top of the window. Click on an image to get access to sizes and HTML you can use for attribution.
7. Finally, you can also find Flickr Creative Commons images by using the [search function on the Creative Commons](#) site itself. This allows you to input your keywords, choose usage rights and pick a search engine. At the time of writing, there were 11 to choose from, five of them relating to images. Sadly, you can only use one search engine at a time, but Flickr is one of the options. The results page loads on Flickr. This is a great tool to use if you want an easy way to search for images on multiple sites.

# CHAPTER 6

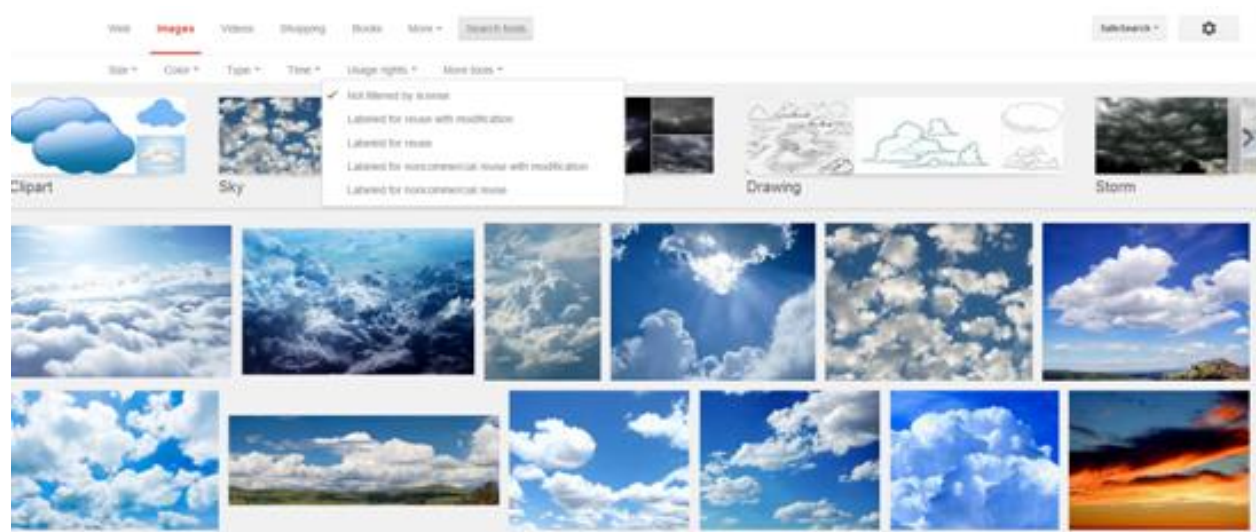


# How to Find Creative Commons images using Google Image Search

[Google Image Search](#) provides another way to find Creative Commons images and it's got a lot of features that make it an ultra-useful tool.

For a start, the search features are excellent, as you would expect from Google. The top of the page allows you to filter your search by size, color (currently 12 colors), type (face, photo, clip art, line drawing or animated), recency and usage rights. You can even choose to display the image sizes overlaid on the images (though since you can see these when you hover, there's not much point). This is a great way to search multiple Creative Commons sources at once.

That's not all. When testing Google Image Search using the keyword "clouds," a horizontal slider (see the screenshot on the next page) at the top of the page gave me the option to click on related search terms such as sky, dark clouds, storm and more. I could select clip art or drawings, and there was even a box in the slider for illustrations of the different types of clouds. This could be a big help in refining your original idea for illustrating a blog post or other content piece.



And there's even more. A killer feature on Google Image Search is the ability to click the little camera icon in the search box to search by image. This is also available via Chrome and Firefox extensions. You can either input the URL of an image or upload one and then click search to see the magic.

You can see the number of results for the identical image (the fewer, the better), where it's been used and can use the usual search tools to identify recent uses of the image. At the bottom of the search page, Google provides thumbnails of similar images (just in case you need an alternative).

This is an excellent way to avoid overusing an image and keep your blog and other content visually fresh.

# CHAPTER 7



# Tips on Working with Images

Once you have found the perfect image, the next step is to use it in your blog. In doing this, you need to think about image attribution (so you don't contravene any licensing restrictions) and search engine optimization (SEO) for images.



Image: [Pixabay](#)

## 7.1 HOW TO ATTRIBUTE IMAGES

All the sites listed in this guide have their own rules on image attribution. Depending on the site the image you need may require:

- no attribution
- a mention of the photographer's name linked to the photo page
- a linked mention of the photographer's name plus a link to the site where you found the image
- a link to the photographer's site

It's a good idea to check the rules if you are using a different site and follow them. Alternatively, you can stick with photos that don't require attribution. On Crazy Egg, the practice is to credit the photographer with a link to the photo page unless a different form of attribution is needed.

## 7.2 SEO FOR IMAGES

Attribution aside, you'll get more from the images you select if you optimize them for search. That includes taking care of things like:

- Naming images with your chosen focus keyword and including that keyword in the alt tags when you upload. (See our article on [post-Hummingbird SEO](#) for more tips on this.)
- Using the product name as the image name and in the alt text if you're running an [e-commerce site](#). This will improve its chances of appearing in Google image search.
- Including relevant image descriptions of around 150 characters for [improved accessibility](#)—this is easy to do on a WordPress site.



- Specifying a width and height for your image, which is what [Google recommends](#).

While you're at it, take care of the impact of images on page load speed by making the images only as large as you need. Aim for something that will look good on Pinterest and other image-based sites, without slowing your site down too much. To do this, you may need some of the tools in the next section.

## 7.3 IMAGE EDITING

Sometimes a little editing will make a good image great. If you have a Creative Commons image that is licensed for modification then it is perfectly okay for you to add your branding, the post title or even another image that you can modify to get the effect you want and make something completely unique that is easily shareable on social media.

That's why you need an image editing tool. There are lots to choose from, for desktop, web and mobile devices. We mentioned [22 of them](#) in a recent post. Most of the tools listed let you adjust brightness and contrast, edit the color, touch up the photos, crop and rotate and add filters.

Of the ones listed in the recent roundup, the one I use most is [Pixlr](#). It's got three varieties: a full editor similar to Photoshop; a vintage photo effects editor and an express version which is the one I tend to use most often.

Like many others it allows you to upload an image from a URL, a webcam or manually—and then you have a huge range of adjustments, effects, overlays, borders, stickers and type you can use to customize the image you started with. It's yet another way to get an image that's totally unique.

# Resources



# Resource List

With this comprehensive guide, you should easily be able to find the perfect image for your blog. It's a good idea to choose sites with more filtering options and frequent updates so you can keep your visual presence fresh. Here's a list of the resources mentioned for your reference:

## RIGHTS-MANAGED IMAGES

- [Getty Images](#)
- [Corbis](#)

## ROYALTY-FREE IMAGES

- [Shutterstock](#)
- [iStockPhoto](#)
- [Bigstock](#)
- [iStockPhoto](#)
- [Corbis](#)
- [A-Z list of stock photo websites](#)

## PUBLIC DOMAIN IMAGES

- [Getty open content images](#)
- [Wikimedia Commons public domain photos](#)
- [Pixabay](#)
- [Morguefile](#)
- [Flickr Commons](#)
- [Wikipedia](#)
- [Public Domain Sherpa](#)
- [UCLA Library's](#)
- [Harvard Library](#)

## CREATIVE COMMONS

- [Flickr](#)
- [Behold](#)
- [Flickrstorm](#)
- [FlickrCC](#)
- [Simple CCFlickr Search](#)
- [Compfight](#)
- [Photopin](#)
- [Creative Commons site](#)
- [Google Image Search](#)

# It's All About Higher Quality Content

No one said content marketing was easy. Doing it well requires a significant investment of time and (often) money. Most brands have made it a goal to improve the quality of their content, but they focus on their writing only. Unfortunately, that's not good enough.

For your biggest gains in content marketing and blogging, focus on images as well. Use this guide to help you find relevant images that add value to your content. We've told you everything you need to know. The rest is up to you. But we're confident you'll enjoy the results.

## About the Author

Self-confessed word nerd and polymath [Sharon Hurley Hall](#) has the perfect job—as a professional writer and blogger. And when she can indulge her geeky side and write about new web tools, it's a little slice of heaven.

Sharon has also worked as a journalist, a college professor (teaching journalism, of course), an editor and a ghostwriter in a career spanning 25 years. Currently, you can find Sharon's work on publications as diverse as Crazy Egg, Unbounce, Basic Blog Tips, Ragan PR, The Content Standard and IBM Midsize Insider.



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