

Free-to-use images for teaching and learning

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Introduction

Section 32 “Illustration for Instruction” of the [Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988](#) enables us - solely to support our teaching rather than to decorate - to use the whole or part of images from any source which does not charge for them, provided it is clear that we are not affecting the income stream of the creator **and** that we acknowledge the creator.

The Act calls this “fair dealing”.

This therefore excludes images from sellers such as [A.D.A.M. Images: Your Online Source for Medical Images](#)

(<https://www.adamimages.com>), [Shutterstock: Stock assets to power your creativity](#) (<https://www.shutterstock>) or [Getty](#)

[Images](#) (<https://www.gettyimages.co.uk/>) from which we can buy “royalty-free” images, i.e. once we have bought them, we

don't pay a royalty for subsequent uses or for specific purposes. Google searches retrieve their images.

We need to be careful about the provenance of images found on the web. The website from which we retrieve an image may or may not be that of the creator. For example, a photograph of a dancer from a particular dance company downloaded from a venue's website is likely to have originated either on the dance company's website or that of the photographer. The company may or may not have paid to create the image. In such a case, we should write to the dance company requesting permission to use the image. They may refer us to the photographer for permission and perhaps payment.

Curated image banks like those below can assist us, though we still need to check that the use we want to make is permitted – if an image includes a trademark, that might still be covered by copyright.

In all cases, we must **acknowledge the creator and the creation**, using this generic template, either under or beside each image or on a separate slide near the end of the presentation:

Note: Title. Retrieved from [URL]. Copyright YYYY by A. Creator. Modification: [Include this only if modification is permitted.]

Reprinted with permission. This file is licensed under [name of licence] licence.

Curated image banks with free-to-use content:

[British Cartoon Archive](#) / [Canva](#) / [Creative Commons Search](#) / [Europeana Collections](#) /

[Pexels](#) / [Pixabay](#) / [Unsplash](#) / [Wellcome Collection](#) / [Wikimedia Commons](#)

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Title:	British Cartoon Archive (https://www.cartoons.ac.uk/)
Size:	150,000+ British cartoons from newspapers and publications
About:	The collection includes cartoons published since 1904; those out of copyright became so 70 years after the death of their creators. The remainder are still in copyright. Cartoons retrieved via the BCA catalogue can be used to illustrate teaching or in student presentations. No modifications can be made without the copyright holder's permission. FAQs
Search guidance:	See online guidance at https://archive.cartoons.ac.uk/How.aspx
How to acknowledge images:	<i>Note:</i> "Let's have a change this Whitsun," says Father. "Let's go horseriding". Daily Express, May 13, 1948. Retrieved from https://archive.cartoons.ac.uk/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=CG%2f1%2f1%2f1%2f3874&pos=2 Copyright 1948 by C. Giles. Reprinted with permission. This file is licensed from the British Cartoon Archive.

Title:**Canva (<https://canva.com>)****Size:**

1+ million images, filters, photos, icons and shapes

About:

Images with which to design more images. A subscription service, also with a free option: £0pm [Canva Basic](#). [Licence for use of free images](#)

Search guidance:**How to acknowledge images:**

Note: [Title]. Retrieved from URL. Copyright YYYY if given by A. Person. Reprinted with permission. This file is licensed under the [Canva Free Images License Agreement](#).

Title:

Creative Commons Search (<https://ccsearch.creativecommons.org>)

Size:

329+ million images, including 304+ million from Flickr, from 22 websites

About:

Enables retrieval of images which are subject to open or public domain licenses. NB: CC does not verify licences: users are advised to double-check these before use.

Search guidance:

See online guidance at <https://ccsearch.creativecommons.org/search-help>

Also:

- Double quotation marks (“...”) around phrases, e.g. “akram khan”
- Capital AND, OR or NOT to link subjects
- System looks for stems of words, e.g. danc; you can widen a search more with an asterisk (*), e.g. danc*

How to acknowledge images:

Note: Akram Khan at Jerwood Space in London, England in April 2010. Retrieved from http://mediacentre.kallaway.co.uk/pics/akram-khan/hires/AK-Reflect-H_6405-by-Laurent-Ziegler.jpg Copyright 2010 by L. Ziegler. Modification: Image reduced to 60% of original size. Reprinted with permission. This file is licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International](#) licence.

Title:

[Europeana Collections > Free to Use Images \(https://www.europeana.eu/portal/en \)](https://www.europeana.eu/portal/en)

Size:

14+ million images free to use from 237 museums, galleries, libraries and archives across the geographical area of Europe

About:

Images, sounds, and videos

Search guidance:

Limit by format, collection, language and others in left column.

How to acknowledge images:

Note: Reference work [book cover] Performance: 1909 to the present by R. Goldberg. Retrieved from https://www.europeana.eu/portal/en/record/2021648/1186_AB00305.html?q=bauhaus#dclid=1571942502644&p=3 Copyright 1979 by Thames and Hudson. Reprinted with permission. This file is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported \(CC BY 3.0\) licence](#).

Title: [Pexels: The best free stock photos and videos shared by talented creators \(https://www.pexels.com/ \)](https://www.pexels.com/)

Size: ?

About: Though we do not need to register to use its contents, we must adhere to its [Terms of Service](#). We are free to use and modify its photographs for any purpose personally and commercially. We can sell derivatives but not the originals. We need to be careful about photos with trademarks, logos and brands in them, as these may still be protected by copyright. Owned by Canva.

Search guidance: General terms seem more successful than specific terms, e.g. dog rather than labrador. Or browse their categories and popular searches.

How to acknowledge images: *Note:* [Title]. Retrieved from URL. Copyright YYYY if given by A. Person. Reprinted with permission. This file is licensed under the [Pexels License](#).

Title: [Pixabay: Stunning free images and royalty free stock \(https://pixabay.com/ \)](https://pixabay.com/)

Size: 1.2 million stock photographs and videos from 33000+ creators.

About: For registered users: stock photographs and videos which are free to sell and to modify. We are not permitted to sell them in their original form but are free to sell when modified. Be careful about trademarks, logos and brands in photos as these may still be protected by copyright. Owned by Canva. [Wikipedia article about Pixabay](#)

Search guidance:

?

How to acknowledge images:

Note: [Title]. Retrieved from URL. Copyright YYYY if given by A. Person. Reprinted with permission. This file is licensed under the [Simplified Pixabay License](#).

Title:

Unsplash: Photos for Everyone (<https://unsplash.com>)

Size:

1+ million photographs from 150,000+ photographers

About:

We do not have to register to use.

Search guidance:

?

How to acknowledge images:

Note: [Title]. By A. Creator Retrieved from URL. Reprinted with permission. This file is licensed under the [Unsplash licence](#).

Title:

Wellcome Collection: Collections: Explore our Collections
(<https://wellcomecollection.org/works>)

Size:

1000s of digital images, paintings, prints, posters, and photographs from their collections to download and use under a Creative Commons licence.

About:

Most were acquired between 1980 and 1936.

Search guidance:

Enter a term. Click on Pictures to refine the results to them.

How to acknowledge images:

Note: A physician wearing a seventeenth century plague preventative costume. Watercolour. Retrieved from <https://wellcomecollection.org/works/k77wfwmc>. Reprinted with permission from the Wellcome Collection.
This file is licensed under the [Creative Commons CC BY 4.0 licence](#).

Title:

Wikimedia Commons: The Free Media Repository
(https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page)

Size:

56+ million freely useable images, sounds and video clips

About:

It makes available to you media which is (a) freely licensed - free to use for any purpose, including making new versions - or in the public domain and not affected by copyright in the US and source country, and (b) of educational value. [More on licensing](#) and [Re-using content...](#)

Search guidance:

Browse by topic, location, type (format), author, licence type, source, dated added.

Searching: searches for whole words - not stems, so enter dance not danc. Assumes AND between search terms. Put double quotation marks (“...”) around a phrase, e.g. “queen elizabeth” “ronald reagan”. [More on searching](#): see How it works and Restricting your search.

How to acknowledge images:

Note: President of the United States Ronald Reagan and Queen Elizabeth II horseback riding at Windsor Castle, England. Reagan is riding Centennial and the Queen is on Burmese. June 8, 1982. Retrieved from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Photograph_of_President_Reagan_and_Queen_Elizabeth_II_Horseback_Riding_at_Windsor_Castle,_England_-_NARA_-_198530.jpg Reprinted with permission. This file from the US National Archive and Records Administration is in the public domain in the United States.

Google Images with usage rights filter (<https://images.google.co.uk>)

If the curated image banks do not reveal suitable images, refine your Google Image search with its usage rights filter:

1. Go to <https://images.google.co.uk> > Settings > Advanced search
2. Enter search terms under “Find images with”
3. Scroll down to “Then narrow your searches by... [usage rights](#)”
4. From the drop down menu, choose “free to use share or modify”
5. Click [Advanced Search](#)
6. Make a choice and double-check any Information for re-use.

Google guidance: Settings > Search Help > Search images > Find free-to-use images
<https://support.google.com/websearch/answer/29508?hl=en>

References

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