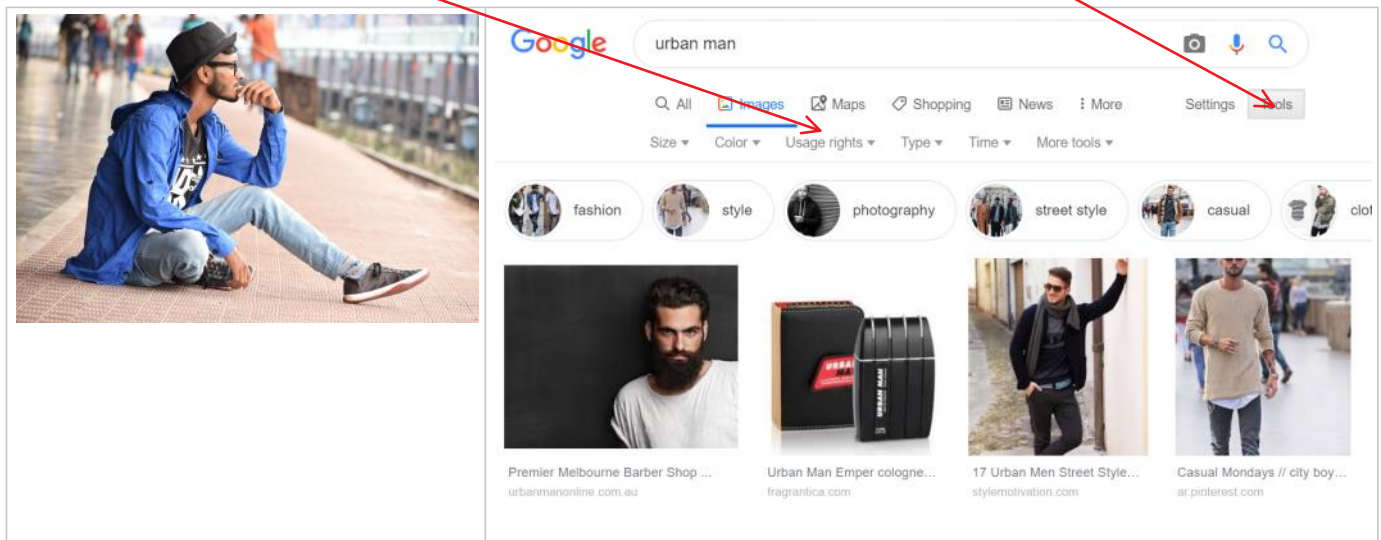# How to make stock photography your own

Wednesday, July 3, 2019          12:56 PM

It's very common practice now for stock images, copyright free or creative commons photos to be used in design portfolios. This is what happens in the real world, but it is risky for NCEA assessments, because of the possibility of plagarism, or proving authenticity. Ideally, you should use your own photos- you can do a lot with a cell phone camera- but if this isn't possible, you have to do enough with the stock image to make it your own. Here are some ideas to help

This image came from an advance image search in google. Click 'Tools' and choose 'Usage rights' to filter for copy right free images



You have to do enough with the image to work it into your design, without relying on it to convey your idea.  Adding a small amount of text wouldn't be enough, because the design relies on the image, not the typography.
Example:



In this example, the man has been clear cut,
And a coloured background applied.
There is some simple typography.
This is not enough to be re-purposing the image.
A good test is "what remains if the stock image is gone?"

In this version, the man has been clear cut And turned into a silhouette shape. This has been scaled and cropped, duplicated several times and layered. The typography has been distressed With a layer mask, and integrated with the silhouette, by repeating the layering. The stock photo has now been creatively re-purposed.

# How to make stock photography your own #2

In this example, the stock photo has been scaled and cropped, a threshold adjustment has been applied to create a black and white, high contrast style.
The silhouette has been used in the background to break It up, and provide some interest. The stock photo is still recognisable, but it has been manipulated to incorporate it into a **style** that has features **different from the original photo.**



In this example, they typography is the main element of the design, and could exist in its own right without the silhouette behind. This is an example of where there is no need for a stock photo, as a silhouette like this could be taken on a cell phone, using a fellow student in class as a model



In this example, the stock photo has been cropped and scaled, and a halftone pattern filter applied. again, the typography dominates, and if the photo wasn't there, the design still has sufficient conventions and integrity to exist on its own. The distressed background and typography, together with the halftone pattern unify all the elements into a grunge style.