



GETTING INTO STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY

By Brenda Fairfax

- Stock photography can be a side income if you are consistent with your uploads, keep to the guidelines, and follow the trends.
- Stock photography is used by designers mostly for ad campaigns, posters, cards, and anything else where a picture says a thousand words.
- Things designers look for: clean, uncluttered subjects, negative space for text, no logos, concepts like happiness, health, wealth, green energy, etc. Overhead shots are a popular trend right now. And people. People doing anything. Real people in candid shots are more popular at this moment.
- You'll need to read up on model releases if you have any recognizable people in your shots. It is prudent to get a release for any shots as the rules change constantly as to what exactly is recognizable. You may also need property releases for certain buildings or parts thereof. Iconic shots still are popular if you come up with an angle that no one else has shot. Always check with the tourist bureau about what can or can not be shot for commercial use. For example: you can not shoot the Eiffel Tower at night as the light show is trademarked.
- Signing up at micro stock sites is free and in some cases they have a tutorial. Some are easier than others to break into. Just remember that almost everyone's first submissions are rejected. Some sites will tell you why and others don't but if you are rejected twice by the same stock site then do more research before submitting again as some will put a time limit as to when you can submit images again.
- If you submit images to more than one agency at a time you have a better chance at making more money with your sales. Yes – it seems piddly what they pay but the more images you have, the more you will make, providing you submit images that sell. And they will if you study the sites, see what is popular, see what images are downloaded the most, and practice.
- Another important point is to know how to keyword your images. Choosing the right keywords make all the difference between a sale or no sale. Put yourself into the searcher's shoes. Who would look for your photo? What does it convey? Treat it like a news story – who, what, where, when, and why. Researching how to keyword will help your sales.
- Here are five popular and easier to get into, stock sites. Read their guidelines.
 - **Bigstockphoto.com**
 - **Fotolia.com**
 - **Dreamstime.com**
 - **Shutterstock.com**
 - **iStockphoto.com** (the hardest to break into but pays the best)

- Once you sign up as a contributor on Dreamstime.com you can play an addictive game called “Stock Rank”. This is a game where you are given a time-limited chance at 10 pairs of stock images to guess which photo has sold, the other has not. If you do not choose a photo in time it will automatically give you an incorrect answer and go to the next pair. You will be surprised at what sells and what doesn’t but after a while of playing to get a feel for what images do well as stock. Sign in to Dreamstime, go to the Resources tab, and click on Stock Rank.
- <http://www.lightstalking.com/7-basic-tips-that-will-make-your-stock-photographs-sell-like-hotcakes/>
- <http://www.webdesignerdepot.com/2009/01/how-to-sell-stock-photos-part-1/>
- <http://blog.photoshelter.com/2008/06/keywording-your-stock-photos-1/>
- These are just a few of the many articles written about stock photography – Good luck!!