From UNSPLASH FAQ

Releases and Trademarks



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The Unsplash License allows a photographer to relinquish their rights to a photo, but it doesn’t necessarily mean that the user of the photo can use it for anything. Similar to a photo found on any other stock photography site, laws can still affect the usage of the photo, like trademark, copyright and privacy rights.

While the Unsplash License allows consumers to download photos for both commercial and personal use, trademark and copyright infringement are separate issues. So while photos can be downloaded for free, photos with brands, trademarks, and people’s faces in them have the additional aspect of trademark, copyright and privacy infringement.

* Trademarks / Brand photos: if a photo has a brand or trademark in it (ex: Star Wars), you can use the photos for personal use (ex: printing the photo to hang on your wall), but when using the photo for commercial use, it’s important not to insinuate that the brand / trademark is endorsing or taking part of the thing that you’re advertising. If the brand can make the case that the photo insinuates that they are part of the commercial message you’re trying to reveal, that’s where you can fall offside.
* People’s faces / celebrities: Photos that have people’s faces that are recognizable in the photos can be used for personal use and commercial use (as long the photo isn’t endorsing any negativity that could harm that person). However, photos that have celebrities in it would not be recommended for commercial use, since typically celebrities have additional privacy rights that don’t allow any company to profit off of their image. However, in both cases, these photos can be used for personal use.

While photographers agree that photos they upload on Unsplash have model releases, there is no reasonable way for us to monitor all photos that get uploaded to Unsplash. We cannot make any guarantees, therefore we recommend when using a photo containing a person, that you should not imply endorsement by the person in the photo.

We recommend reaching out to the photographer to clarify whether they have a model release, which you can do directly via the ‘message’ button on the photographers profile.