

It just got a little easier to keep yourself honest online.

By checking a few boxes in the "Usage rights" section of Google's Advanced Image Search page, you can now tell Google to show only files tagged with a license that allows re-use of the image. You can even narrow the search to see only images you can use commercially, or -- my favorite -- images you can modify and then use for commercial purposes.

The search engine recognizes images in the public domain and those tagged with Creative Commons and GNU Free Documentation licenses.

You'll have to verify the license's accuracy, of course, and follow the license restrictions; for example, some Creative Commons licenses state that you include artist attribution. But it's still a heck of a lot better than the wide-open image search that was the norm before this improvement.

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Find Legally Free Images Online

Written by Terri Stone

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For more information, read:

Safely Find and Use Images Via Google

A change to Google's Image Search means you can more easily find images online that the creators have OK'd for commercial use without compensation

In a July 9 blog post, Google software engineers Lance Huang and George Ruban quietly and calmly unveiled a change to Google's Image Search that could save countless designers from violating image copyrights.

By checking a few boxes in the "Usage rights" section of the advanced image search page, you can now filter every image Google has ever indexed so that you see only files tagged with a license that allows re-use of the image.

Copyright-savvy designers know that a basic "OK to re-use" tag may not be enough when you want to use an image commercially. And what if you need to modify the image and then use it for commercial purposes? No problem -- just select which level of usage rights you need in a drop-down menu, and Google will narrow the search even further.

The search engine recognizes images tagged with Creative Commons and GNU Free Documentation licenses, and those that are in the public domain.

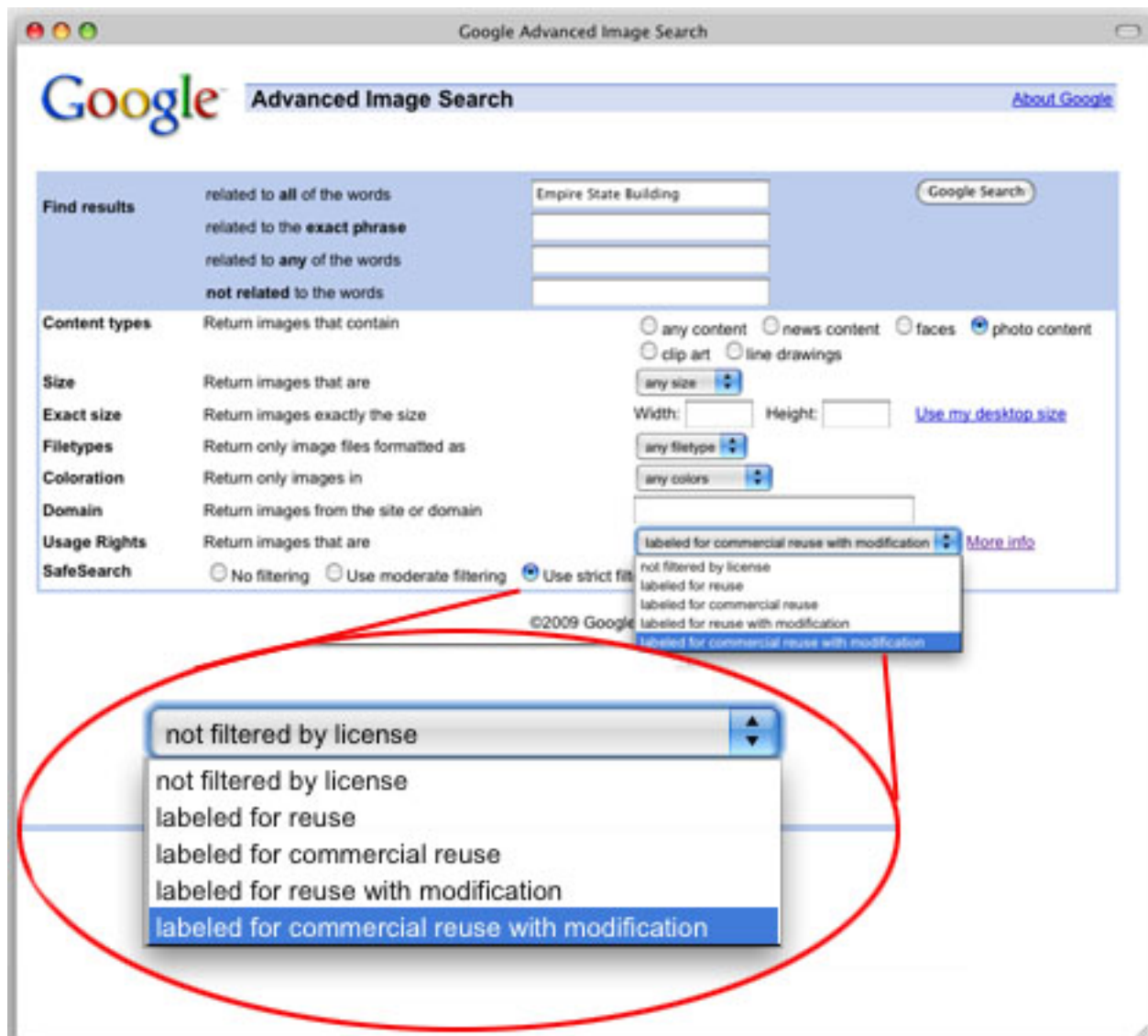
Of course, as Huang and Ruban themselves point out, just because someone slaps a license on an image doesn't mean that someone truly has the legal rights to do so. You'll have to do some digging to verify the license's accuracy. You'll also have to abide by the restrictions imposed by the particular license; for example, some Creative Commons licenses state that you must include artist attribution. But at least you're farther down the road toward doing the right thing than you were before!

Here's what the process looks like:

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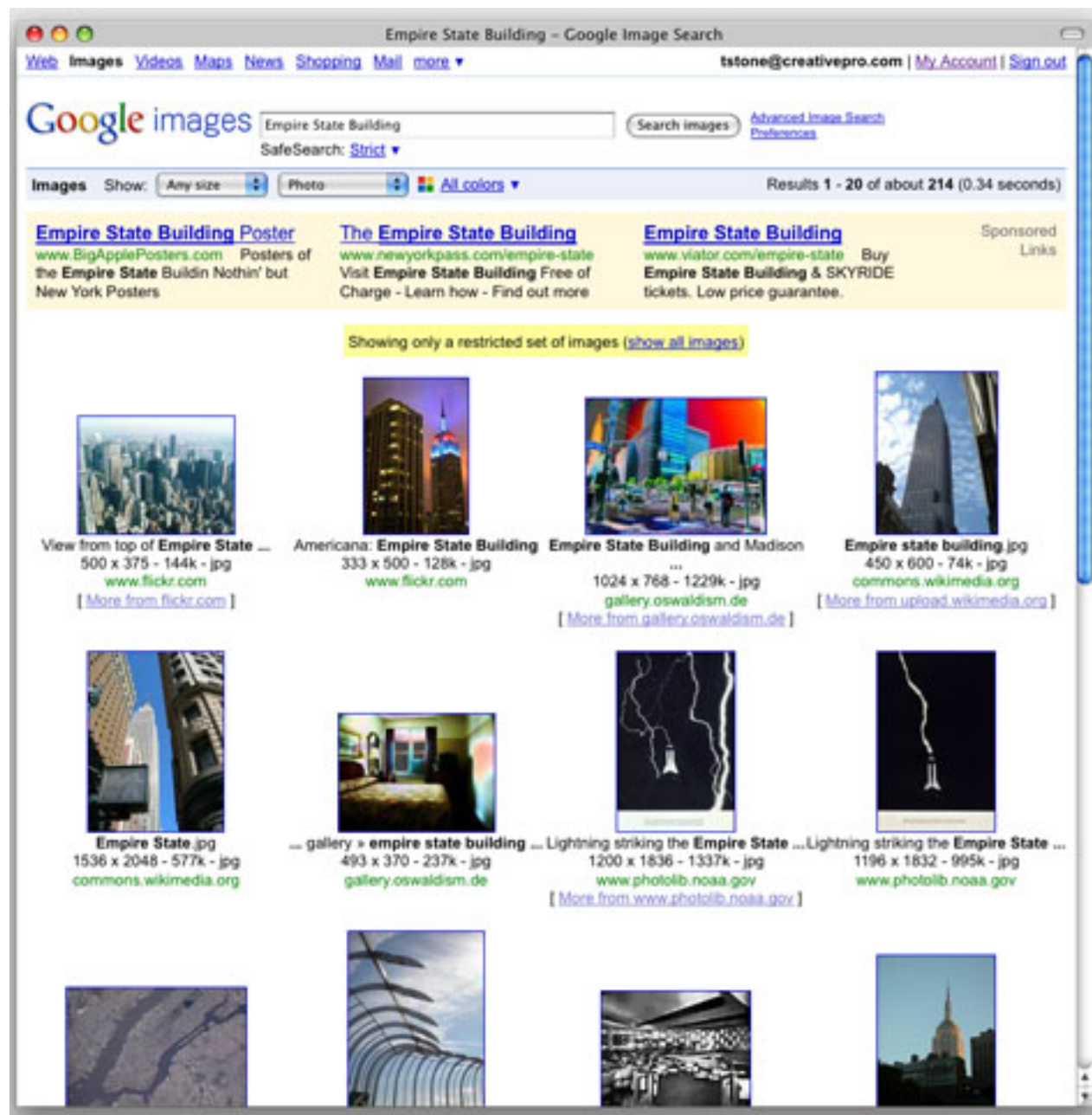
1. Go to the advanced image search page. Fill out as many of the fields as you wish, but be sure select the appropriate choice in the Usage Rights dropdown menu.



2. Google will return search results that meet your criteria.

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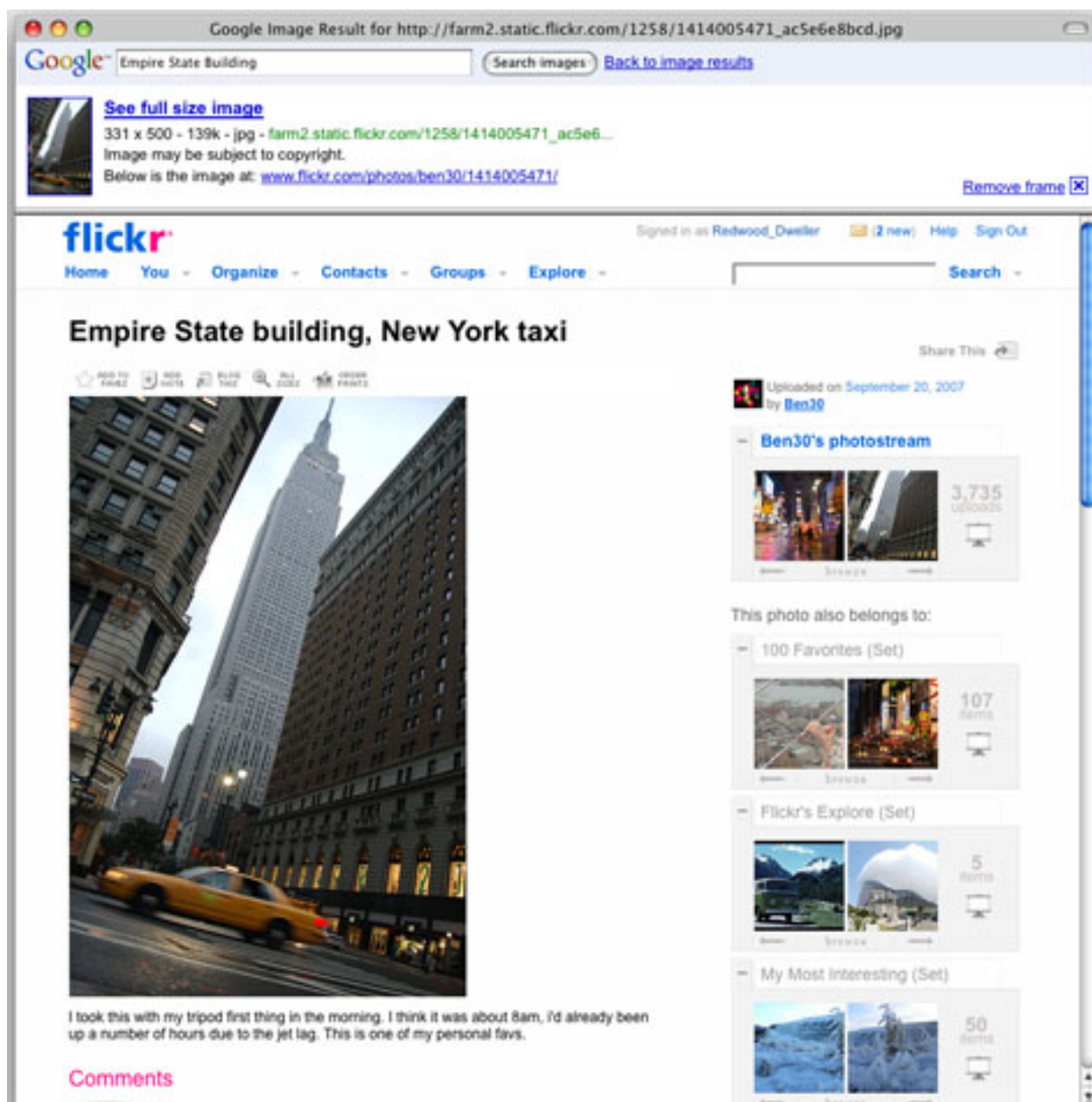
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3. When you find one, you like, click on it.



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<http://zonezero.com/magazine/articles/stone/index.php>