

HOW TO MAKE MONEY WITH PHOTOGRAPHY



By Evan Sharboneau

Stock Photography

Have you ever heard of “stock photography”? You might have never thought about it before, but stock photography is absolutely everywhere. On billboards, advertisements, blogs, magazines, fliers, book covers, etc. Graphic designers need imagery for their designs to help businesses communicate, and artists need them for their Photoshop creations.

A stock “agency” is simply a company that owns a website that has tons of photos and illustrations up “for sale”. These are JPEG, RAW, and EPS files, not physical prints. The photos, illustrations, and footage clips in these stock agencies belong to thousands of photographers and illustrators worldwide, people just like you and me.

So then, who buys the images? The answer: Anyone who needs it. Here are some examples of how the images get used in case you don't already know:

This is a picture that my friend took of me when I was playing video games. After uploading the image to the agency, someone purchased the license to use it in their blog.

Zdaniem profesora Daphne Bavelier prowadzącej corocznie sympozjum Games for Learning, u osób, które grają w gry komputerowe, zwiększa się **funkcje** mózgu odpowiadające za planowanie i koncentrację. W niektórych przypadkach zwiększają się nawet nasze zdolności matematyczne. A to dopiero niespodzianka, prawda?

O zbawienym świecie gier komputerowych przekonały się już chociażby izraelskie siły lotnicze. Studenci grający w grę **Fortress** wykazywali się lepszymi wynikami w treningach pilotów niż ci, którzy nigdy w to nie grali. Co więcej, grający w gry sieciowych trybach kooperacyjnych są bardziej skłonni do pomocy innym w rzeczywistości i aktywnego reagowania na krzywdę drugiego człowieka.



Badanie, którego wyniki przedstawiono na nowojorskim sympozjum opierało się na grach typu FPS takich jak **Unreal Tournament** oraz **Medal of Honor**. Zdaniem Daphne Bavelier, gry typu “zabij-albo-gin” mogą nawet pomagać w leczeniu chorób oczu, takich jak **Amblyopia** (tzw. lenwe oko, czyli osłabienie zdolności widzenia w jednym oku).

Poprzez rozrywkę gry wideo testują naszą pamięć, koordynację wzrokowo ruchową, umiejętność wykrywania niewielkiej aktywności na ekranie, a także uczą zarządzania dostępnymi zasobami.

I co powiecie na to? Graliście już dziś w jakąś rozwijającą mózg strzelankę?

Źródło: Yahoo! News
Fot. Wlue | Dreamstime.com

This photo is by Yuri Arcurs

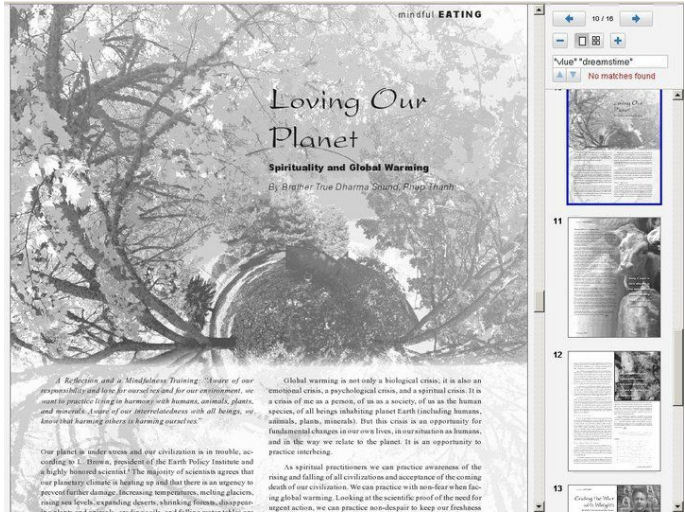
- Pobierz najnowsze programy**
1. TeamSpeak 3 Server dla Windows 3.0.0-beta25 32-bit
 2. TeamSpeak 3 Server dla Windows 3.0.0-beta25 64-bit
 3. TeamSpeak 3 Client dla Windows 3.0.0-beta22 32-bit
 4. TeamSpeak 3 Client dla Windows 3.0.0-beta22 64-bit



www.shutterstock.com · 3778609

Woah, did you just see that? My photo was used in a blog article, but there was another stock photograph being used in a banner advertisement right next to mine on the same page! This demonstrates how stock photography is just like air, it's everywhere and easily accessible. In case you didn't know, Yuri Arcurs is the best selling stock photographer in the world. He has a massive image library of people and lifestyle shots. You can see his portfolio [here](#).

This is a planet panorama photo I took in my backyard in October, it looks like it was used in an article about spirituality and global warming.



You can upload photos of just about anything. Here is me when I had crooked teeth and braces on. It was used on the header of a website showcasing a product that helps reduce lag when playing online video games. There's a caption that says "let the nerd rage begin!" Hilarious stuff!



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WTFast **WORLD OF WARCRAFT** **AION**

"The Cure For WoW Lag."
- MARKEE DRAGON

PWN MMO Lag!
Let The Nerd Rage BEGIN!

- ✓ INSTANTLY LOWER YOUR PING BY 60-90%
- ✓ IMPROVE YOUR RESPONSE TIME UP TO A FULL SECOND OR MORE
- ✓ STOP LAGGING IN HIGH POPULATION AREAS AND RAIDS
- ✓ NO MORE MISSED CLICKS, MISSED OPPORTUNITIES
- ✓ DRAMATICALLY IMPROVE YOUR PVP PERFORMANCE
- ✓ NO MORE DISCONNECTS!

MADE BY HARDCORE GAMERS, FOR HARDCORE GAMERS.

We have the best technology, the best talent, and the best connection available. We streamline your data to the game servers so you can PWN the enemy before they can say WTFast!?!?!?

USER RESULTS

Every millisecond (ms) your ping improves is like giving you a 2 ms better response time while playing WoW. The

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Password (Repeat)

Subscribe to WTFast Newsletter:

DOWNLOAD FOR FREE NOW!

"Dang this WTFast is great, ms went from 430 to around 112." - Ron from Alberta

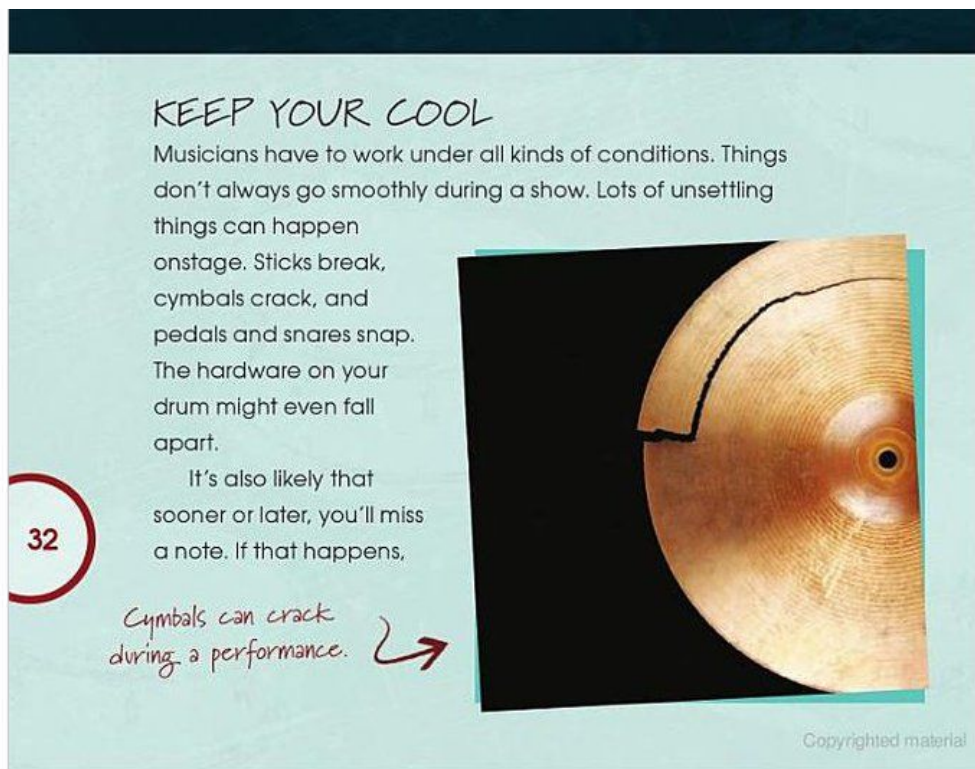
"Game speed is now around 300-400ms. Before it was 800-1500ms." - John from China

After seeing the last photo you might ask “Well jeez... I don't want pictures of friends, family, and myself being used in weird ways that I don't like...” don't worry, it is actually illegal to use stock photos for defamatory or pornographic purposes. Also, if you don't want photos of you, your friends or family used in weird ways, don't take photos of yourself doing weird things! Simple.

In case you are still wondering how stock images can and cannot be used, check out these articles:

- [Restricted Uses for Royalty Free Stock Photos](#)
- [Acceptable Uses for Royalty Free Stock Photos](#)

You don't have to take photos of just people (although they will generally sell the best). I'm a drummer and have a drum set. So, naturally, I took some stock photographs of it. This image of one of my cracked cymbals was used in a book about drums.



If you would like to see more stock images being used, check out this [Facebook group](#).

Getting Started

Now that you have a basic understanding of how stock photography works, where do you start? There are probably hundreds of stock agencies out there, but you should only submit your images to the top players because they will give you the biggest return. All the other small agencies are pointless submitting images to unless you have a massive library of 7,000+ images or something. Let's talk about the good agencies instead:

[Shutterstock](#) – This is by far the best agency. You will get the most amount of money from them. Efficient submission process. Accepts JPEG photos, .EPS vectors, and footage.

[Dreamstime](#) – This was the first agency I started submitting photos to. They can be pretty picky but their site is the most visually pleasing :). Accepts JPEG, RAW and EPS vector files.

[Fotolia](#) – These guys seem to put an emphasis on having a worldwide presence. This is 3rd best on the list as far as earnings, next to Dreamstime. Submitting stock *footage* isn't worthwhile though because you have to copy and paste all the meta data in without knowing what clip you are applying the meta data too. Very inefficient for footage. The footage section of their site shouldn't even be on there. Don't waste your time.

[123RF](#) - 4th place in earnings. Efficient. JPEG and EPS Vectors.

[BigStockPhoto](#) – Another agency. Very inefficient submission process but they accept almost everything you submit.

[CanStockPhoto](#) – Great agency! Welcoming, fast submission process, the most efficient of all sites, excellent customer support, accepts most photos submitted. I really like this agency.

Optional:

[Pond5](#) – This is by far the best agency for submitting footage clips and audio clips (yes, stock *audio* exists too). The reason why is that they pay the best and also automatically include the metadata inside of your footage clips. No other agency does this for footage, and I have no idea why not. Efficient and most practical submission process compared to all other agencies that accept footage clips. JPEG photos, RAW photos, and EPS vectors are *not* accepted.

[iStockPhoto](#) – The most extremely inefficient site out of all agencies and the most picky. Very

anal submission process. I definitely would NOT recommend this agency to anyone starting out in stock photography. They are very well known, they pay alright, and they have the most buyers, but I honestly don't think it is worth it. Submitting just one photo here takes a long time. If you are doing stock photography full-time or you are a really amazing photographer with astronomical images with extremely high commercial value that have been executed perfectly in every way imaginable, you will want to consider submitting photos here, but don't be disappointed if they reject 90% of your images after you spent an hour submitting 20 to their site.

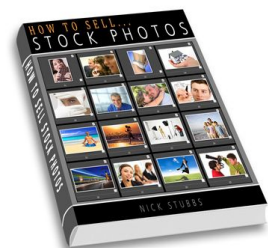
Now, that's a lot of sites I listed. All the sites require photographers to submit a set of 3-10 of their best stock photographs. After that, they review those images and decide to either approve the photographer or reject the photographer for the time being. You can re-apply at a later time with better images.

Most photographers will get rejected the first time, especially if you try to get into Shutterstock, Dreamstime, Fotolia, or iStockPhoto right away without knowing much about how stock photography works. I would start out with CanStockPhoto, BigStockPhoto, 123RF, or maybe Dreamstime if this is your first try at stock photography. After you get accepted into one agency, make more images, get the hang of how things work, and then slowly apply to get into more agencies as time progresses.

Also, one side note: You can sign up with an agency with an “exclusive” contract or “non-exclusive”. If you want to submit images to multiple agencies, you will need to sign up with a non-exclusive contract. Exclusive contract means you will get a higher commission for each sale but are limited to that one agency. You may choose to go that route in order to save time on submissions, but it's all up to you!

The stock agencies have high standards and reject many images; they (and their contributors) are losing a lot of revenue because of it. No one likes it, but you are going to have to jump through hoops and play by their rules in order to get images accepted. I'll list some guidelines to follow on the next page.

- **Make sure your shots are taken at ISO 200 or lower.** Most photos above ISO 200 will get rejected. Use a noise removal tool if you have to, but don't over-do it.
- **Make sure your images are focused properly and are sharp.** If you are photographing a person, put the focus point on their eyeball. Don't use sharpening in Photoshop unless you have to, and if you do, don't over-do it. Remember that using F8-F11 is generally the sharpest aperture, so use it when you can. If there is any amount of camera-shake in your photo, it will immediately be rejected.
- **No harsh lighting.** If there are sharp shadows, forget it. If one part of the photo is in shadow and is dark, while the other part is bright, the photo will get rejected. Use external flashes and use diffusion material over your lights if you have to light up your subject better.
- **Dreamstime is really picky on skin blemishes and skin imperfections.** I don't think the other agencies are as picky. I have acne and submit photos of myself to agencies frequently, but Dreamstime isn't always the most impressed.
- **Make sure your photo is properly exposed.** This is a given. Not too dark, not too bright. Also, don't "over post-process" your images too much. No extreme HDRs or added artistic grain or anything. They want clean, easily readable images that illustrate a definite purpose.
- **Images with commercial value will sell more.** This is a subjective topic, but in general, images with commercial value sell more. When you are looking through a magazine or see a banner ad, take note of how the picture is being used. Chances are that image got accepted into the agency and sold because it had commercial value. If you want to make more sales, make more commercial images that have selling potential.
- **Get the e-book ["How to Sell Stock Photos" by Nick Stubbs](#).** I've given you the tip of the iceberg of how to get started in stock photography, but this guide will tell you everything you need to know to get started and will also give you a number of strategies you can use to help you create images that sell really well. Highly recommended for beginners and pros. It's also filled with examples to help you get a feel for knowing how to get an image accepted and how to get it selling well.



How much money can you make?

You make how much you put into it. You will need to learn how to edit your photos, how to properly keyword them, how to submit them, and how to get your images accepted before you start to earn any money. It's a skill that needs to be learned.

If you can produce a *ton* of great images like Yuri Arcurs, you could potentially make a million dollars a year just like he does. If you have a much smaller portfolio with images that aren't so hot, you won't make anywhere *near* one million dollars a year, but you still will make something; even if it is a few bucks.

Keep in mind that Yuri Arcurs also has several employees working for him, has high-end professional models, and has a really awesome studio, so he has a lot of expenses. Not all of that million dollars is profit. When he retires though, those people won't be working for him any more so he won't have expenses, but he will still be collecting royalties from all the photographs he took in his lifetime. His photos will still be generating money, even after he dies.

Yuri got his hands dirty, went for it, and built a business. Not a lot of other people can throw themselves out there like that and be a risk-taker. Probably 99% of people. I myself do stock photography but I don't have employees, don't have many models other than myself and some immediate family members, and don't have a studio. I would be making *way* more money if I had those three things and used them as efficiently as possible, daily. Instead, I just semi-casually/semi-professionally shoot what is around me, then add those images to my portfolio. Simple. This is probably what most people do.

Learning The Rules of Stock Photography will Make You A Better Photographer

Because of the high standards stock agencies place on well composed, high quality, tack-sharp, noiseless images, you will learn to develop your photography technique. I've learned how to take "*technically perfect*" photos just by learning the stock "rules". And yes, this does take time and practice to nail down.

Selling Your Photos As Art

Now, I've only done this a few times, so I am by no means a pro at it, but I do have some tips to share for anyone starting to think about it. Here is my basic little "strategy" for selling artwork to average people (not high-end art collectors):

Select 24 of your best photos (ones that have artistic quality) and print them out on 24 separate 8"x10" prints. You can upload your photos online to Mpix.com and they will send your images to you printed on high quality paper in the mail. You can also get images printed at a grocery store like Fred Meyer, Bi-Mart, Walmart or at a regular photo printing shop. As of the time of this writing, if you ordered 24 8"x10" prints from Mpix, it would cost you \$40.56 + shipping.

Next, we need some frames to put the photos in. The cheapest frames you can get is a pack of [12 8"x10" MCS frames](#). Order two packs of 12 so you get 24 in all. This will roughly cost you \$47 + shipping. These frames should also be available at Walmart if you don't want to order them online.



These are just a few of the prints that I have stored away in boxes in my closet, ready to sell. The total cost to produce 24 framed prints is a little over \$100, so you will only need to sell 4 or 5 prints to break even. After you sell at least 4 or 5, the rest is profit. Oh and – if you sell one print, order it again and replace it with the same image so you always have the same 24 images. Some images will sell over and over again, while others will not sell as much.

Congrats! You have 24 awesome framed photographs, which only costs you about \$100 to produce. Now what? Now we need to figure out how to sell them. Here are some ideas:

- If you are a middle school, high school, or college art student, sometimes the teacher will notify their students of any art contests happening around the local area. If this ever happens, enter in some photos. In general, having a photo that is emotional, unique, or creative will usually get you more points in a contest *wink wink*. Sometimes these contests have cash prizes, other times you can get paid if you sell a print. Most importantly though, it gives you exposure. This can and will open up opportunities for you. I was in an art contest a while ago and won first place, and someone who works at a concert hall happened to see my artwork on display and then contacted me via Facebook the same night asking if I would be interested in having my work on display in their building for a month. I said yes to his offer, and sold \$150 worth of prints by the end of the month (I priced them at \$30 each, so that means I sold 5). In another art contest I was in, someone contacted me wanting me to speak at their photo club.
- Ask staff members who work at your school if you can hang up your artwork in certain generic areas of the school, such as the main office, staff lounge, or student counseling area. If you get the staff lounge, put the majority of your photos there. Make sure to have a sign or print taped up to the wall letting people know your name (and that you are a student at the school), and where to contact you if they want to buy a picture. Making a flier with pull-tabs should work well. You can also leave a note that says you have other photos in different areas around the school or on your website, but make 100% sure that you leave them an email address or phone number so they can contact you! Here are two that I've made in the past, pull-tabs would have been better:



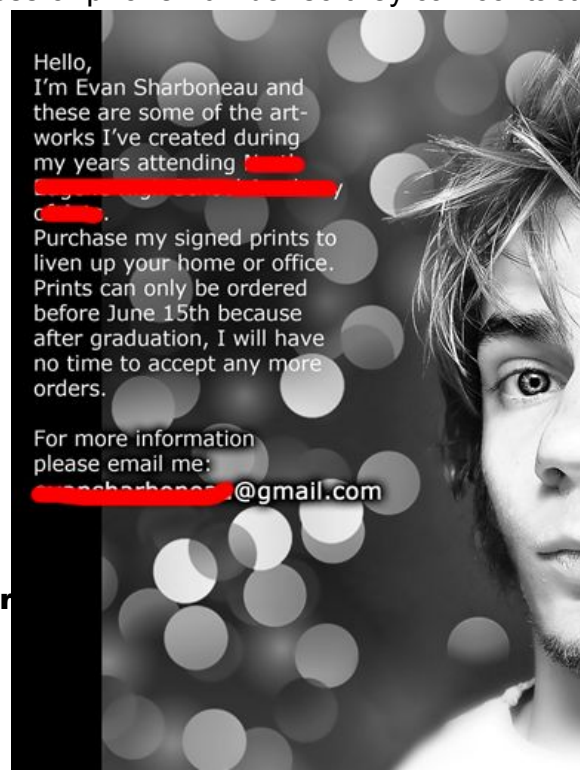
Liven up your home, office, or classroom by purchasing creativity. These artworks will only be available until June 5th because I will be graduating from North!
See pricing structure below.

Any artwork on display can be ordered as..

8X10 prints: **\$15**
16x20 prints: **\$39**

E-Mail me to request your artwork or more info:
[redacted]@gmail.com

All rights reserved



Hello,
I'm Evan Sharboneau and these are some of the artworks I've created during my years attending [redacted] / [redacted].
Purchase my signed prints to liven up your home or office. Prints can only be ordered before June 15th because after graduation, I will have no time to accept any more orders.

For more information please email me:
[redacted]@gmail.com

- Sell the prints at flea markets or “local gatherings”. If you live in a tourist town, your chances of selling stuff will potentially increase.
- Go to local restaurants and ask if you can hang up your art work there. Brand new restaurants that just have opened might be the best ones available because they get a lot of business when they first open up. After you are done eating there, ask to get in contact with the manager to see if they would be interested in displaying your artwork. If you don't want to physically go “door-to-door” to a bunch of restaurants, use the phone book or email them instead; this isn't always the best idea if you haven't been to the restaurant before because it could turn out to be a bad place for artwork (extremely dark, no places to hang the photos, etc.)
- Create a [Craiglist](#) posting and either sell your artwork or trade it for something else.
- If any building/place/organization/gallery features local artists, try getting your stuff on display, especially if there is no fee. All you have to do is drive over there once, hang up your stuff for a while, and if it sells, great! If not, put your stuff on display somewhere else. If nothing ends up selling, there will surely be an event waiting for you in the future where you can display your artwork. It doesn't hurt to have some “inventory in stock”, even if you don't sell anything for a decade. You can hang the artwork around your house in the meantime!

These are just some of the things that I have done in the past (I've only actually done the first two ideas back when I was still in high-school and have a bunch of prints left over, so I'll get around to implementing the other ideas at a later time). If you have any experience or tips that you would like to share on selling prints, please e-mail me at admin@photoextremist.com.

And of course, if you are *looking* for more tips, just do a [Google search](#).

Selling Art Online

You can also sell your artwork online using print-on-demand services. All you have to do is upload your images, keyword them, and hope someone will buy. These places print and frame the artwork for you, so you don't have to do anything except upload the images. Most of them also offer your work to be printed on other things too, such as mugs, puzzles, mouse-pads, calenders, etc. Let us review some of these sites:

[ImageKind](#) – This site integrates with Flickr. This means you can just import your entire pre-existing photo gallery onto this site right away. The titles and keywords get imported as well!



[Fine Art America](#) – This site apparently has the most traffic compared to all the other sites, however you will need to pay around \$30 to host an unlimited amount of images each year. You only can host like 10-40 images for free.



[DeviantART](#) – This site is good only if you get a Premium account (\$30/year) because you get to set the markup yourself and keep a very large proportion of the royalties. Otherwise the profits are just too slim and not worth it. You need many great photos to make any sales.



[RedBubble](#) – You can sell T-Shirts and prints on this site. As of the time of this writing, this is the only site I've experimented with, but I've gotten a few sales from it already so I plan on adding some more stuff. Upload hundreds of photos here and you can be making money..



[Zazzle.com](#) – Another site that I haven't gone into because of the time associated with submitting images. You can make a lot of money here, but you need to know what sells and submit many images.

Building A Local Photography Businesses

There are other – and potentially more profitable – ways to make money with photography.

You can do portraits, architecture, journalism, events (concerts, etc.), sports photography, wedding photography, and even taking photos of babies and pets!

I can't give you advice on any of these areas because I am not active in these niches, but my friend Roy Barker has created a free email newsletter that gives away information on how to get customers and clients for many of these areas.

You will get tips on creating real local photography based businesses. To sign up for the email newsletter (yes, you can unsubscribe at any time), [go here to get the information](#).



Thanks for reading my ebook! It's been fun writing it. More of my stuff can be found on PhotoExtremist.com.

Talk soon,
Evan