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Photos for your website: where to get them legally and what to credit

SEO & Marketing

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Photos for your website: where to get them legally and what to credit

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The short answer: an image you find on the internet is **not free just because it is there**. For your site, use photos that are **yours**, or from an image library whose licence allows commercial use, and keep proof of where they came from. Images from a Google search do not do, unless the licence on the source page says so.

The licences, in plain words

Licence	What it allows	What it asks
Public domain (or CC0)	Use for anything, including on a business site.	Nothing. Crediting the source is courtesy, not an obligation.
Creative Commons with attribution (CC BY)	Use, including commercially.	Name the author, the source and the licence.
Creative Commons "non-commercial" (NC)	Only non-commercial use.	**Not suitable** for a business site.
Creative Commons "no derivatives" (ND)	Use the image as it is.	You cannot crop or alter it.
The image library's own licence	Depends on each library: read the licence page.	Almost always there are things you cannot do (reselling the image on its own, for example).

Where to look

1. **Your own photos** are the best choice: they are yours, they show your business for real and cost nothing. A phone is enough. Then shrink them before uploading: see **Image optimisation and WebP**.

2 **Free image libraries** (there are several well-known ones) **and paid ones.** Each one's rules change over time, so read the licence on the day you download and keep a copy of it, or the receipt.

3 **For each image keep,** in a simple sheet: the address it came from, the author, the licence and the date. If someone complains, this is what you show.

4 **Write the credit** when the licence asks for it: "Photo by AUTHOR, on SOURCE, licence X". It usually goes near the image or on a credits page.

! **Do not use without thinking:**

Images from a Google search; other brands' logos and products; screenshots of other people's sites; and **photographs of people** without their consent. A person's right to their image is different from the photographer's copyright, and the rules vary by country: check what applies to you.

AI-made images raise other questions, about who the author is and what you may do with them. See **Who owns text and images made by AI**. And always write the alternative text, which helps people who cannot see the image, and Google: **Alt text and file names for images**.

NEED A HAND?

Received a notice saying an image on your site is not yours? Open a ticket with the notice and the page address.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- **Who owns text and images made by AI: copyright in plain terms** →
- **Alt text and file names for images: what to write, and what to avoid** →
- **Image optimisation and WebP** →
- **Personal data protection: what applies to your website** →

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TAX ID (NUIT)	401 191 607
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ECONOMIC ACTIVITY CODE (CAE)	62022
REGISTERED OFFICE	Bairro 7 de Setembro Vilankulo 1304 · CEP 0411-02, Inhambane, Mozambique
CONTACT	info@interweb.co.mz · +258 84 635 1111 · +258 86 635 1111 · www.interweb.co.mz
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