

BUDGET

STOCK

PHOTO.com

2020

STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY RESOURCE BOOK

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....4

LICENCE TYPES 5

[Royalty Free License \(RF\)](#) **5**

[Creative Commons License](#) **5**

[Rights Managed \(RM\) License](#) **6**

[Editorial Use License](#) **6**

[Royalty Free Extended License](#) **7**

[Free Images Have Hidden Costs](#) **9**

STOCK PHOTO INDUSTRY IN 2020..... 10

[More Creative Images - Everywhere!](#) **10**

["Authentic" Mainstream](#) **10**

[Covid Effects](#) **10**

[Confirmed: Mobile Stock Went Nowhere](#) **11**

[Trends in Words:](#) **11**

[The Still Slow Growth of CC0](#) **12**

CREATIVE COMMONS 13

[A godsend for those looking for free photos](#) **13**

[Sources of Creative Commons Images](#) **14**

[Creative Commons Samples](#) **15**

FREE PHOTO SITES..... 19

[Disadvantages of Free Sites](#) **25**

[Disadvantages of using PD Images](#) **29**

CC ZERO 30

[CC0 Stock Image Site Directory](#) **30**

[CC0 Tumblr Site Tips:](#) **32**

BUYERS MARKET VS FREE PHOTOS.....33

["It's never been better for image buyers"](#) **33**

MICROSTOCK AGENCIES34

[Microstock Marketplace](#)35

[How to Choose a Microstock Agency](#)36

[Microstock Directory](#)37

[Subscription Microstock](#)38

[Useful Microstock Search Tools & Directories](#)40

MACROSTOCK / FULL PRICE.....43

SPECIALITY STOCK IMAGES45

[Travel](#)45

[Christmas and Festive](#)47

[Halloween](#)48

[Religion & Faith](#)49

GLOSSARY..... 50

STAY UP TO DATE53

[Discount Coupons & News](#)53

[Broken Link / Add Listing / Feedback](#)53

discover
the Best of
Free & Paid
Stock Photos

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2020 Edition of the BudgetStockPhoto Stock Photo Users Resource Book

Sometimes, finding stock photos is harder than it looks.

Budget constraints, awkward search systems, sites trying to up-sell you their premium collection when all you want is an image to drop into a blog post... Sounds familiar?

Regardless of your budget (including plenty of options for those with no budget at all!) we have compiled this guide packed full of image libraries ready to provide you with just what you are looking for.

LICENCE TYPES

To those outside the industry all the license terms used to supply stock photography can be a little confusing! here's a little help:

A license is the agreement that a photographer or agency provides and that the image buyer or user agrees to when they buy or download an image for use - **even if the image is free you are usually bound by some kind of license agreement.** There are several types of license available ranging from very restrictive in the case of rights managed images to quite relaxed in the case of creative commons. Most images are licensed as royalty free images because that allows some flexibility and hence are popular with buyers.

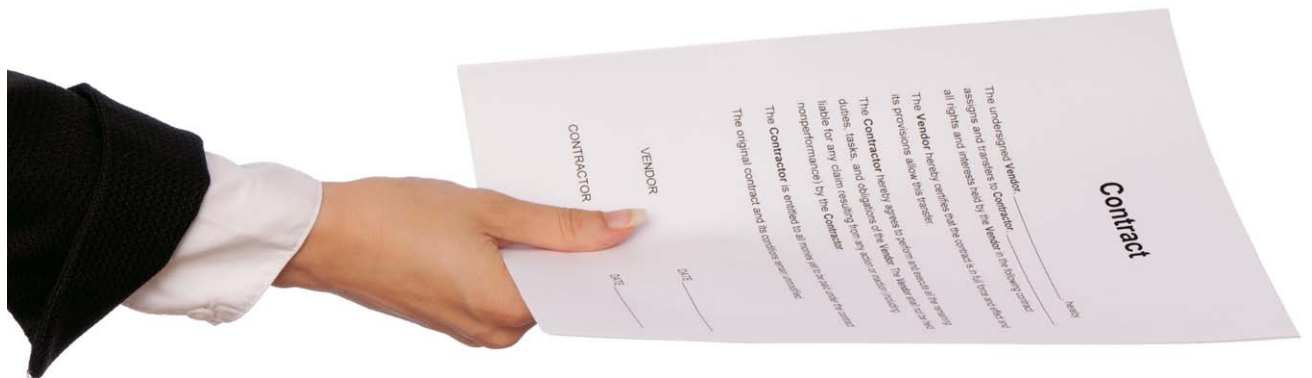
Royalty Free License (RF)

Royalty free has become the default license type of selling stock images. It allows flexibility to the designer in that an image only needs to be purchased once for use in unlimited applications. There are however some license limitations, you can usually print up to 1/2 million copies of the image in a publication but you cannot create a derivative products using the image (one where the image forms a part of the products

reason for existence e.g. a poster, calendar or t-shirt) for that you need an extended license. All microstock images are licensed as royalty free, there are also a lot of full priced or macrostock agencies

Creative Commons License

Creative commons licenses are a series of license types that were setup by a non profit organization to help photographers easily license their work. Creative commons licenses allow photographers to protect their work in simple to understand terms while still providing it for use free of charge to image users. Creative commons license always require an attribution (a credit to the image creator) and in a lot of cases require that derivative work be 'shared alike', images are often not available for commercial use. More about creative commons licenses



Rights Managed (RM) License

In a rights managed license the buyer needs to define exactly where the image will be used, this includes the number of copies printed or length of time the image will be in use, size of image and industry it will be used in. Because every image use is accounted for this allows for the buyer to exclusively license the image for use in their industry hence meaning that a competitor will not be able to license the same image (this sometimes becomes a problem with royalty free where anyone can download and use an image) RM licenses are very restrictive and you need to re-license the image to use it again in a different medium. They are usually the most expensive option too, although prices can be cheaper when comparing certain usages with full priced royalty free). Look to Rights managed agencies for specialist images and those with very high production values (i.e. hard to setup)

Editorial Use License

Images which feature logos, brands, recognisable products, events or celebrities are licensed as editorial use meaning they can only be used as part of newsworthy stories. Editorial images cannot be used in any form of advertising or commercial application.

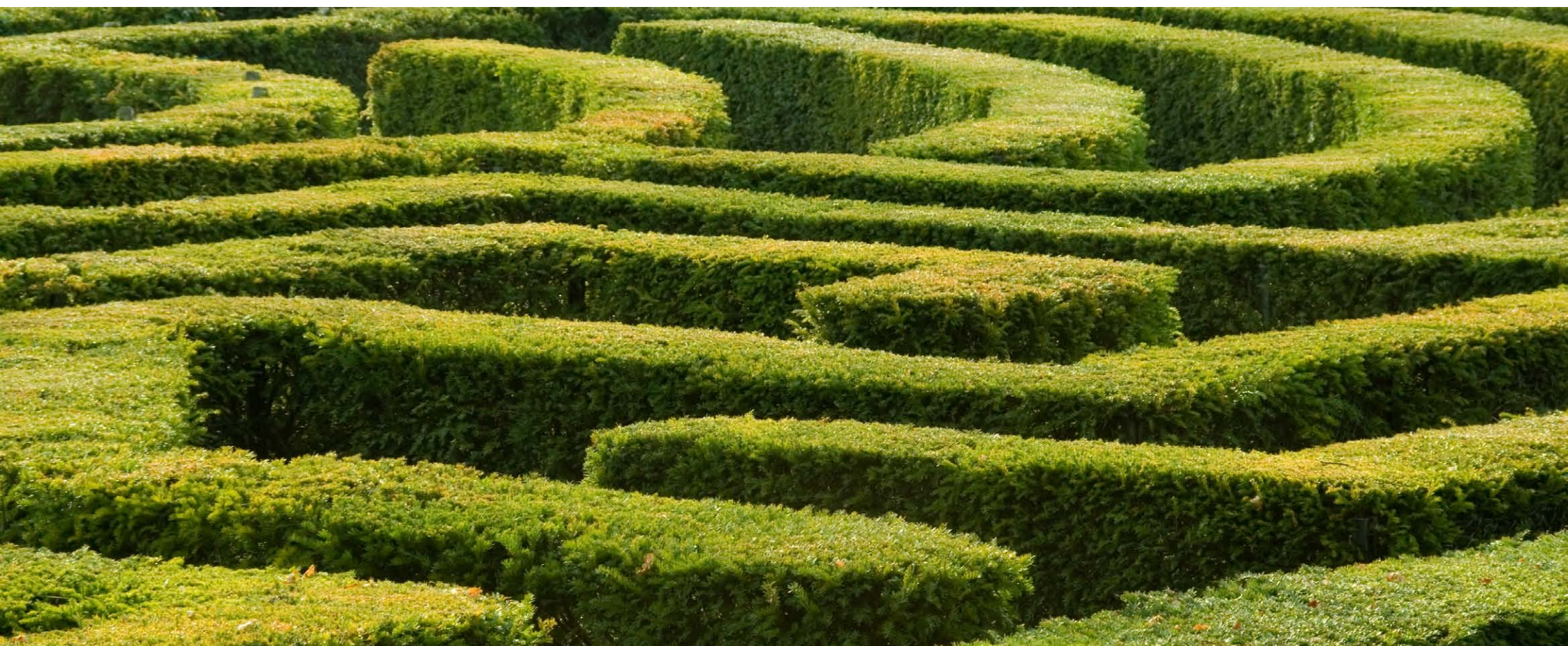


Royalty Free Extended License

An extended license extends the terms of a standard royalty free license so that an image can be used in derivative products (e.g. mugs, t-shirts, website templates) there are usually limits on the number of products that can be produced/sold. It sometimes works out cheaper to license an RM image for such usage, but microstock agencies generally offer a cheaper option for low volume use.

Public Domain & CC0

This is usually an absence of a license agreement, the image creator has placed their work into the 'public domain' for use by anyone in whatever way they like. CC0 is a recently created standardised dedication to the public domain, not to be confused with the other Creative Commons Licenses which are all attribution based



Which License Do I Need?

As you can see in the previous section a mesmerizing array of license terms and sales models awaits the image user, if you are new to this it can all be a little confusing! There are various criteria that you need to look at when either buying or selecting free stock photo for use.

Copyright Free?

Most people are familiar with the term copyright, and often search for 'copyright free images', that phrase is a bit of a misnomer, very few images are truly copyright free; those images are known as 'public domain'. The vast majority of images are copyrighted and that copyright is owned by the author/photographer. You can still use a copyrighted image, indeed that's what buying stock photography is all about, every image at a stock photo agency website is copyrighted, when you 'buy the image' you in fact license it for use either in a specified way in the case of rights managed, or for unspecified use in the case of 'royalty free'. Always check the license terms to make sure that your application is covered under the license agreement.

- Exclusivity - do you need the image to be unique? > Rights managed stock
- Cost - looking for images at a minimal cost? > [Microstock](#)
- Exceptional quality images and can pass on the cost to the client > Macrostock
- No budget - doing a project for charity, or blogging, and you don't mind adding a credit for use > [free stock images](#), [creative commons](#), [PD & CC0](#)
- Resolution - high resolution images are usually more expensive than low resolution images i.e. it's more expensive to license an image that you can print on a large poster compared to one that is a few inches square on a web page.
- End use - you may need what is called an extended license if you want to use the image in a book printed in large volume or a product for sale, not all images are available for this.
- Convenience - subscription image services, or 'credit packages' often provide a very simple way to get an image at speed.
- Volume - if you regularly buy images then a subscription service is often good value, there are both macrostock and [microstock subscriptions](#) available.

Free Images Have Hidden Costs

- **Poor search options**
It can take a long time to find a free image when a good usable one off the shelf can cost \$1.
- **Limited choice**
Free is not always 'free' when you find an image you will need to check the license terms are suitable, especially if you use a search engine to find images, they might not even be available for use (i.e. they are copyrighted and no usage license is available from the copyright holder / photographer). Sometimes only the low resolution version of the image is available free, the higher resolution may cost money.
- **Conditions Apply**
In terms of free when referring to stock photography, the word invariably refers to you not having to pay for the image, that said there are often some hoops to jump through when using free stock images, they might need an attribution (i.e. a credit/link) where you use the images. They might only be available free of charge for non commercial or non-profit use. In many cases you need to register (for free) on a website to download the full resolution version of the image. Clearly all of these free websites support themselves in one way or another, this is usually in the form of promotional messages or advertising - some good work can be found on free sites but clearly it's more likely that you will find quality images on a paid site even if only at a cost of a few dollars.

Calculating True Costs - Time is not Free!

The cost of an image is not just because in it's price to license. The time taken to find the image is often a large factor in the cost. If it takes two hours to find an image that costs just a few dollars then the time factor becomes an important buying choice.



STOCK PHOTO “STATE OF THE NATION”

Current stock photography industry trends, forecast for 2020 and beyond

More Creative Images - Everywhere!

I've written before and I'll write it again no doubt - the trend is more images, larger images, images with everything, but in the past 4 years tastes in images have noticeably changed to embrace a more creative cinematic aesthetic. The use of images has also been enhanced by the death of the “info graphic” in recent years.

As of 2020 Video has still not taken off to any great extent as is predicted but is still growing. I suspect it will be for some time, Facebook videos are auto playing a nauseating spin of motion as we scroll down our feed, but like sounds or music on the internet, I do wonder about video in the mainstream and a visitor backlash at bandwidth or more likely the distraction it brings. We have ad blockers brought about because of visually noisy advertising banners, there are also ways to block video. The industry is learning to only play video when the mouse rolls over on desktop platforms.

One day in the future can see myself writing about a new (sic) trend in “information rich” websites with lots of useful textural information all displayed right in front of your eyes - but sadly I can't see that happening for a good few years yet. The novelty of swiping endlessly (and often needlessly)

around screens with massive text and images to find what we want has now long lost it's novelty. We are still to see any kind of movement back towards information dense screens that enhance productivity. In the meanwhile there is plenty of negative space that images can spread into.

“Authentic” Mainstream

During my last review I wrote about authentic style images becoming mainstream. Authentic, retro and instagram style (now minus the overused cross process effects thank god!) is now the norm. Polished high key style stock with white teeth and smiles is completely out! This has seen an availability of space for other styles of photography, especially well thought out and executed 'clean minimalist' often with a pop of colour. Minimal or sparse composition and overhead perspective continue to be a growing trend.

Covid Effects

Conspicuous use of technology to work smarter, now manifesting itself in WFH / teleworking was a trend in our last industry review. We were seeing less groups of people and more individuals in photography before the corona pandemic, At time of writing this it almost feels alien to see groups of people together in a photo. As we use technology more than ever to do things like check-in, pay bills etc, then the stock photography depicting these topics will have to be constantly refreshed as technology advances.

Market Growth

Shutterstock is slowly losing its commanding lead in the microstock industry with more than 300 million images online as I write this (75 million 4 years ago). Shutterstock are seeing growing competition from Adobe Stock. Not entirely surprisingly, if designers are locked into buying a subscription for their design software then bundling or adding a subscription to stock images is easy.

Getty images are no longer quite so weighed down by greedy investors milking profits and hindering the companys' ability to adapt.

Confirmed: Mobile Stock Went Nowhere

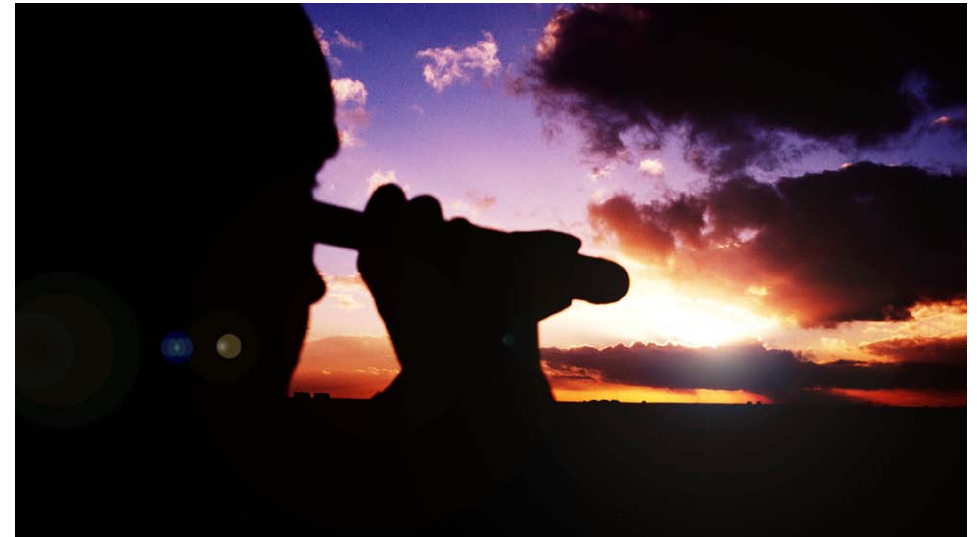
6 years ago you would have thought that mobile was going to take over the world of stock photography, well it didn't - it's style and aesthetic did. Mobile brought us realism. Photographers were easily able to execute photos in a "phone style", and combine it with professional descriptions and keywording, high quality of professional cameras, reliability and trustworthiness of known producers and distributors who sometimes offer a legal guarantee of their work. Crowdsourcing from amateurs has its pitfalls.

Trends in Words:

Authenticity - Minority : Disability : Imperfection : Candid

Realism - POV (point of view, first person perspective) :

Real Life : Available Light : Start my Day



The Still Slow Growth of CC0

After initially bursting onto the scene in mid 2014 with lots of excitement and some jaw dropping completely “free to use images” (CC0 is a license that allows photographers to divest themselves of all rights to their images so far as is possible - public domain dedication). Reviewing in 2016 for our list of CC0 photo sites, I was totally underwhelmed by what you found if you scratched the surface. Most of these sites had few images, those that are there are nothing short of extraordinary considering they are being given away. Many of the images are simply copied around from one site to the next. In the past 4 years CC0 has continued along the same vein. A couple of major sites leveraging the license type were pexels and unsplash, but it’s very important to note that now both of those websites converted to a custom license which is not so liberal as CC0 (no redistribution allowed).

The large increase in numbers of CC0 seen in the initial years have been the addition of several collections of existing PD materials and public works (e.g. museum, old book prints etc). The lack of keywording for stock use, that is to say descriptive or emotive keywords rather than simple ‘what it is’ continues to hinder discoverability.

The company jumpstory has made an interesting move in this arena, creating a subscription service to allow easier discovery of CC0 images using machine learning to filter the best images. The terms of use are concerning however; do not think that these images are without strings, there may be other rights holders featured in the ‘free’ image (logos, protected designs, people).

If you enjoyed this article follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) to stay up-to-date on stock image industry stories.

Thanks!

CREATIVE COMMONS

A godsend for those looking for free photos

Creative Commons images are a special subset of 'free images'. Creative commons came about as way to simplify the minefield that is 'free' content (see later chapter) and allow photographers to provide ('license') their work for free under easy to understand terms which benefit both the photographer and the user.

The good people at creativecommons.org explain this better, but CC allows photographers and illustrators or creators of any content to clearly license their work, and tag it in such a way that it can be found online easily.

For the image user creative commons makes it clear if the images can be used in commercial applications, if changes can be made and in ALL cases an attribution as specified by the creator must be included when the image is used. The details of this attribution are usually displayed along with the image on the source web site often in a series of icons or a link to a licence page: as an example:



The above icon specifies that you can use the specified content for free in non-commercial applications, provided that you attribute (link back) as specified.



"You let others copy, distribute, display, and perform your copyrighted work — and derivative works based upon it — but only if they give credit the way you request."



"You allow others to distribute derivative works only under a license identical to the license that governs your work."



"You let others copy, distribute, display, and perform your work — and derivative works based upon it — but for noncommercial purposes only."



"You let others copy, distribute, display, and perform only verbatim copies of your work, not derivative works based upon it."

The above information was sourced from the [creative commons licenses information](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) page. Creative commons is just one of several license types that are commonly used in the stock photography industry to allow photographers and buyers to use and control image use

The "Disadvantage" of Creative Commons (if you could call it that) is that you need to attribute the image i.e. mention the author of the work in return for getting it for free.

Sources of Creative Commons Images

I'm not certain on the exact figures but with services like Flickr allowing users to easily license their images as creative commons it seems that there are more CC licensed images out there than there are on free photo sites with their own bespoke licenses. BUT a quick look at Flickr (more than 100 Million CC images) reveals that **most of these are not intended or at all useful for use as stock photos.**

The difficulty in creative commons images for stock is actually finding the stock images amongst all the other creative commons content. There are a couple of places I recommend looking:

search.creativecommons.org

Allows you to search google and flickr for creative commons images, and several other search providers for non-image based content (try attaching "image of" or "stock photo" to your search terms.

images.google.com

Click on "advanced image search" and then select for the "Usage Rights" dropdown, ALWAYS confirm that the images you find are actually licensed as you selected.

commons.wikimedia.org

more than 10 million categorized, photos, illustrations, footage, sound bites etc.

foter.com / visualhunt.com / compfight.com / photopin.com / wyllo.com / stockpholio.net

Browse through the CC images on flickr, searching and filtering by license type, nicely done

flickr.com/creativecommons

More than 290 million CC licensed images from the popular photo sharing site (almost 100 million with the most flexible "attribution only" license).

geograph.org.uk

contributors submit images covering locations all over the UK sorted on ordnancesurvey map references.

everystockphoto.com

Search a selection of free images sites (flickr, freeimages etc), the license selector in advanced search allows you to filter by creative commons and other free license types.

creativity103.com

unusual selection of textures, backdrops and abstract photos and illustration





Creative Commons Samples





stockarch.com (from sites own collection)























 Commercial Use	 Registration Required	 Approx Resolution	 Number of Images
--	---	---	--





openphoto.net  Yes  No  2000px(v)  19,000
Photographer community based site, where photographers contribute their work, good quality





stockarch.com  Yes  No  3000px(v)  10,000
Photographer community site, growing collection of images with good search features and quality





sciencestockphotos.com  Yes  No  3500  300
specialist collection of scientific stock images for commercial or education use





stockmedia.cc  Yes  Yes  3264px  3,000(?)
great looking managed collection of quality creative commons stock images, free registration needed





frankenfotos.com  Yes  No  3264px  100
great looking german language website, some stylish moody landscapes and cityscapes





kavewall  Yes  No  800px  1000?
free textures backgrounds and some images, only lower resolutions are free other available for purchase on cd for \$199





lightmatterphotography.com  Yes  No  900px(v)  600
limited selection of very nice travel images from aaron logan attribution US 3.0 license





tripalbum  No  No  1600px(v)  100's
plants listed by scientific and common name, relative small resolution, useful research tool, attribution license





freephotobank.org  Yes  No  1000px(v)  5000
varied collection including images from about 100 contributors, but sadly the search feature fails to find a lot of the images, creative commons attribution





alegriphotos.com  Yes  No  1600px(v)  2600
European library of cc stock images, science, abstract, nature, good search feature and broad image selection for its size





[Im Free](https://imfree)  Check  No  Varies  100s?
search tools to browse creative commons images from various sources





4freephotos.com  Yes  No  1600px(v)  5000
links are welcomed as are image contributions, selection typical of user generated content, variable quality but some users have contributed some good images also

freefoodphotos.com  Yes  No  3800px  1000
beautiful collection of food photography and related subjects

freebie.photography  Yes  No  3800  ~500
a simple site with a good collection of commercial style stock, no search

images.superfamous.com  Yes  No  1000  100's?
nice looking site, but you feel like you are in an example of trendy web design rather than somewhere to find photos, nice to browse now and again. images seem to be smaller than most other sites (standard web resolutions)

photos.bucketlistly.com  Yes  No  1000  1000s?
very nice collection of travel stock photos - hence the title, tumblr, no search, but tagged by categories, disappointingly small full size downloads

albumarium.com  Varies  No  Varies  Flickr Collection
beautiful looking collection with some categories to browse, appears to be mostly sourced from the flickr CC collection

FREE PHOTO SITES

Getting images for free is great, and there is a lot of choice out there, but sourcing images from a free site can have its drawbacks, the license that the images are provided with is different on every site you use. Some sites prohibit commercial use of the image, most require an attribution, some require you register or sign up to a newsletter to access the images, some ask that you seek permission first etc.






You will notice that several of the sites lists are commercial microstock agencies trying to up-sell by offering a selection of free images to attract visitors.

A word of warning: Expecting that nobody will notice if you make use of an image that you just take without permission is foolish, tools like [TinEye](#) make it free and easy to find who has used an image without permission, and stock agencies like getty and others use paid services like picscout.com track image misuse, bill the offender, taking legal action if images are not removed. If you are using images without the correct license, someone will catch up with you sooner or later. here's a typical forum quote "[I currently have a demand from getty images for \\$1200 over an image I hot-linked to in a blog entry 2 years ago.](#)"

With that in mind, here's our definitive list of resources providing free stock photos...






	Commercial Use Allowed	Attribution Required	Free Signup Required?	Guide to Resolution of Collection	Approx size
(v) = Varies ?=Approx/Guesstimate, Always confirm the license information before you use any image you find on a site listed here.					

[StockVault](#)

 No	 Yes	 No	 2000px(v)	 139,000
--	---	--	---	---


Community of more than 3000 photographers sharing their photos, note: non commercial use only

[Morguefile](#)

 Yes	 No	 No	 3000px(v)	 400,000?
---	--	--	---	--






Community of photographers sharing their photos, also contains a large selection of free work available under an attribution license. I rate this one highly.

[freeimages.com](#) (was [SXC.hu](#))

 Varies	 Varies	 Yes	 1500px(v)	 380,000
--	--	---	---	---

StockXchange, one of the first sites to 'share' stock photos, a range of licenses, some require attribution or permission, owned by Getty images to promote their microstock site 'istockphoto'

[freeimages \(.co.uk\)](#)

 Yes	 Yes	 Yes	 1000px(v)	 21,000
---	---	---	---	--





easy browsing and instant download, variable image quality but some good pictures to be found, and a photographer upload area with growing collection of images.

[freedigitalphotos.net](#)

 Yes	 Yes	 No	 400px(v)	 20,000?
--	--	---	---	--






There's a catch - only the lowest web resolution images are free the rest cost \$5

[unsplash.com](#)

 Yes	 No	 No	 varies	 ?LOTS!
---	--	--	--	--

After initially leveraging CC0 licenses, this site now offers images via its own attribution free license. stylish new imagery, useful for inspiration

[freepixels](#)

 Yes	 Yes	 No	 1600px(v)	 6500
---	---	--	---	--

well rounded collection, good search and some really quite good stock and conceptual images on offer, resolution varies 1852x2200

[pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com)



Another site that started out aggregating CC0 images, and has many images sourced from other CC0 websites [listed here](#), some images uploaded direct by photographers under a custom license, nice site, navigation and search. CAUTION: I found images from kaboompics marked as CC0 on pexels, linked to direct from the kaboompix site (but not marked as CC0 on kaboompix)

[rich & wild](#)



similar to above but no premium option/search, a free fortnightly feed of great looking photo creativity in your inbox

[Dreamstime \(free section\)](#)



Another commercial provider with free archive, special link to the free images at bottom right of their homepage.

[123rf \(free section\)](#)



10's of thousands of free images accessed via the "free stock images" link on the home page.

[photogen](#)



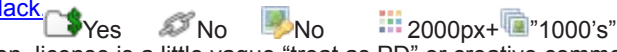
small collection, good search and no link needed but registration required.

[imageafter](#)



The place to find textures and backgrounds, plus a selection of reasonable stock photos

[X imagebase.davidniblack.com](#)



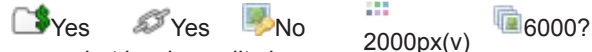
high quality small collection, license is a little vague "treat as PD" or creative commons attribution if you like? lots of good people photos up to 3072x2048 and some nice powerpoint backgrounds

[creepyhalloweenimages](#)



niche site with Halloween theme stock images and clipart

[X freephotosbank](#)



convenient navigation but somewhat low in quality images

[X freefoto.com](#)



you might want an ad blocker if you visit this long running, commercial ridden site, free for non commercial use - venerable old site that I think has been around as long as I have

[freestockphotos.com](#)



very limited selection, low resolution and images contain a stamp which must be left in place or replaced with a text credit

[unprofound](#)



creative and unusual site full of artistic PD images organized and browsed by colour

[adigitaldreamer/gallery](#)



high resolution but limited range of images, no license details provided

[studio25.ro](#)



site that seems similar to the old SXC.hu, registration required to download

[abstractinfluence.com](#)



design forum and stock photo gallery, license unclear

[amgmedia.com/freephotos](#)



painful navigation!, and very low resolution, you might find something for a web project here

[freelargephotos](#)



a good travel/scenic location based library, non commercial use only or buy a \$50 commercial license

[cepolina photo](#)



great navigation via category, colour and geographic location. downloads in various sizes but the maximum is 1024 pixels

[bigfoto.com](#)












you need to browse this useful but small collection manually, attribution required but can be omitted if you pay a \$5 license fee






[photorack.net](#)








massive collection (suspiciously so?), looks like it's no longer updated, and pitiful resolution of most of the photos makes for limited application - lack of search is also annoying






fromoldbooks.org  Yes  Yes  No  1800px(v)  2500
collection of scanned illustrations from out of copyright books, organized by title






[X mayang's textures](http://Xmayang'stextures)  Yes  No  No  2560px(v)  3800
Credit is welcomed, simple site with huge selection of textures and backgrounds of all kinds






[X amazingtextures](http://Xamazingtextures)  No  N/A  Yes  1600px(v)  2000?
just when you thought the world did not need another texture site! these textures are repeating so they can easily be used in 3d rendering, free for personal use, \$20 for commercial

aarinfreephoto  Yes  Yes  No  504px  950
photos are watermarked and very low res, reasonable range of subjects






freemediagoo.com  Yes  No  No  1000px  200?
some interesting 3d rendered images, audio, textures and flash animation, mostly very low res photos, not much use

ancestryimages  No  Yes  No  1600px(v)  16500
old scans of maps and books not for commercial use



holylandphotos.org  No  Yes  No  1600px(v)  1000's?
do check the terms, "in general 4 images can be used without permission" with a credit, images of the "holy land"






[X bajstock.com](http://Xbajstock.com)  Yes  Yes  No  2800px(v)  5,000?
images from one photographer, some good conceptual images and locations in France, high resolutions






DHD Multimedia Gallery  Yes  Yes  No  Varies  35,000
very eclectic mix of images by various contributors, this site has been running for more than 15 years!


Cromavista  Yes  No  No  1024px(v)  100?
Spanish site with various architectural, creative and location photos






paulbates.com  Yes  Yes  No  1820px(v)  50?
small gallery from individual photographer, flowers, sunrises and sunsets, yawn






textureking  Yes  No  No  1600px(v)  1000?
well edited collection of texture and backgrounds, nice site layout






freerangestock.com  Yes  Yes  Yes  2400px(v)  10,000
more than 2000 images in their in house catalogue + thousands of other images contributed by users






[X photl.com](http://Xphotl.com)  Yes  No  Yes  1200px  10,000+
amazing quality photos (professional stock level), you need to create an account to download the images, for free you can access only lower resolution images, higher resolution images are via subscription

[X freewebphoto.com](http://Xfreewebphoto.com)  Yes  Yes  Yes  700px(v)  5000
registration required and 5 image download daily limit, good quality subjects lots of conceptual subjects covered which are also available for purchase if a higher resolution is needed or web use license without attribution, free for web use only

[X stickstock.com](http://Xstickstock.com)  ?  ?  No  1200px(v)  1000
some nice illustrations but no terms are listed, anyone can upload anything? could have the potential to be copyright infringement nightmare!

pachd.com  Yes  Yes  No  1024px(v)  1500
some nice isolated images of flowers, food, and travel locations, license for USD 1.99 if you don't want to include an attribution.

fontplay.com/freephotos  Yes  No  No  2624px(v)  5500
simply described as free photos with no further terms listed this site contains all sorts of interesting things!

allfreeimages.net  ?  ?  Yes  2624px(v)  1200
some useful conceptual stock subjects as well as the usual architecture and landscapes

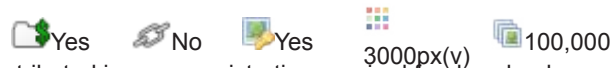
sunipix.com  Yes  Yes  No  600px(v)  1000?
mostly nature and location / landmark images plus a few concepts like biology and finance, only available at low resolution

freestockphotos.biz



large collection of categorised images, with additional collections of PD, Creative commons and other license types, main collection does not require attribution but link is appreciated.

rgbstock.com



large collection of user contributed images, registration required for download

littlevisuals.co



sadly no longer updated, an archive of existing images downloadable as zip files

magdeleine.co



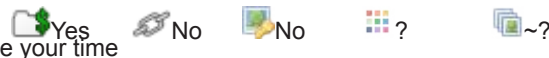
nicely curated collection of images, varying licenses (attribution and CC0) search, but limited pool of images to choose from

picjumbo.com



growing collection of usable images with a basic search tool

getrefe.com



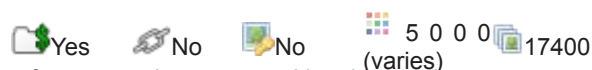
mostly rubbish don't waste your time

stokpic.com



browse some of the images of subscribe for regular images delivered to your inbox

kaboompics.com



nice photo collection, with a few categories presented in a blog style

barnimages.com



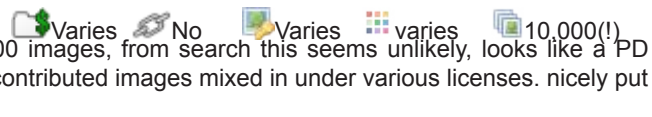
photo collection from various photographers, includes both free and upselling to a premium collection

bara-art.com



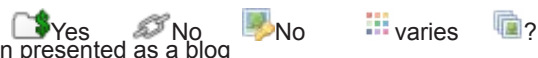
great looking website with some very nice images, some very appealing landscapes and nature photography

en.freejpg.com.ar



site claims to have 10,000 images, from search this seems unlikely, looks like a PD collection with few extra contributed images mixed in under various licenses. nicely put together

foodiesfeed.com



nice food photos collection presented as a blog

hiresstock.com



another nice collected presented in the form of a blog feed

photostockeditor.com



photo editor tool website, with a small collection of nice work, no categories or search :(

goodstock.photos



sparsely populated categories and no search, nice images

highresolution.photography



all fir coat, no nickers. when I visited I found a nice looking site with broken links, some pointing to flickr profiles of various photographers, might as well have gone find the images myself (did I miss something)

stockfreeimages.com



lots of free stock photos, these are the images rejected from the dreamstime collection.

designerspics.com



simple clean site, search and categories, but limited by image collection size

photober.com



nice collocation of commercial style stock, let down by small image size

trunklog.com



very nice collection of inspiring insta style travel and landscape photos

X.noblweb.com



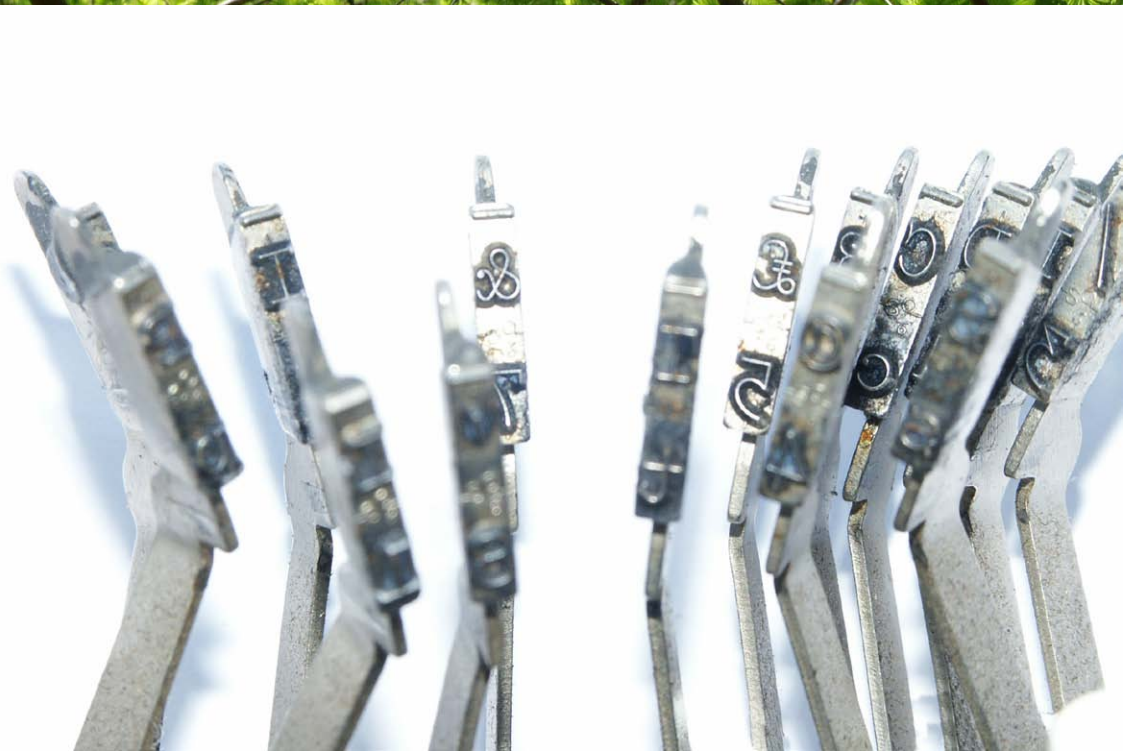
some nice sunny stock images and iconic locations, browse for something, no search or categories

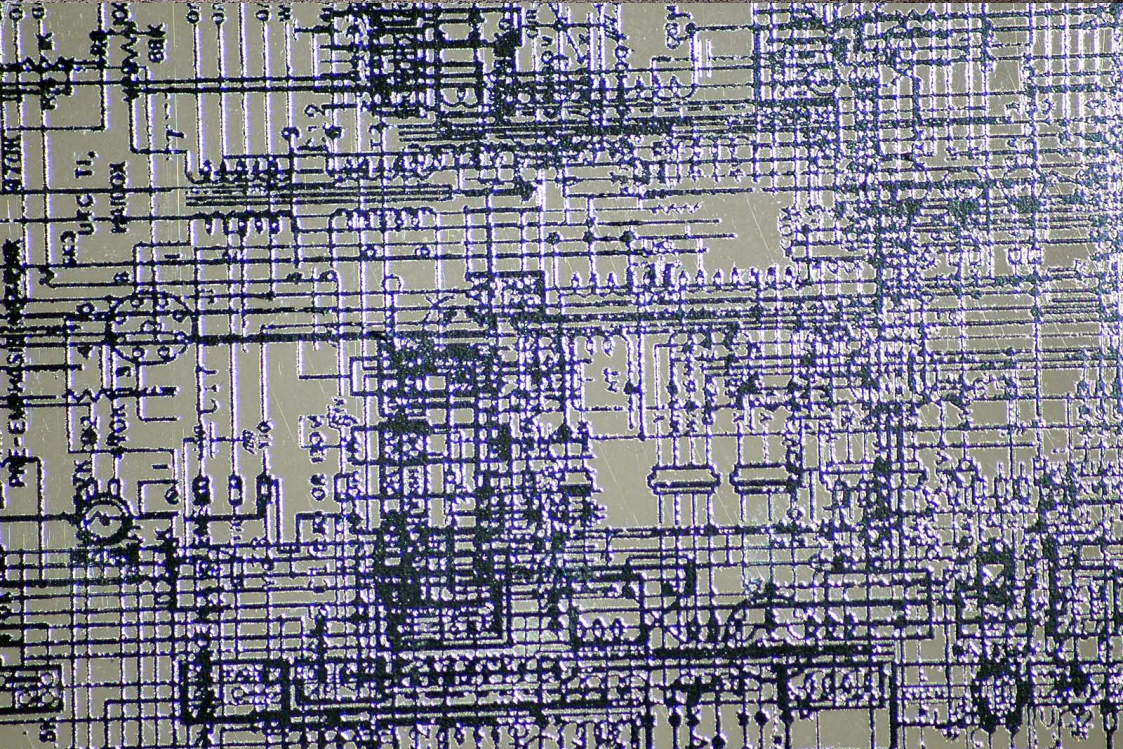
titania-foto.com



reasonable size collection of objects, landscapes, nature, the usual free stock fodder

NB: Always confirm the license details before you use the images, all of the sites listed here clearly display their terms of use which must be followed. Commercial use means that you can use the images in advertisements NOT that you can create products for sale using the images - This is possible but in almost all cases you will need to contact the provider or negotiate an 'extended license'.





[imagetemple.com](https://www.imagetemple.com)

Disadvantages of Free Sites

Although free sites are great, there is a good reason that most of the images on them are free, they are usually not up to the same quality as those on paid sites. They might be only be suitable for use as a small online images. Just like with PD images it's often hard to find an image suitable for your needs unless your requirements are for simple non conceptual images like landscapes, flowers, nature or travel. As a simpler, and safer alternative you can look at a [microstock](https://www.microstock.com) agency (quality images, huge selection, easy search and priced from \$1).



PUBLIC DOMAIN

PD Images are pictures that have been placed into the world 'public domain' and are free to use by anyone, they are sometimes also referred to as 'copyright free'. in some cases though there are special requests made that the author of the photos be attributed so read the terms of use on each site you plan to source your images from.









































See the next section for a listing of CC0 websites (public domain dedication)

There are some great images to be found, below we have listed some of the better sites we have come across:

Site:	Resolution (typ.)	Collection Size
pdphoto.org	1024x768	1000's
unclesamsphotos.com	N/A	Directory
public-domain-photos.com	1024x768	13,000
lots of flowers, landscapes and travel images from the creators of pdphoto.org	1024x768	100's
oldbookillustrations.com	400x600	13,000
some lovely old illustrations and etching from bygone books	1280x900	1000+
publicdomainpictures.net	1000x1000 varies	1000+
nicely setup archive of user contributed PD images	N/A	Directory
grin.hq.nasa.gov and/or nix.nasa.gov	1000x1000 varies	1000+
Great images in nasa is a collection of high resolution space related images.	N/A	1000+
usa.gov/Topics/Graphics.shtml	N/A	1000+
openclipart.org	N/A	1000+
PD licensed clipart from contributors and via wikimedia commons	small / varies	?
photolib.noaa.gov	1024x768 varies	32,000
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration Photo Library	1024x768 varies	32,000
gimp-savvy.com/photo-archive	small / varies	27000
collection of PD images from US government sites	small / varies	27000
ars.usda.gov/is/graphics/photos	2700x1850 (varies)	1000's
US Department of Agriculture. animals, crops, research, fruits and veggies - good quality	2700x1850 (varies)	1000's
nps.gov/features/yell/slidefile/index.htm	2000x1300 (varies)	1000's
gallery if PD images from yellowstone national park	2000x1300 (varies)	1000's
logodesignweb.com/stockphoto	600x400	100's
small collection, described as PD but credit required	600x400	100's
burningwell.org	3072x2048	2000?
community repository of free use images	3072x2048	2000?
copyrightfreephotos.com	1700x100 (varies)	300?
small collection of location within the uk, nature, technology	1700x100 (varies)	300?
defense.gov/photos	2100x1300 (varies)	Lots
US department of defense image collection	2100x1300 (varies)	Lots
logotypes.ru/default_e.asp	adobe illustrator .ai files	5000
almost 5000 company logos in vector format (for editorial use only)	adobe illustrator .ai files	5000
public-domain-image.com	2700 (varies)	2000?
just horrible when it comes to ads, but good categories of reasonable res PD stock	2700 (varies)	2000?
archives.gov	varies	Lots
the US national archives, 30 million items (not all photos) organised under various subjects	varies	Lots
digital.library.northwestern.edu/wwii-posters	460x650 (varies)	300
collection of WWII vintage American posters	460x650 (varies)	300
pdpics.com	varies (up to 24MP)	1800
small bug growing collection of pd	varies (up to 24MP)	1800
picdrome.com	1600x1200	700
small collection of pd, mostly travel locations	1600x1200	700
pixabay.com	varies	Lots
user contributed PD site, nice search	varies	Lots
clker.com	PNG varies, SVG	?
vector clipart and tools	PNG varies, SVG	?
new-old-stock	Varies	?
nice collection of vintage PD images on tumblr	Varies	?
publicdomainarchive.com	Varies	?
nicely curated collection of pd images from various sources (modern style stock, sadly no search!)	Varies	?



Detailed Reviews

					
	Commercial Use Allowed	Attribution Required	Free Signup Required?	Image Resolution	Approx size of Collection
lifeofpix.com	 Yes	 No	 No	 varies	 100s
nicely styled modern stock photos, no search makes the 'list of photos' limited use for more than inspiration					
gratisography.com	 Yes	 No	 No	 3828	 100s
stylish and trendy, hipster style images, but no search makes the site limited use (CC0 license)					
stocksnap.io	 Yes	 No	 No	 Varies	 ~1000
collection of images from various photographers CC0 licensed, good search					
thepatternlibrary.com	 Yes	 No	 No	 Varies	 ~100
really nicely put together website with a small collection of tileable background patterns					
goodfreephotos.com	 Yes	 No	 No	 Varies	 <1000
small collection of PD images.					
skitterphoto.com	 Yes	 No	 No	 Varies	 <300
nicely implemented site, featuring a small collection of PD images.					
1millionfreepictures.com	 Yes	 No	 No	 Varies	 ~800
despite the title, this site seems to have about 800 oddly selected photos, no categories					

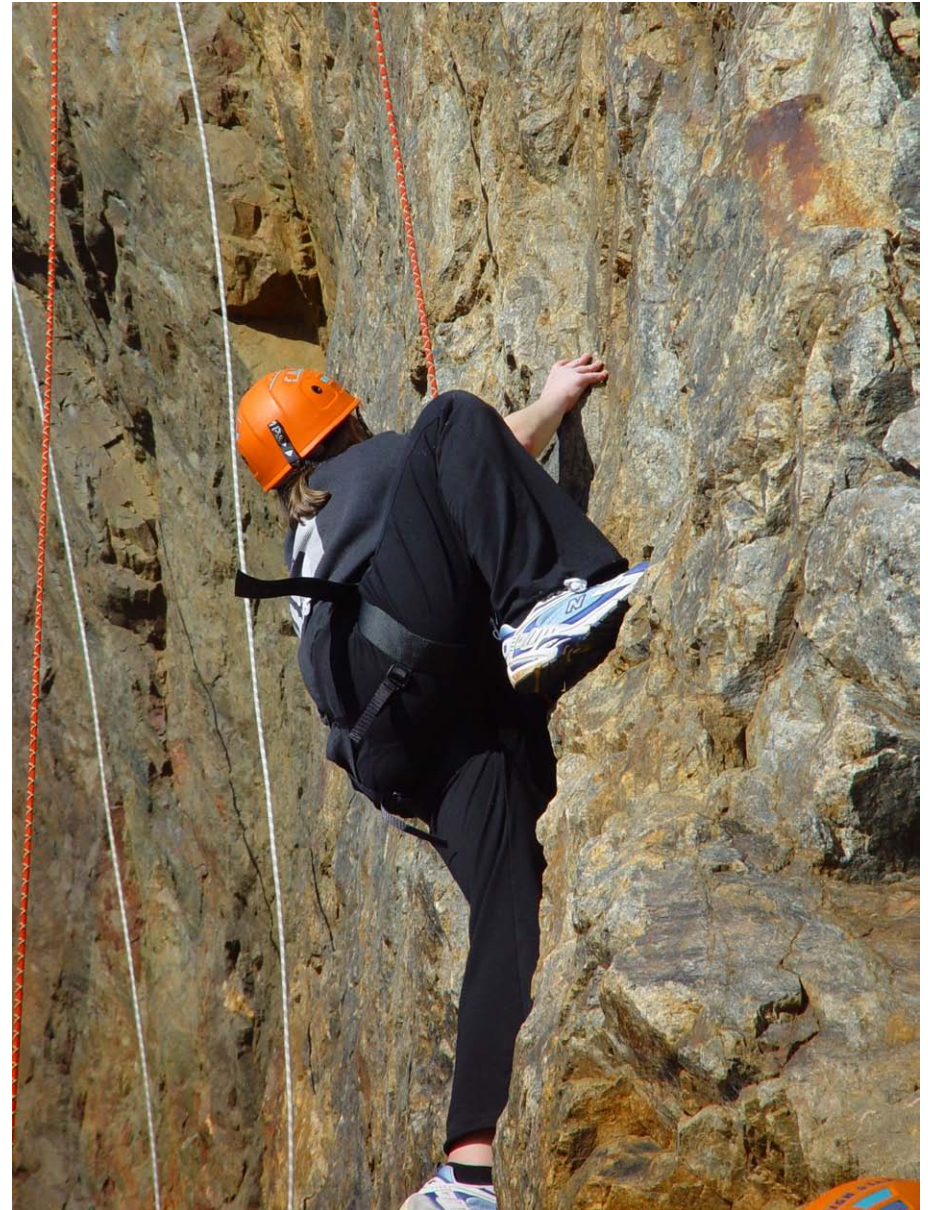
Disadvantages of using PD Images

Very limited choice, although there appears to be lots of PD images out there, it's actually quite difficult to find an image suitable for most concept topics (lifestyle, metaphors, images with people suitable for advertising etc) wide coverage is limited to areas where US government agencies are involved so there are some good pickings to be found in agriculture, food, minerals etc. Stylish, up to date stock images... hmm, no, look elsewhere, or look every hard indeed.

Most of the images are dated looking or have some technical problems, while you can correct some of these issues in Photoshop its often better to save time and spend a couple of dollars on a [microstock image](#) if your budget allows.

Unlike [creative commons](#) there is no easy way to search several PD websites at once, and typically each site only has a few thousand images, unless you regularly need images on a specific topic that is served by one of the PD sites then you will spend a lot of time searching for suitable pictures.

burningwell.org



CC ZERO

Until recently all creative commons image licenses required you attribute the author. The creative commons licensing system was created to allow authors to share their photography simply and easily by providing a standardised license framework.

Creative commons have now extended their license system to include a new significantly more liberal license, one that is similar to placing the image in the public domain. To summarize:





- Standard Image (e.g. a [commercial stock agency](#) on in a photographer portfolio) = **All Rights Reserved, Licensed Use**
- [Creative Commons](#) Attribution/Share Alike etc = **Some Rights Reserved, Free to use with conditions**
- CC Zero (listed below) and [Public Domain](#) = **No Rights Reserved**

CC0 clearly offers the most flexibility to the image user, often being dubbed as “do as you like” license. The only disadvantage is that there are almost 100 million [Creative Commons Attribution](#) licensed images available, but the range of CC0 images is MUCH smaller. There are quite a few websites available with CC0 images, an many of them look fantastic, but a quick search reveals a slim range of subjects. However there are some good ‘popular’ images that will look fantastic on a social media campaign etc. you’ll also tend to see the same images copied around on different websites.




By their nature they can be no such thing as an exclusive CC0 image, they can all be freely shared and redistributed. After spending hours reviewing the websites for this guide, one striking conclusion I have is that most of the sites look great! but many of them have so very few images. Even the largest of the sites have about 5000 (excellent quality!) images, most have less than 200, and most simply copy the same images that other sites have.




We’ve reviewed CCZero websites until it felt like we couldn’t look at another full width photo slider again: here’s what we found....




CC0 Stock Image Site Directory




 Free Required?	 Signup	 Image Size	 Approx size of Collection
--	--	--	---

(v) = Varies ?=Approx/Guesstimate, Always confirm the license information before you use any image you find on a site listed here.

[streetwill.co](#)  No  4000  132
vintage and retro modern with a nice mix of useful subjects and ideas as well as landscapes and art

[isorepublic.com](#)  No  ?  ~250
collection by various authors, some nice images, but limited collection and no search

[skuawk.com](#)  No  4 0 0 0 /  ~200?
some nice photos here, no search, but an enjoyable place to browse, not that much to choose from

[thepicpac.com](#)  No  4000+  500?
download packs of photos, 10 to choose from when we visited, CC0 license, “pay what you like” including ‘\$0’.

kiviphoto.com				nice CC0 curation from various photographers in this managed collection
snapwiresnaps.tumblr.com				CC0 licensed image collection, features an all important search! approx 30 images a month since June 2014
jaymantri.com				very nice images - re how useful: see above, you'll want to slit your own wrists after 5 minutes searching
startupstockphotos.com				stagnant - computers in trendy workspaces, nothing more, no search (tumblr base site)
splitshire				trendy modern template but usability that someone should call the gui police! also featured of dirty little trick advertisements that pop over images just before you click for a larger view.
gratisography.com				nice fresh wallpapy/moody images, trendy square crops, limited category range.
picography.co				limited collection size, 170 images when we visited, of little use.
Xfreeuse.io				it's just the same old CC0 images uploads without much value added.
realisticshots.com				another uninspired tumblr feed.
negativespace.co				sounds and looks nice, but the reality is a bit disappointing.
libreshot.com				quite a nice collection, that does not appear to have been simply copied from unsplash and jay mantri. Yes it has a working search and categories! how novel for a photo site to have those... whodathunkit,
focastock.com				hard to browse as a endless loading blog, but categories and search do work.

fancycrave.com				seems to be little more than a tumblr blog with links to peoples work on flickr.
largephotos.net				either the search is not working or there as so few photos there's little to be found.
travelcoffeebook.com				another tumblr feed with less than 200 travel stock images
Xcrowthestone.com				wow 22 images, nothing new since Sept. 2014. look somewhere else.
moveast.me				very similar to travelcoffee book but oriental travel images, and not many of them, tumblr again
pixabay.com				lots of images and good search, registration to download high res image
wunderstock.com				nicely curated public domain images.?
cupcake				beautiful collection of high quality stock images from photographer Jonas Nilsson Lee, not many imageS
finda.photo				searches some CC0 sites, but seems to have limited coverage, does a nice job of what it doeS
freenaturestock.com				tumblr site with 30 or so nature photos upload each month, nothing special.
pickupimage.com				different collection of images, in categories, registration needed to download.
splashbase.co				dreadfully limited range of images scraped from other PD and CC0 SiteS
jeshoots.com				nice modern collection, no search but there are categories, just over 200 images, some of the download links were broken when we visited.

CC0 Tumblr Site Tips:

Lots of CC0 artists have chosen to host their images on tumblr. The tumblr archive feature allows you to avoid whatever excuse for navigation some of these sites have and view images directly by upload date as thumbnails, just change the url to /archive to see a simple grid view of images and when they were uploaded.

Search Several CC0 sites at once:

imagefinder.co

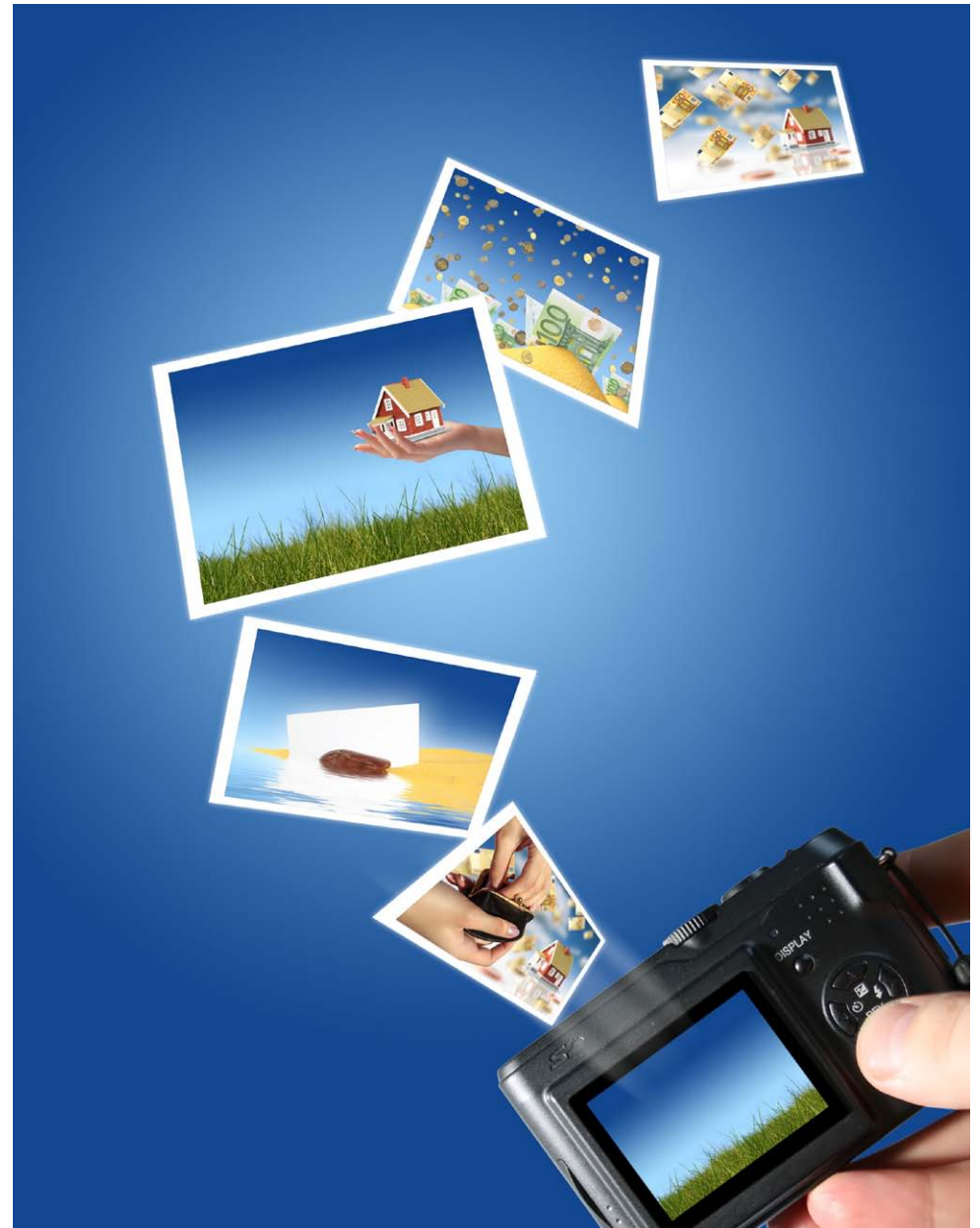
BUYERS MARKET VS FREE PHOTOS

“It’s never been better for image buyers”

While photographers face stiff competition in the marketplace, the advent of high quality digital cameras, their reduction in price and the Internet’s ability to drive down prices and source images from all over the world means the market has never been better for the image buyer. The stock photo industry is valued at 1.8 billion dollars a year (2010), In 2004 62% of designers used stock photos and graphics, according to recent surveys that figure has risen to well of 90%.

There is currently so much choice available, microstock agencies (crowd sourced image libraries) aggregate quality images from all over the world by professional and amateur photographers. Images which don’t meet microstock standards are often offloaded for free* on free stock photo sites and into the creative commons. With billions of images available (yes literally) the difficult problem is finding what you want. Images are scattered across a range of stock libraries and prices.

The traditional (macrostock) agencies have, facing stiff competition from microstock, created new or more flexible pricing options, subscription royalty free offerings and with a ‘flood of images’ from newly empowered photographers the quality of royalty free images at traditional agencies is better than ever. These traditional full-priced agencies are having to differentiate themselves from the low-cost microstock sites which have become popular over recent years.



MICROSTOCK AGENCIES

Microstock agencies source their images from not just professional photographers but also amateur photographers while still maintaining a strict quality level. In doing so microstock sites can provide images at a much lower cost than traditional stock photo agencies which you might consider to be prohibitively expensive.

Microstock started in around 2002 but took until about 2005/6 to gain acceptance and really start to take off. Rather than sourcing images from professional photographers, the advent of digital cameras meant that a lot of hobbyist photographers were able to easily take some great looking stock images, microstock photographers, sometimes professional and sometimes amateur are able to sell these images direct to you via microstock agency.

Most microstock websites operate on a credit based system where you pre buy credits which allow you to make downloads of images. Although microstock images are not free, they normally cost between \$1 and \$5 depending on the resolution you need, once you have registered with a microstock site (a few minutes) it's quick and easy to find and download an image to suit your needs. Most agencies have several million images to choose from. With this in mind it's often a better option to use a microstock image than spend 30 minutes searching for a free image with no guarantee that you will find something suitable. Of course because you pay for the image then there is usually no need to attribute / credit link the image where you use it, making everything look a lot more professional.

While 'cheap' might be a good term to describe the agencies listed here, our guiding principle is "quality discount photos", how to get either more or better quality images for your money. Most of these sites will offer low resolution images from about \$1, the guide prices listed show prices for a typical medium resolution purchase.

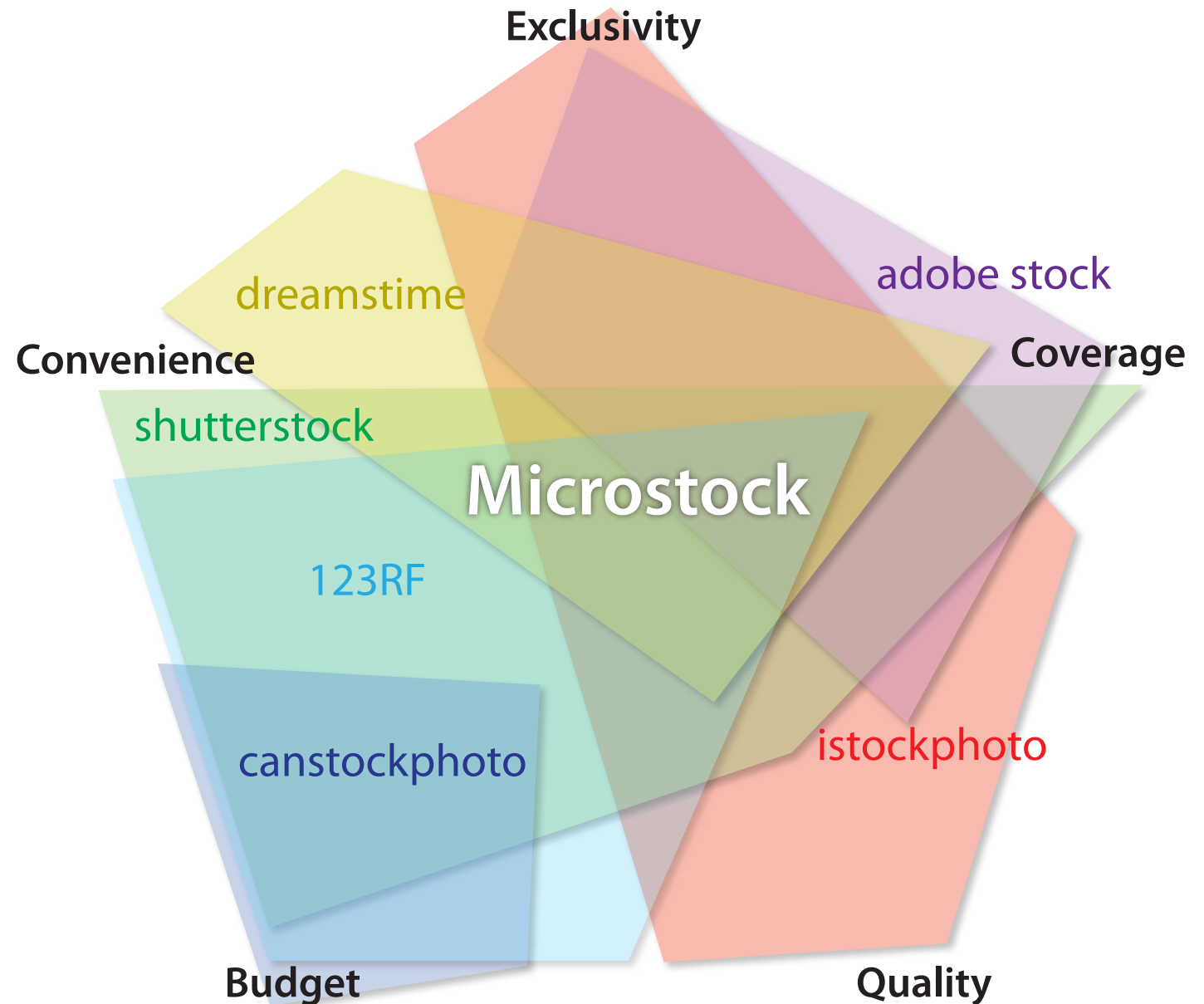
Most of the major microstock agencies have some form of unique selling point, and while you can probably find an image to suit your needs from any of agency, some of the sites we have listed cater for different buyers needs better than others - it's depends on your circumstances. Be it a one off purchase, an obscure subject or location, a high resolution photo for print use, a regular need for lots of small images etc. - there is likely an agency to suit your needs.



Microstock Marketplace

This venn diagram highlights of the differing ways that some microstock sites have tried to sell to different market segments. While many sites sit in the 'middle of the road', several have carved out their own market segment suiting some buyers requirements better than others.

We'll look at each agency in detail later in this section...



How to Choose a Microstock Agency

With many of the microstock sites selling a similar image collection, (photographers upload the same image to several sites) the stock agencies differentiate themselves in various ways. The question should perhaps be restated **which agency is best for my individual needs?**

Value: [CanstockPhoto.com](https://www.canstockphoto.com) have one-off high res images for a low price, but a smaller image collection, but much cheaper than other agencies with similar sized collection.

Subscription: [Stock Photo Secrets](https://www.stockphoto.secrets.com), coming in at less than \$2 per week with 200 downloads per year included (extra downloads @ 99c) again the image collection is smaller than most agencies.

Guarantee: Several sites including [Shutterstock](https://www.shutterstock.com) and [iStockphoto.com](https://www.iStockphoto.com) warrant their images against legal costs.



Exclusivity: Exclusive image collections like the one at [iStockphoto](https://www.iStockphoto.com) mean you can't find the same image on sale elsewhere.

Coverage: The number of images each site has on offer: if you require specialty stock images then choose a site which more images to increase the likelihood of your subjects being covered - use the tables of comparison above.

Style: [iStockphoto.com](https://www.iStockphoto.com) offers premium images and a general collection of more stylish images, prices are much higher than average. The images at [Dreamstime](https://www.dreamstime.com) and several of the other sites have a noticeably more 'clean' and minimal look.





Search: Not all sites are alike when it comes to the quality of their search engines. When choosing a microstock site you might also check how good the search engine is.



Bulk Buy: [Shutterstock](https://www.shutterstock.com) offers a flexible subscription, providing value to volume image users. A month subscription can easily be paid for by downloading 10 or so high resolution images which might cost 15-20 dollars each elsewhere. [123RF](https://www.123RF.com) provides flexible subscription/credits to volume buyers. Prices from as low as \$0.21 per image.

Microstock Directory





There are plenty of microstock sites to choose from, we've listed the major agencies here, also look at the microstock subscription section for more options.

 Download Options
 License Types
 Guide Price (3Megapixel image)
 Number of images in collection

What is RF+Editorial? See our [Glossary of Stock Photography Terms](#)





[iStockphoto.com](#)

visit site for search
 istockphoto was the pioneer of the microstock revolution, now owned by traditional stock photography company Getty images, painful search system peppers results with expensive images that cannot be filtered out. Images are high quality, with a large collection of exclusive and premium content

 Credits+Subscription
 \$17+
 RF+ Editorial
 300 Million





[123RF](#)

visit site for search
 Great value images, and free link code to paste images into a blog, 123RF have a premium microstock collection called EVO

 Credits
 \$5
 RF+ Editorial
 45 Million





[Adobe Stock](#)

visit site for search
 combines one of the largest collections in microstock with reasonable pricing, adobe also offer cloud subscriptions to their photo editing and creative tools

 Credits
 \$11
 RF
 100 Million+





[Dreamstime.com](#)

Another massive selection of images , but more expensive than bigstock.

 Credits+Subscription
 \$8
 RF+Editorial
 72 Million

[CanstockPhoto.com](#)

One of the best for value, but limited choice for more unusual subjects.

 Credits+Subscription
 \$2
 RF+Editorial
 21 Million

[PhotoDune / Envato Network](#)

One stop shop, the envato network offers a wide range of digital sales as well as photos, including video, templates, sound, 3d objects

 Credits
 \$3
 RF
 7 Million





[Bigstock.com](#)

reliable stock agency, in business for 5 years+, now owned by shutterstock

 Credits
 \$8
 RF+Editorial
 28 Million

[CreativeMarket](#)

Relatively new on the scene: the (autodesk) creativemarket is predominantly a place for completed designs but has a growing photo and "packs of photos" collection.

 Credits
 \$Varies
 RF
 1 Million(?)

Price Guide

Our guide prices are based on obtaining an average resolution image of 3 megapixels or more, in most cases the websites advertise images from \$1, this will only buy you a low resolution image (sub 1MP) suitable for a webpage or a blog. 3 megapixels allows more flexible online use, cropping and printing at a modest size. Of course you can obtain higher resolutions, these typically cost between \$5 and \$10 dollars. You can get significant discounts by buying large numbers of credits, but sometimes you need to spend \$100 or even \$1000 to obtain the lowest price, in calculations we have taken the cheapest starter option which invariably means that individual credits cost more than buying in bulk.

Subscription Microstock

Subscription vs Credits ?

Credits allow you to buy images on a casual basis, whereas a subscription offers better value for those who regularly require images (usually professional designers and design groups, but perhaps also newspaper and media websites).

[Shutterstock](#)



Subscription



\$49+ (\$249pcm)



RF+ Editorial



300 Million

Shutterstock was one of the first microstock agencies to offer a subscription service, much copied but still one of the best. Offer excellent value if you need regular access to high resolution images

[Dreamstime.com](#)



Subscription



\$44.99 weekly
(up to 70 images per week)



RF+ Editorial



35 Million

Monthly subscription from dreamstime, allows images to be downloaded any time of the month and also allows extra credits to roll over to next month meaning that you never lose unused credits

[Adobe Stock](#)



Credits
Subscription



\$39.59 Monthly
(based on annual price)



RF



100 Million+

a range of options for high and low volume images needs, adobe stock allows unused credits to roll over (up to defined limits)

[Stock Photo Secrets](#)



Subscription



<\$2 per week,
\$99 per year)



RF



4 Million

Download 200 Maximum sized images from a smaller collection (4 million images) but great value alternative to the higher priced collections of the bigger sites.

Other Worthy Microstock Sites...

Recent startups are offering lower priced photos or regular special offers, credits back, discounts etc. to carve a share of the microstock market.

[Depositphotos.com](#)



Credits



\$4



RF



30 Million

Visit site for search
launched in 2009, with low prices, also offers subscription plan

[Stockfresh.com](#)



Credits



\$3



RF



5 Million

Stock photo site from the people who originally brought you stock.xchng and stockxpert



Here's a few smaller libraries we have not reviewed in detail:

[Yay Micro](#)

[Most Photos](#)

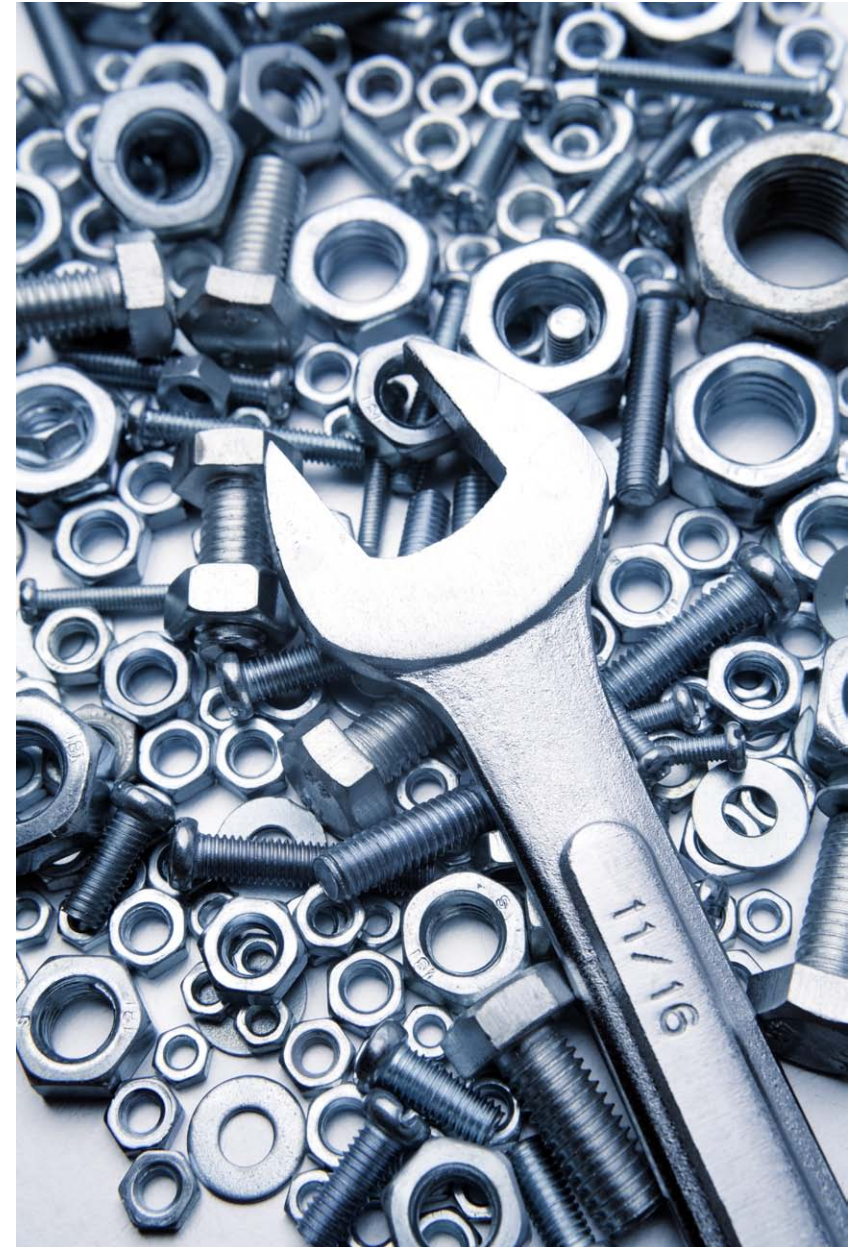
[Zoonar](#)

[Panther Media](#)

Useful Microstock Search Tools & Directories

If you are a regular microstock buyer and have more than one account you can integrate microstock search into firefox with the picniche buyers toolbar (currently in beta) see picniche.com/toolbar for more details.

- shotspy.com another a search engine that lets you search multiple microstock agencies on one go
- MicrostockPhotography.com - microstock photography industry information & news
- And of course... Budgetstockphoto.com

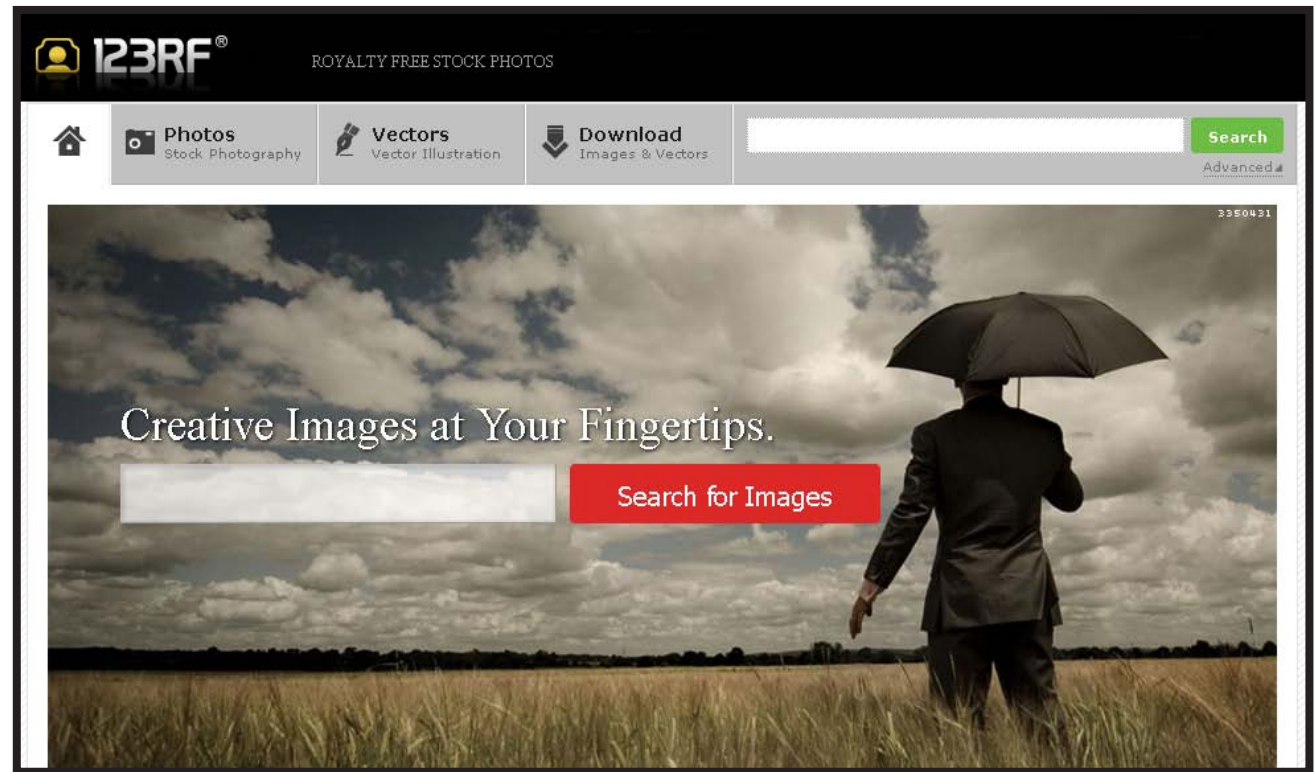


Site Profile: 123rf.com

"[123RF.com](https://www.123rf.com) is one of the world's largest players in the royalty-free microstock photography industry.

Since its debut in June 2005, 123RF.com today hosts over million stock photographs and vector illustrations with over 100,000 contributing photographers and illustrators. The 123RF.com platform is also a channel for photographers, illustrators and designers to showcase their talent, allowing them to promote and sell their creations to a worldwide audience through a sales profit sharing model between 123RF and each contributor.

With images going for less than \$1, 123RF.com is committed to making high quality stock photography affordable for everyone. 123RF.com also offers its clients the flexibility of acquiring images via subscription plans or credit packages, whichever suits their needs better."



“You shouldn’t simply assume is that micro is cheap, RF is in the middle and RM is expensive – clients can spend hundreds of dollars in a microstock site on an image, and they can get RM cheaply.”

Lewis Blackwell, Director of Strategy for Image Source

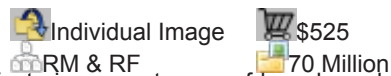
MACROSTOCK / FULL PRICE

Traditional stock agencies sell Rights Managed or Royalty Free Images, some still sell packages or 'virtual cds'. Since the term [microstock](#) was coined you might also come across these agencies being called macrostock, and in some cases those offering lower cost images (~\$50 per image) are described a 'midstock' (although this term tends to describe microstock sites that offer premium images).

We have listed a few of the bigger agencies here, despite the inroads that microstock has made the vast majority of images available today are licensed by the full price agencies, if you can afford the price this is where you will find, with enough research, an image of ANYTHING; including flowers growing on the Moon!

There are two giants of the traditional stock photography world, Getty images and Corbis, combined they dominate a large part of the industry. You'll find a large number once independent agencies owned by these two companies

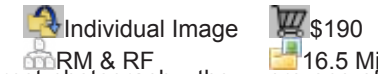
[Getty Images](#)



Individual Image \$525
RM & RF 70 Million

One of the worlds largest stock agencies, featuring a vast array of brands and licensing options.

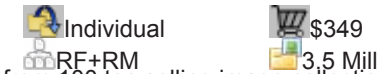
[Alamy.com](#)



Individual Image \$190
RM & RF 16.5 Million

Independent: Alamy was a pioneer of internet photography, they were one of the first to accept and resell digital images from any photographer whose work was good enough to meet their guidelines.

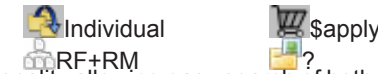
[inimage.com](#)



Individual \$349
RF+RM 3.5 Million*

Source of rights managed and royalty free from 100 top selling image collections

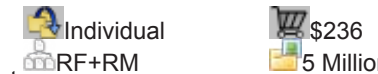
[masterfile.com](#)



Individual \$apply
RF+RM ?

nice looking collection, and good site functionality allowing easy search of both RM and RF collections and filtering between the two.

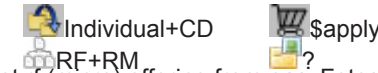
[Robert Harding](#)



Individual \$236
RF+RM 5 Million

Leading independent travel image specialist

[agefotostock.com](#)



Individual+CD \$apply
RF+RM ?

Combining both RM and RF with low budget rf (micro) offering from easyFotostock

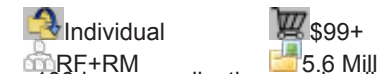
[firstlight.com](#)



Individual \$355 (varies)
RF+RM ?

Representing Canadian stock photographers and major worldwide collections

[fotosearch.com](#)



Individual \$99+
RF+RM 5.6 Million

searching 5.6 million images from more than 100 images collections and well as a range of image CDs

[imagesource.com](#)



Individual \$199+ (varies)
RF 5.6 Million

London based premium royalty free

[acclaimimages.com](#)



Individual \$252.95 (varies)
RF+RM 225,000

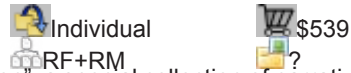
acclaim Images offers over 200,000 images by hundreds of professional photographers covering all major topics.

[X - AGPix](#)



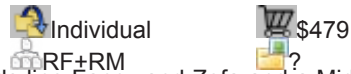
AGPix.com is home to an online community of 350+ image providers, who are mostly freelance photographers

[PlainPicture](#)



Unconventional Portfolio, including "Rauschen", a special collection of narrative, emotional and atmospheric photographs, specifically dedicated to book jacket designers.

[SuperStock](#)



A selection of images from the Corbis brands line Fancy and Zefa and a Midstock priced collection

Macrostock Notes:

All prices are approximate, in US Dollars and subject to change, see each agency for full details and license details.

What is RM & RF? - [View Glossary](#).

All our single image prices comparisons are based on a typical RF license for an image of at least 1000x1000 pixels, in some cases cheaper licenses can be obtained for web/online use, lower resolutions or by subscription program.

Shocked by the price? Remember the price gets you quality, wider choice and a level of exclusivity not found with microstock images, [but for many people microstock offers a better value solution](#).



SPECIALITY STOCK IMAGES

Travel

Free Sites (Global)

photoeverywhere.co.uk

A good selection of creative commons travel images from the UK and around the world

freelargephotos.com

free collection categorized mostly on geographic location

shutteroo.com

small collection of photos of Australia

Location Specific Free Sites & Creative Commons

freeaussiestock.com

Small collection Australian stock photography

geograph.org.uk

aiming to photograph every bit of UK and Ireland

Location Specific Microstock

microstock.co.il

microstock agencies specializing in Israeli images

[Travel @ bigstock.com](http://Travel@bigstock.com)

Travel search results from their microstock collection

hedgehoghouse.com

Rights managed Kiwi image collection

pacificstock.com

Hawaii, Asia and the pacific

idahostockimages.com

stock images of Idaho

alaskastock.com

stock images of Alaska

accentalaska.com

Alaska Image specialist site





Christmas and Festive

Free Sites

[Christmasstockimages.com](https://www.christmasstockimages.com)

Small collection free festive and seasonal photos for web/online use

[Vintage Christmas Clipart](https://www.vintagechristmasclipart.com)

Very small collection, but great looking Christmas illustrations

[Festive at FreePixels](https://www.freepixels.com)

About 200 free xmas holiday stock images

[Seasonal and Celebration at www.freeimages.co.uk](https://www.freeimages.co.uk)

Christmas stock and festive backgrounds / light effects

Commercial Sites

[Christmas @ bigstock.com](https://www.bigstock.com)

christmas search results from their microstock collection



[ChristmasStockImages.com](https://www.christmasstockimages.com)

Halloween

Free Sites

freedigitalphotos.net/images/Halloween_g164.html

21 halloween images from freedigitalphotos.net

creepyhalloweenimages.com

Around 400 free halloween photos in resolution up to 1600px (3000px for free subscribers)

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Halloween_images

Creative halloween some commons images on wikipedia

publicdomainpictures.net/hledej.php?hleda=halloween

well organised collection of PD images

Commercial Sites

[Halloween @ bigstock.com](https://bigstock.com/Halloween)

halloween search results from their microstock collection

[Halloween @ 123RF](https://123RF.com/Halloween)

halloween search results from 123RF



creepyhalloweenimages.com

Religion & Faith

Stock Image Sites

easterstockphotos.com

Images of Easter and Christianity themes

goodsalt.com

The world's leading source of religious imagery

[picjew](https://picjew.com)

Purchase pictures of "Jewish way of life"

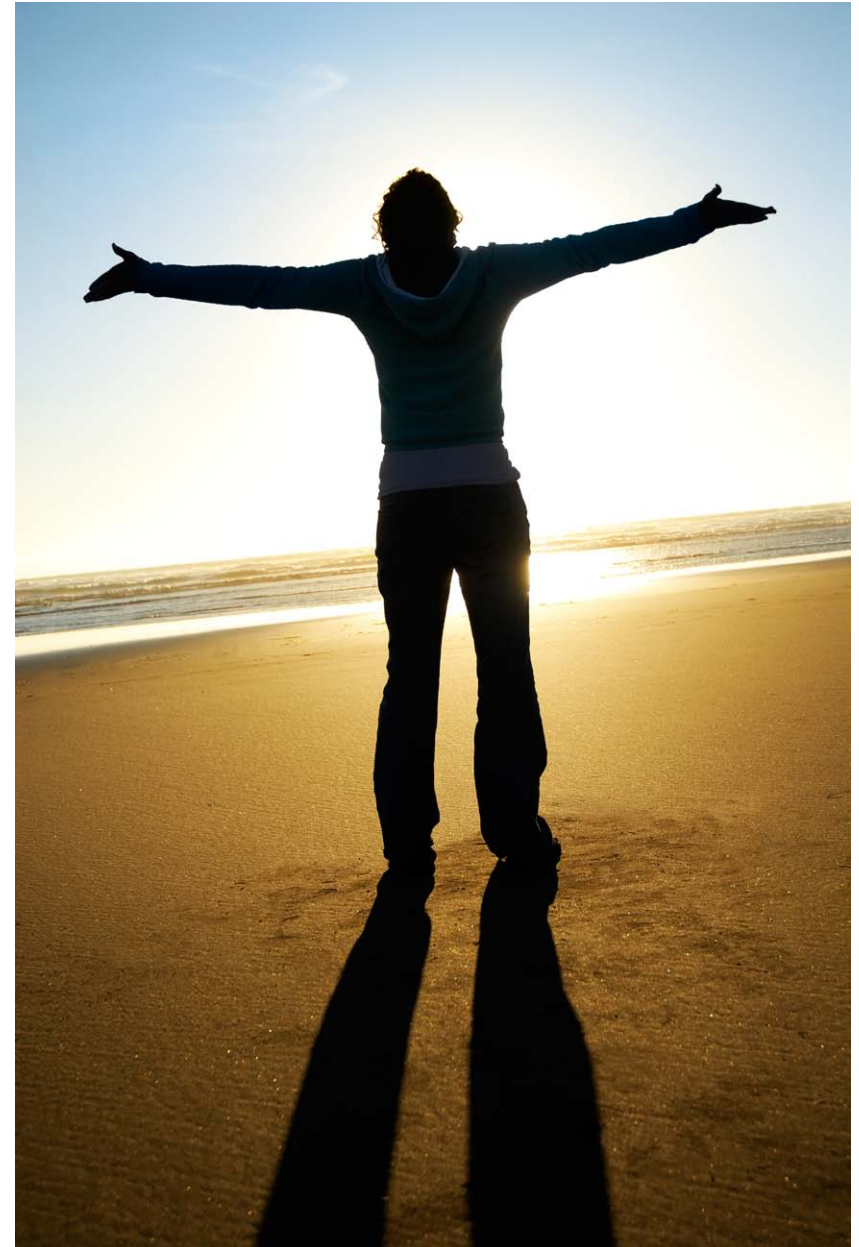
[forgivenstock](https://forgivenstock.com)

Collection of Christian Stock Photography

Microstock Sites

[Religion @ bigstock.com](https://bigstock.com)

Travel search results from their microstock collection



GLOSSARY

Terms and Jargon - here's a little help

- **Key Terminology: "Copyright Free Images?"**
Very few photos are copyright free, only PD photos have no copyright attached. In most all other cases the original photographer still owns the copyright over the image because they created it. That does not mean that you can't use the image, but in order to use any image you need a license to do so. In the case of free and creative commons images the license is given away with no charge, in the case of paid "stock photography" then you need to pay for the license depending on what use you make of the image. When you buy a stock photo you are not buying the copyright of it, you are simply buying a license to use the image.
- **Stock Photo**
A stock photo is simply an "off the shelf" image that was taken with the intention of being reused in a design, web site etc, this compared to having someone take a custom photo for you. Stock photos can be obtained either free or by purchase. The term stock photo is used to differentiate these images from those which were taken as artworks, or for documentary or editorial purposes.
- **[PD](#)**
Public domain images, images that have been made available for free use and have no terms attached, typically the choice of subjects and image resolution or quality is limited - there's no such thing as a free lunch!
- **License**
The terms which you agree to when you 'buy' an image for use, these typically prohibit you from reselling the image or using it in certain predefined ways, as stated above then you 'buy' an image you are in fact buying a license to use it, you are not buying the copyright of the image, a common misunderstanding amongst amateur image buyers. Licenses vary from site to site so always check you can use the image in the way you intend. There are two main license types in stock photography Rights Managed (RM) and Royalty Free (RF) [More about stock photo license types on our website](#)
- **[Creative Commons](#)**
A system of licenses which allows photographers to provide their work for free under certain well defined conditions, these typically exclude the image being used in commercial applications and ALWAYS stipulate that the photographer be attributed where the pictures are used. Many photographers use creative commons as a way of promoting their work in front of a wider audience.

- [Microstock](#)

A term applied to Royalty free stock photo agencies who source their images from not just professional photographers but also amateurs via a strictly controlled review process. Microstock sites are a marketplace for 1000's of photographers to sell their work to you, but buyers only need to deal with the agency itself. Most sites allow you to buy credits that afford you a number of downloads of varying resolutions, most also sell vector illustrations and some sell stock footage (video).

- Resolution

Strictly speaking the term refers to how many pixels (the smallest elements of a digital image) are displayed or printed in a defined area (i.e. 300 dots per inch - 300dpi) but the term is often used to refer to the dimensions of an image in pixels e.g. 1200x1600 pixels. The higher the number of pixels the larger you will be able to print or display the image without losing quality.

- [Subscription Images](#)

You pay a monthly or annual fee to access a pre defined number of photos as you need them, this works out cheaper if you need images on a regular basis.

- Editorial Photo

This term is usually applied to images of events or celebrities, they have special license terms applied to them, they normally cannot be used in advertising or promotional material.

- Extended License

A term used by stock agencies to allow images to be used in more applications than normally allowed e.g. to resell a photo as a derivative product like a framed print, website template, poster etc. then you need to buy an extended license or merchandise license, these cost more than standard royalty free licenses.

- Royalty Free (RF)

Stock photos which are supplied for unlimited use (within the license terms which do sometimes include restrictions) are called royalty free because you do not pay a royalty each time the image is used or how many times it is displayed. Microstock images are sold as RF.



- Rights Managed (RM)

Rights managed is usually the most expensive way to buy stock photos, but has some key benefits in exclusivity, as rights managed images are strictly controlled, you pay to use them on a per use basis e.g. on the front of 10,000 copies of a magazine, or on the front page of a web site for 1 year.

- Attribution / Credit Link

An attribution or credit is a piece of text or web link displayed alongside an image when you use it, unless used in editorial applications paid stock images almost never require a credit. Conversely a large majority of free stock photo licenses stipulate some kind of 'credit' as do all creative commons licenses, in this case you can think of the attribution being made in lieu of payment to the photographer. If you use the images without making the credit then you will be breaking the terms of the license leaving you open to legal action - a pitfall a lot of people fall into when they simply download a photo they see in the internet and use it.

STAY UP TO DATE

Discount Coupons & News

Discover all the latest stock photo industry news, discount coupons and receive updates to this document as they are published.

[email updates and discount codes](#)

[budgetstockphoto.com - latest updates via our site](#)

[@bstockphoto](#) on twitter

[Facebook.com/BudgetStockPhoto](#)

Broken Link / Add Listing / Feedback

We **really do appreciate** any feedback you have about this document, let us know anything you would like to see included.

Think we have missed a site from the list? then [let us know](#)

Document revision 20A

