

Which is the best site for the Microstock Buyer?

[Which is the best site for the Microstock Buyer? \[1\]](#)

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[Compare Prices »](#) [2]

microstockinsider is aimed at the microstock photographer, but I've added this feature to the site for a very important reason, **if an agency is no good for buyers, has bad search, wrong price structure etc. then it won't attract new customers - it's a waste of time uploading images there.**

Most of the sites operate on a [credit system](#) [3] allowing you to purchase more credits at a discount over the basic credit rate, for these calculations we have used to basic cost of a credit (minimum purchase) and not factored any discounts which might be available. Also note that some sites offer only [subscriptions](#) [4] so these sites may not have a fair estimate of cost for just a single image.

The Verdict for Microstock Buyers:

If you require a lot of photos (you run your own design group or do a lot of design work requiring images) then [Shutterstock](#) [5] offer the best value [subscription service](#) [4]. ([read the shutterstock review here](#) [6])

Using the data collected in our site reviews we have compiled a table costs for a reasonable size image from each of the microstock companies to help as a buyers guide.



[Compare prices of each microstock agency](#) [2]

Free Microstock Images

First of all let's make it clear that the **free images are provided as a way to entice you into buying some of their paid images...** with that in mind the following microstock agencies offer either a couple of free images a day or a whole collection of free photos.

Agencies with Free collections

[iStock.com](#) [1]

search list of free stock photos uploaded by dreamstime photographers

[Shutterstock.com](#) [2]

Claim a free free images, click 'free stock photos' on the home page

[iStock.com](#) [2]

list of free images via the link on their home page

Free Daily or Weekly Microstock Image(s)

[iStock.com](#) [10]

free weekly image

[Shutterstock.com](#) [11]

free weekly image

[iStock.com](#) [12]

free image and vector on the home page each week



Buyers Tips

If your search for an image reveals 1000's of results, click on the 10th page of results and look around for some great images that will not be on 1000's of other websites. Images further down the list are not always lower quality, they have just been bought less often - hence are not already used quite so widely. You should end up with a great quality image that is not already splashed across the internet!

In general it's much more expensive to buy a single image with instant payment compared to buying credits and multiple images. Credits offer huge savings over instant payments but obviously tie up your money in one agency. GOTCHA: make sure you look at how long your credits last, at many agencies they expire after a year.

Keep an eye out for discounted credit packages in December. The period in the run up to Christmas is traditionally a slow time for photo agencies and many offer savings on credit purchases at that time of year - if you are a regular buyer you can spend the credits throughout the year and take

advantage of the December discounts even if you do not need images in December.

[More advice and information for stock photo buyers at budgetstockphoto.com](#) [13]

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[5] <https://www.microstockinsider.com/redirect/shutterstock.com>

[6] https://www.microstockinsider.com/site_reviews/shutterstockcom

[7] <http://www.dreamstime.com/free-photos-resi63706>

[8] <http://www.featurepics.com/index320356.aspx>

[9] http://www.123rf.com/src_photohome

[10] http://www.istockphoto.com/free_image.php?refnum=budgetstockphoto

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