

Find Free Images for Your Blog – The Legal Way

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[Faithful Bloggers.com](http://FaithfulBloggers.com)

Bloggers are always on the lookout for images to use in their blog posts. It can get expensive quickly if you use sites like [iStock](#), [Big Stock Photo](#), or [Dreamstime](#) to purchase images you can legally use. But guess what, you don't have to pay to find pictures to use in your blog posts. You just have to understand how the Creative Commons License works and a whole new world of free images will be available to use.

Creative Commons License is a group of copyright licenses that allow the use of and alteration of documents in other works, including websites and blogs. These licenses can be used in different combinations, making it possible use for a variety of works. These licenses were released by Creative Commons (<http://creativecommons.org>) in 1992 and make it easier for you to find free images that you can use on your website or blog.

Types of Licenses

When searching for images, you will see combinations of the following four core licenses. They are also often abbreviated and you can see the abbreviation for each license in brackets below.

- **Attribution (by):** You can use image, as long as attribution for the work is provided.
- **Non-commercial (nc):** You can use the image for non-commercial purposes only.
- **No Derivative Works (nd):** You cannot create derivative works only. You cannot edit the work.
- **Share-Alike (sa):** You can make derivative works and modify the work, only if you distribute the work under the same license as the original work.

Possible License Combinations

There are 6 possible combinations of these licenses:

1. **Attribution (by):** It can be used for commercial purposes, derivative works can be created, but only if proper attribution is provided.

2. **Attribution AND Non-Commercial (by + nc):** It cannot be used for commercial purposes, but derivative works can be created and proper attribution must be provided.
3. **Attribution AND No Derivatives (by + nd):** It can be used for commercial purposes, but derivative works cannot be created and proper attribution must be provided.
4. **Attribution AND Share Alike (by + sa):** It can be used for commercial purposes, derivative works can be created, but only if the derivative work is released under the same license. Attribution must be provided.
5. **Attribution AND Non-Commercial AND No Derivatives (by + nc + nd):** It cannot be used for commercial purposes and no derivatives can be created. Attribution must be provided.
6. **Attribution AND Non-Commercial AND Share-Alike (by + nc + sa):** It cannot be used for commercial purposes and derivatives can be created, as long the derivative work is released under the same license. Attribution must be provided.

Graphical Representation of Licenses

While some sites may use different images to indicate certain licenses, you will likely see the images used by the Creative Commons. You will often see a CC, which stands for Creative Commons and indicates a Creative Commons license:



Then the following images, show the 4 possible licenses that can be used in the variety of combinations mentioned earlier.



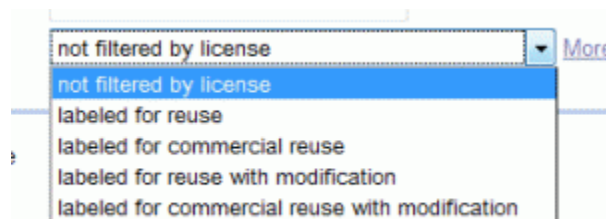
1. Attribution (by)
2. Non-Commercial (nc)
3. Share-Alike (sa)
4. No Derivatives (nd)

Understanding these licenses will make it easier for you to find the images that suit your needs. As a blogger who is not interested in making money on their blog, you really just need to focus on finding images with the attribution or non-commercial licenses. And of course those who are looking to make money off their blog should look for the absence of the non-commercial license.

One way to find images that fit that meet your licensing needs is to use Google Images. While you cannot simply search Google Images and use the images you want (even though a large number of people do), Google does provide you with the search tools to find images that are under the Creative Commons License.

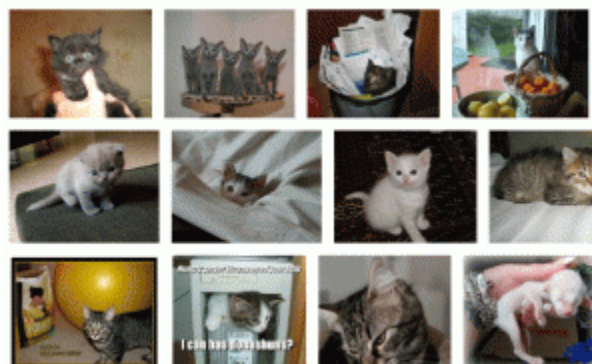
To get started, go to the Advance Google Image Search at http://images.google.com/advanced_image_search

On the search form, you will see an option called “Usage Rights”. The drop-down box gives you the following options:

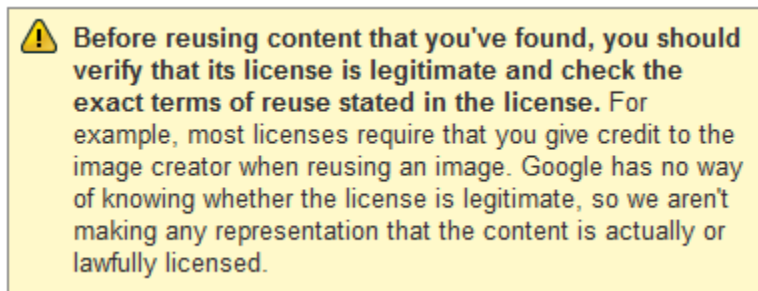


If you have a commercial website of any kind, you should choose “labeled for commercial reuse” or if you want to actually edit the image, choose “labeled for commercial reuse with modification”.

Here are the results for a search for “kitten”, “photo content” and “labeled for commercial reuse with modification”:



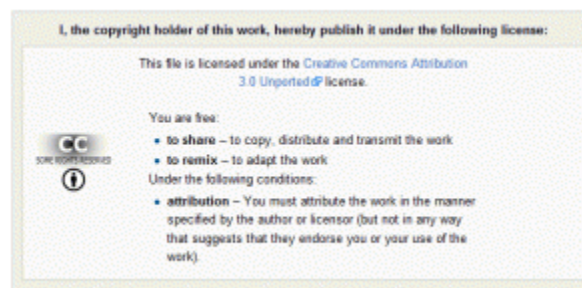
Before you use any photos, you need to confirm the Creative Commons Licenses are correct as noted in the following Google warning:



You can do this by clicking on the image and then click the X in the top right of the corner of the image, so you can see the actual web page the image came from.



This particular image is on the Wikimedia Commons Website (<http://commons.wikimedia.org>), so the information on the license is easy to find and are shown below:



If you want to use an image from Wikimedia Commons, you can click the “Use This File on the Web” icon to the right of the image.



A screen will pop-up, giving you the location of the image and the proper attribution. If you click the HTML box beside the attribution (as shown below), it will make copy-and-paste code for you to use in your blog post.

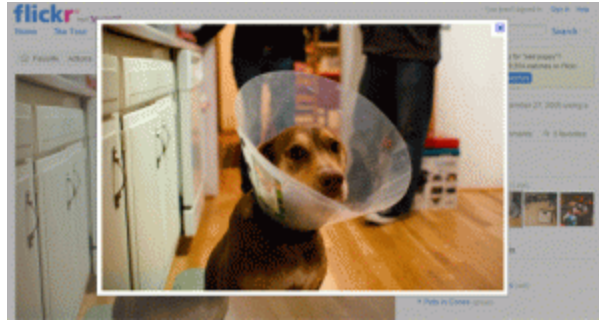


By using Wikimedia Commons you can make sure you legally can use the image you want in your blog or on your website. Of course, there other ways to find images with the correct Creative Commons License and next week we going to go over using Flickr for that same purpose.

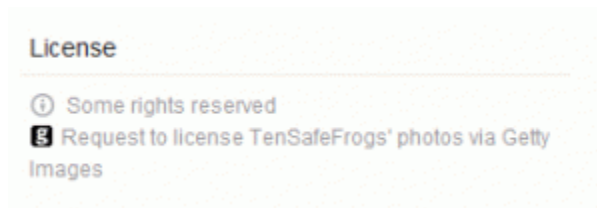
Flickr (<http://flickr.com>) is a common source of Creative Commons License images. By performing a Google Image Search for “sad puppy”, “photo content” and “labeled for commercial reuse with modification” I find the set of images below:



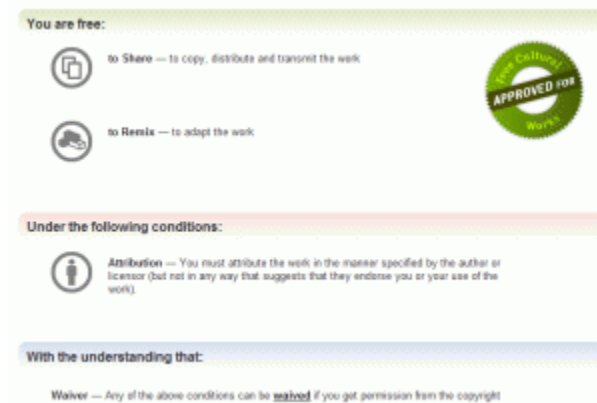
I am interested in using the first image and notice that it is from Flickr. I click on the image and then click the X in the top right corner of the image to see the web page it came from.



To use an image from Flickr, check the License information on the right menu:



If I click “Some rights reserved”, I can see the conditions of this license.
Always be sure to read the full terms prior to using the image.



To get the appropriate code to use the image, I just click the “Share” tab at the top of the page and then copy and paste the code into my blog post.



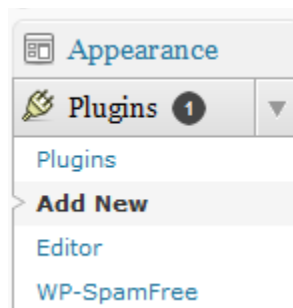
Flickr has millions of images on its site and there is actually a WordPress plugin that helps makes finding images with the correct license easy to find and add to your blog post.

[Photo Dropper](#) is a WordPress plugin that makes it easy for you to search Flickr for photos with Creative Commons License and insert appropriate images into your blog. You can read more about the plugin at the [WordPress.org Plugin Repository](#).

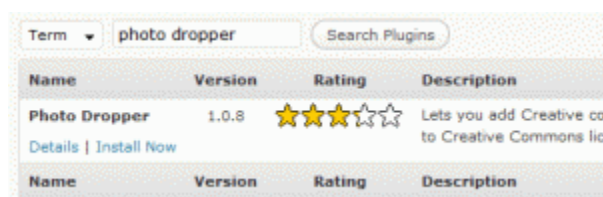
Obviously, this will only work self-hosted blogs using WordPress **not on Blogger or WordPress.com blogs.*

Install the Plugin

You can install the plugin by logging into your WordPress control panel and click on “Plugins -> Add New” on the left menu.



On the next screen, search for Photo Dropper. When you find it, click “Install Now”:



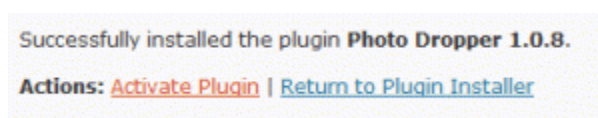
You may be asked for your FTP information in order to perform the installation, if so enter it in.

A screenshot of the WordPress FTP configuration screen. It has four input fields: 'Hostname' (with '.com' entered), 'FTP Username' (with a redacted name), 'FTP Password' (with masked characters), and 'Connection Type' (with 'FTP' selected and 'FTPS (SSL)' as an option). There is a 'Proceed' button at the bottom.

Next you’ll see a screen that indicates your plugin installation has begun.



When the installation is complete, click “Activate Plugin”:



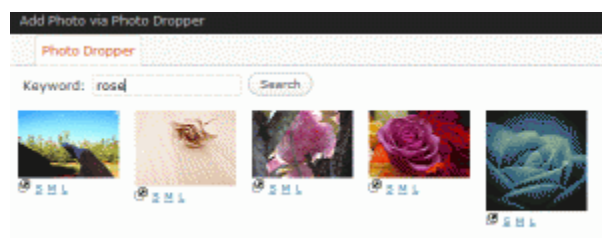
Now the Photo Dropper plugin is installed and ready to use.

How to use Photo Dropper

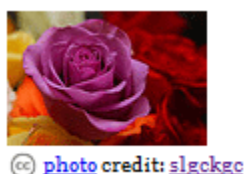
When you create a new post, you can see the Photo Dropper icon as one of your options at the top of the post.



Click the icon to search for images. In this example, we are searching for “red rose” and get the following results:



You can choose the image that you'd like, choose small (S), medium (M) or large (L) size and it will insert the appropriate attribution into your blog post.



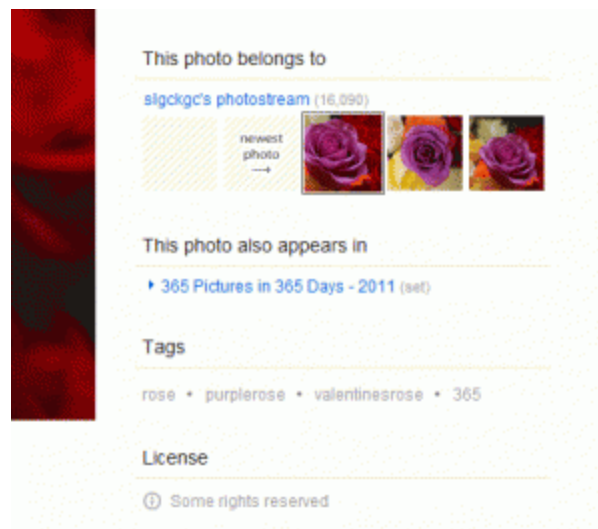
Confirm Licensing Details

While ongoing use of Photo Dropper seems to indicate it's pretty accurate in using appropriate images for commercial websites, you should always confirm the license allows you to use the photo for your website.

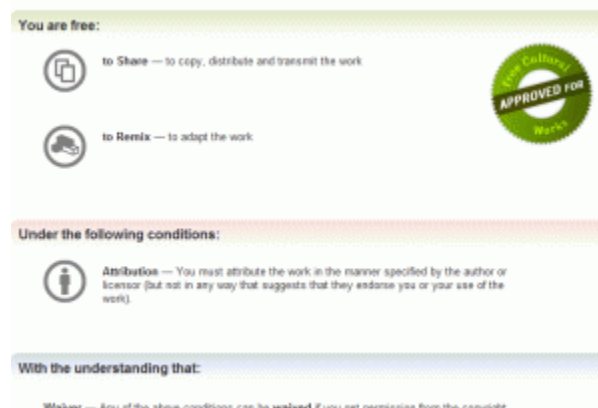
You can see the image information by clicking the arrow icon in the bottom left before you add the image:



This brings you to the image page and you can find the license information on the right menu:



Click the “Some rights reserved” and you’ll see the details about using the image. Make sure to read them completely.



[Zemanta](#) is a plugin available for Firefox, Explorer and Chrome. It is also available as a plugin for Blogger, WordPress, Joomla, Drupal and more. For this example I am going to show you how to use Zemanta in Blogger to find free images for your blog posts. So in order to get started using Zemanta, you have to first install it.

Install Zemanta

The Zemanta website provides full and complete instructions for installing it in a browser or using it as a content management system plugin (which is what we are doing today).

Please make sure you are logged into Blogger before beginning in the installation process.

To start installing on Blogger, go to:
<http://www.blogger.com/zemanta.g>

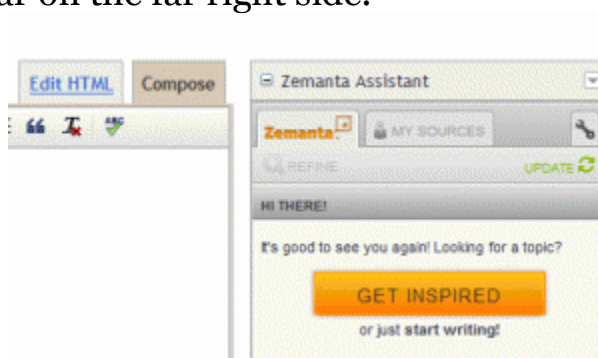
Choose the blog you want to install Zemanta on and click “Add Zemanta”.



And that's it. Zemanta is now ready to use on your chosen blog.

Using Zemanta

When you make a new post on your blog, the Zemanta Assistant will automatically appear on the far right side.



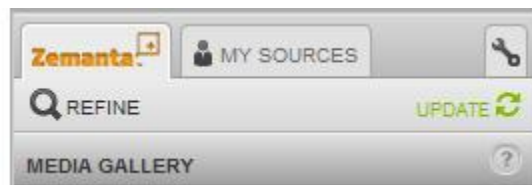
You can click the “Get Inspired” button and some images will appear, as will some recent topics that might inspire you to get writing.

We're going to enter our own article instead and see what Zemanta comes up with instead. Once you start writing, Zemanta will analyze your text.

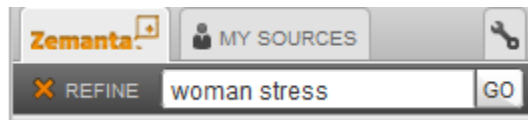


Suggested images will appear on the right side, as you can see above. If you change your text, you can click the “Update” icon on the far right side and it will update your selections.

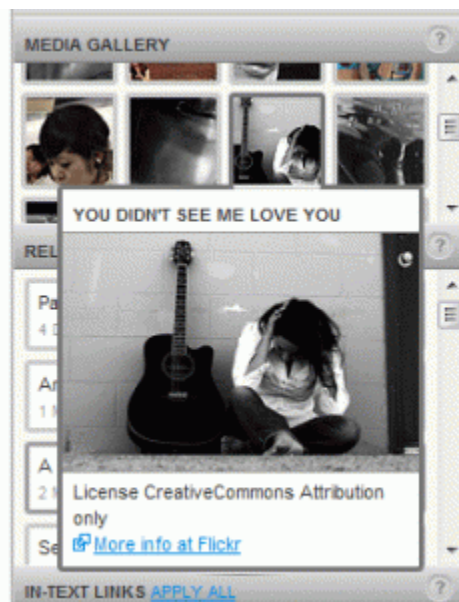
If you don’t see anything you’d like to use, you can click “Refine” and enter some keywords.



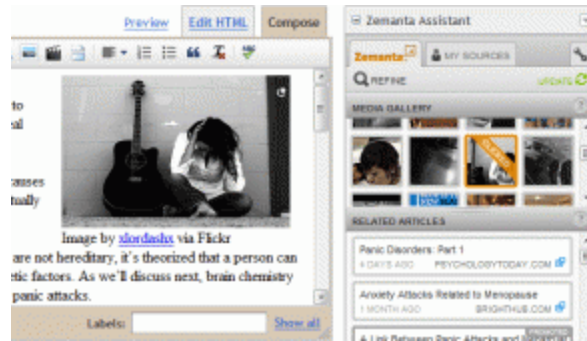
We have entered “woman” and “stress”:



and are given new options. Now when we see an image we want to use, we can put our mouse over it to see the license information. You can also click through and see more license details.



To add the image just click it. Zemanta will keep track of the images you have added by marking them as “Clicked”. It will also insert the image, with proper attribution into your post.



[Zemanta](#) is relatively easy to use, but seems to be limited in the number of appropriate images returned, even when keywords are entered. It also displays a lot of images that are for non-commercial use.

That's it in a nutshell. There are some additional settings you can customize such as: positioning of the image, code style, Amazon affiliate ID, and more.

So as you have seen finding free images you can legally use on your blog is not hard to do, just a little time consuming. Of course, there are more ways than just the ones I have listed in this report, but these will help you get started.

If you have any questions about Creative Commons License or using any of the sites mentioned, visit my website, CourtneyChowning.com, and drop me a note.