

Open Images in Google and Flickr

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Faculty members are often looking for “free” images or media resources to use in their presentations. While it’s easy to search Flickr or Google Images for photos, many of these images might be licensed with a traditional copyright. There is a way to search for images that are either free-to-use or Creative Commons-licensed for reuse, sharing, and modifying.

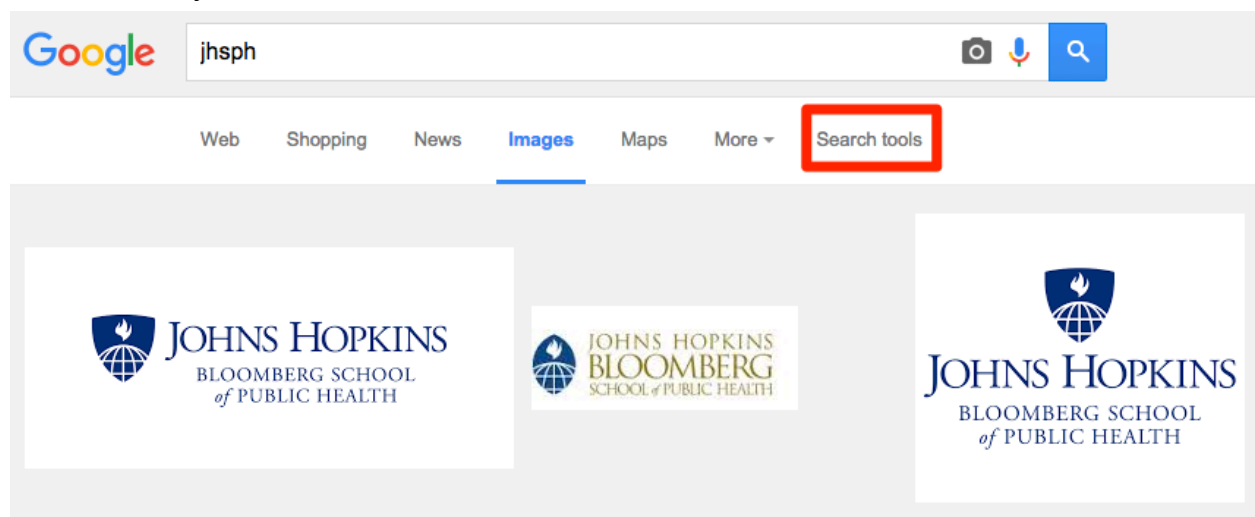
Creative Commons

[Creative Commons licenses](#) are an alternative to traditional copyright. They allow creators to more easily share and allow others to share, reuse, distribute, alter, or edit their works. Creative Commons license elements include:

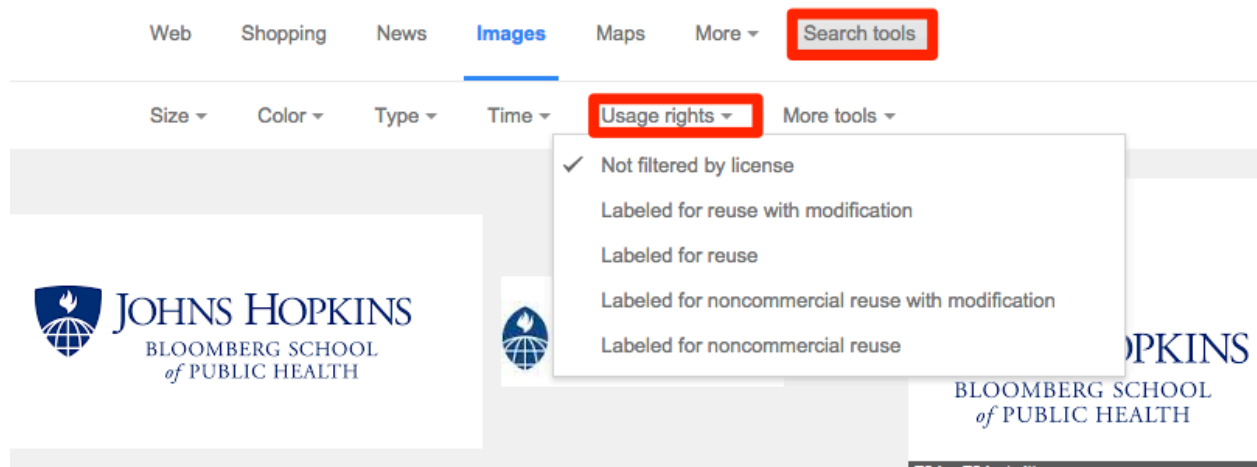
- attribution: how a work is credited
- commercial vs. non-commercial use
- derivative works
- share-alike - works with “share alike” (SA) as part of the CC license must be shared with the same license as the original

Google Images

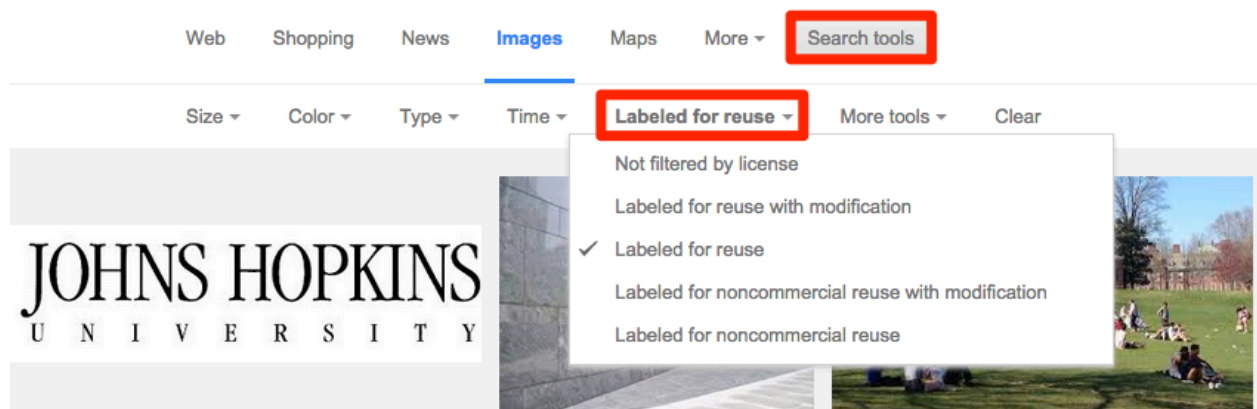
When you first go to images.google.com, you will see a search box. After entering a search term, you'll see the "Search tools" link:



when clicked, several more search criteria show up, including: “Usage Rights”



By default you see the results are "not filtered by license" but you can quickly change that to "Labeled for Reuse." We'd recommend you start there.



Using the advanced search tool allows you to search through millions of Google images and get results that you can freely use and share in your presentation. Before using the image, however, you should check if there are specific restrictions on the host's website about "attribution" or citation. Often, the owner of the image wants you to give credit (and/or a link to their website). Also, if the license on the image is a Creative Commons license, you may be required to maintain that same type of license for the image in your creation, especially if modified.

Here's an example. Let's say we search for "malaria net" using the advanced search, looking for an image we can use, share, or modify. We get results, click on an image, and see a few options:

- "Visit page"—this selection is useful for going to the original page to see more

information about licensing, attribution sharing, etc. In this case, we find out from the page that the image is in the public domain, so we can use it or alter it without worrying about attribution.

- "View original image"—this is useful for seeing the original image at full size and saving the image to your hard drive to import into your presentation.
- "More info"—use this link to look for other sizes, other sites that use the same image, and visually similar images.

Flickr

To access Flickr's advanced search simply enter a search term and then select "advanced search" to see [Flickr's advanced search features](#). In the upper left you'll then see "Any license" We recommend you start by selecting the "*Modifications allowed*" or broaden the search to "*All Creative Commons*" if need be. You can also sort or view results based on size or time posted. After clicking on an image you will see some additional options. In the lower right, under the date uploaded —there are some Creative Commons icons, and a link with more information about the type of license for this image. Click on that link and you'll see [the Creative Commons license for this image](#). In most cases, it is best for you to link to that same license page and/or to use the Creative Commons icons showing the license type for the image in your work.

Regarding attribution, unfortunately, most Flickr users don't specify how they want their works attributed. Many users simply request a link to the original image, or their Flickr username or real name included. Your best bet is to send the owner a quick message, letting him or her know your intended use, and asking how they'd like attribution.

Other Open Image Resources

[Open Image Resources compiled by the Johns Hopkins Open Education Lab](#)