

## Free Images Tutorial

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Within the last ten years, usage of the internet has increased exponentially. Images are now in abundance and the line between what someone can and cannot use has blurred. The following tutorial will give you a basic understanding of the laws surrounding images, explain the difference between free images and royalty images, list several free image sites, and show you how to look for a site's terms about using images.

### Basic Image Laws

This information **is not legal advice**. If you are unsure whether you can legally use an image, seek written permission from the owner or consult a legal professional.

*Educational Purpose* – You are allowed to use an image for an educational purpose, without seeking permission. You **cannot** professionally reproduce and distribute any image you take. You do not own the photo or the rights to it; you are, in essence, borrowing the image to assist you in conveying a message or idea and must credit the source.

*Non-Monetary Gain* – You may use an image for print or web, with permission from the person who owns the photo. This may be a person, company, or a website. Every time you use the photo, a credit must be linked to the photo; typically the credit is rotated 90 degrees and written to the right of the photo, but you should follow the site's terms for credit placement. To the right is an enlarged example of credit placement.



<http://www.freeimages.co.uk/>

*Monetary Gain* – You **cannot** use an image without permission in which you or someone else earns money from the use of the image. You *must* obtain **written** permission from the owner of the image. In most cases, you will not be allowed to use the image for free. Thus, a royalty is paid to the owner of the image. A royalty means that every time the image is used, a predetermined fee is paid to the image's owner. If a royalty fee cannot be established, you may have to purchase the image.

*Legal Action* - If you use an image without permission, the owner of the image has the right to pursue legal action. Most likely their first course of action will be to send you a cease and desist letter. It's a polite way for the owner to tell you that they know you are using the image and to immediately cease using it. Within this letter the owner will detail what course of action will take place if you do not cease using it by the given deadline.

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### Free Images vs. Royalty Images

Make sure to read a site's image Terms of Use page **very carefully**. Many sites boast they are a "free images" when they are not. A totally free image site does not require any sort of payment whatsoever for the image or for the use of it. Many sites claim they have free images because they have free small images, but you have to pay for the high resolution images. If there is any sort of mention of price or a shopping cart, not all the images are free, so be careful.

### Free Image Sites

These sites have been checked to make sure they have free images.

<http://www.bigfoto.com/>

<http://www.freeimages.co.uk/>

<http://www.freefoto.com/index.jsp> (small photos only - larger ones require payment)

<http://www.imageafter.com/>

### How to Find a Site's Terms of Use

There is no step by step instruction on finding a site's terms of use for its photos. This section contains tips on locating information.

- Look for a link that says "Terms of Use", "Copyright", "Licensing Terms", "Image Permission" or something similar.
- Links regarding photo permissions tend to be either in the header or footer of the page (the extreme top or bottom). Some sites may have this link in small type, others may make it more obvious.
- If you are unable to find the Terms of Use page or you have doubts about the site's credibility, go to another site.
- Once you load the site's Terms of Use, make sure you **read it** and **agree with it**.
- Make sure **no payment** is involved. If a site has a shopping cart in the upper right corner, chances are not all the images are free.
- Remember, a site **cannot** give you sole permission to use a photo with copyrighted material or a trademark. You must obtain written permission from both the image site and the owner of the copyrighted material.
- Make sure the free photos do not contain watermarks. To rid a photo of a watermark, you must purchase the photo.

**\*\*\* Remember, if you have any doubts, seek written permission and credit the source of the image.**