Title: The Ultimate Guide To Making Stock Photos Look Less Stock-y

Stock photos can be said to be the lifeline of marketing. After all, we depend on them to create stunning and engaging visuals no matter if it is for a display banner or an outdoor billboard.

The problem? Stock photos often have a certain "stock-like" look to them. Whether it's an incredibly cheesy pose or over-the-top reactions, stock-based visuals, if not done right, can be an eye-sore to your increasingly ad-savvy customers!

So, if you've been thinking of how to make your marketing assets look less like it's been plucked straight out of a database, here is Heroes Of Digital's ultimate guide to making your stock photos less stock-y.

We've also compiled this guide into a handy PDF for you to keep as inspiration. Download it here!

1. Avoid an overused or recognizable model if possible



2. Crop out the model's face to bring focus on the subject instead

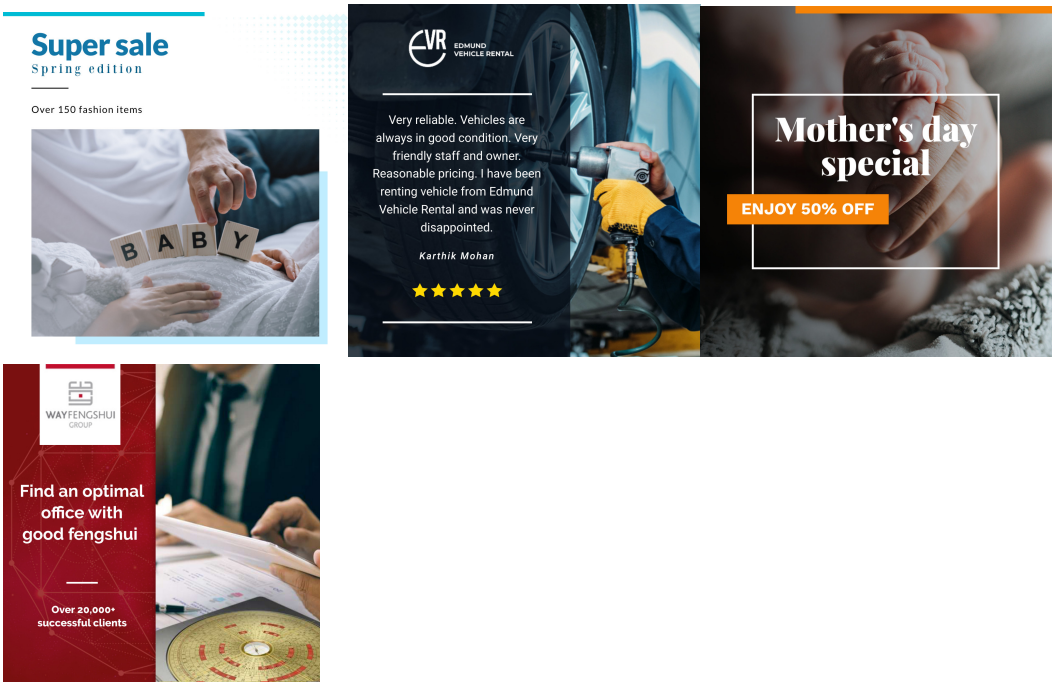
Before



After



More Examples



3. Split an otherwise ordinary photo into half - customise it by aligning it left & right with high contrast editing

Before



After



More Examples





4. Play with asymmetry by cropping ordinary full faces into half, as well as shifting to the left or right for word placement

Before



After



More Examples



5. Greyscale can work wonders to highlight your product or the subject

Before



After

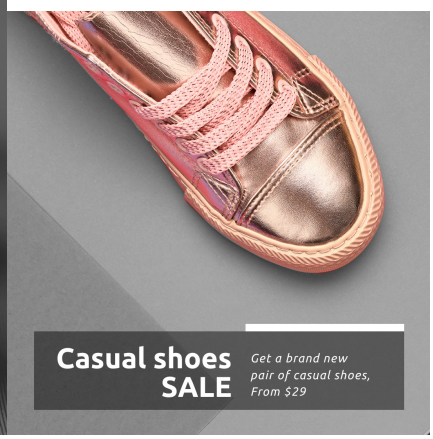


More Examples









6. Refrain from displaying the whole image's background by adding object or combining images

Before



After



More examples





7. Capture and utilize genuine emotional cues

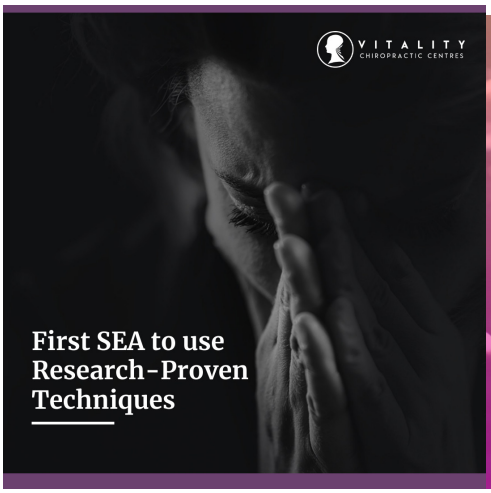
Before

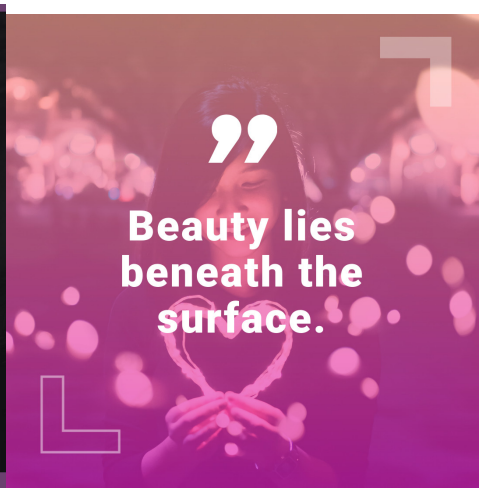


After



MORE EXAMPLES





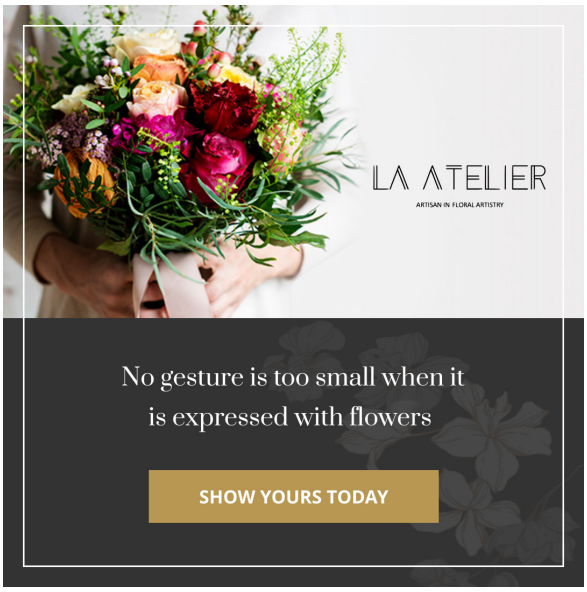


8. Image manipulation - rotate, zoom, flip or mirror & other techniques. Stock photos are often shot in generic positions to appeal to a wide market. Aim to make your visual look as if it came from a personal studio.

Before



After



More examples







9. Apply a gradient fade on an image horizontally or vertically

Before



After



More examples









10. Authenticity - find candid photos to show genuine moments over photos that are over-posed

Before



After

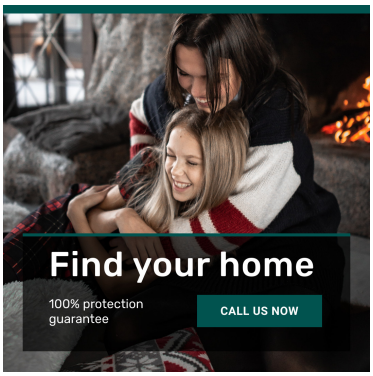


More Examples









11. Split an otherwise ordinary front-sho to make a stunning comparison

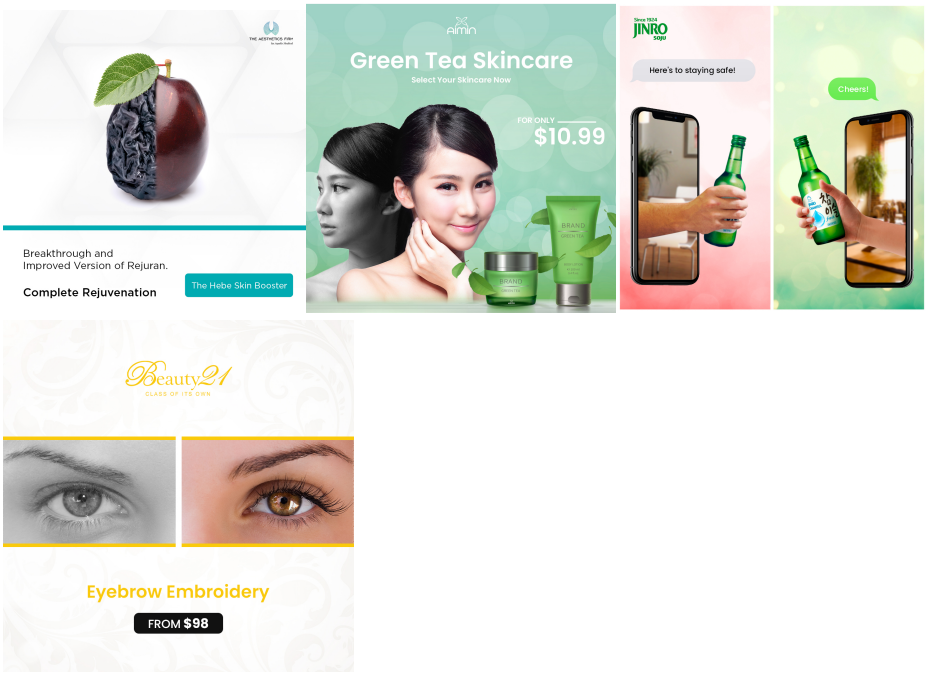
Before



After



More Examples



12. Most stock photos will be shot in the safest-possible colour scheme (which looks generic), so changing the colour drastically can make it unique to your brand

Before



After



More Examples









13. Don't be afraid to mix images and vectors (symbols, emojis, FB/IG texts) as long as it fits the brief and brand.

Before



After



More Examples









14. 99% OF STOCK PHOTOS ARE SHOT WITH WIDE DEPTH OF FIELD (EVERYTHING IS FOCUSED). MAKING A FOCUS-POINT SEPERATES THE GENERING FROM THE STUNNING.

Before



After



More Examples



15. Perspective - choose photos that are not shot from typical & cheesy angles

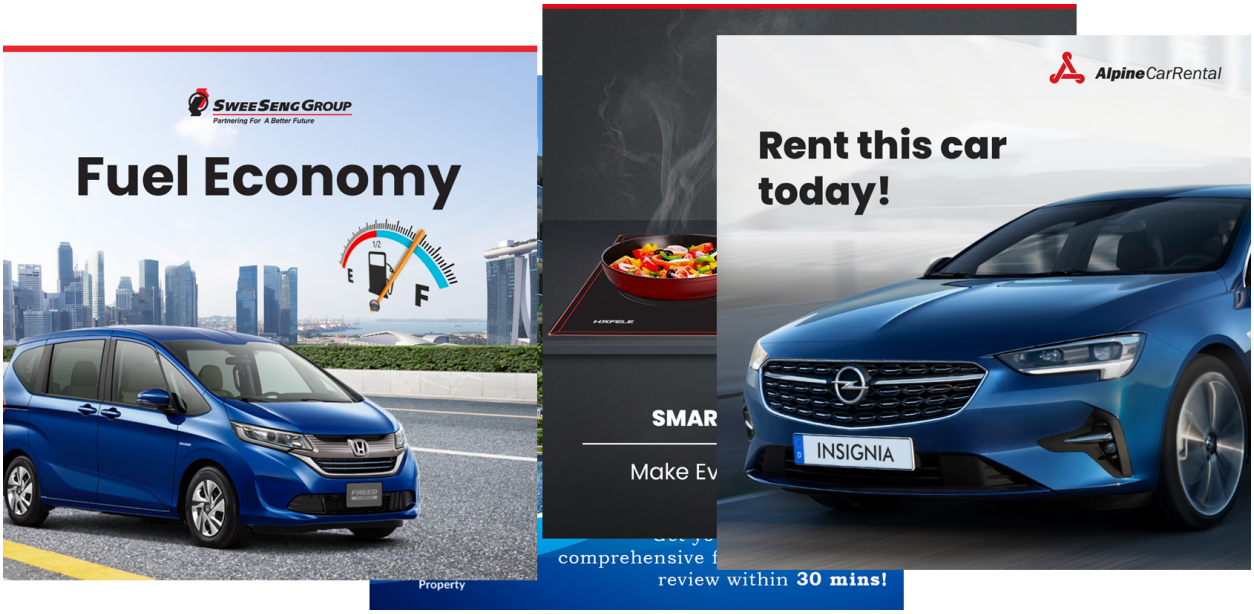
Before



After



More Examples



16. Typography Design - make full use of text as a main design element

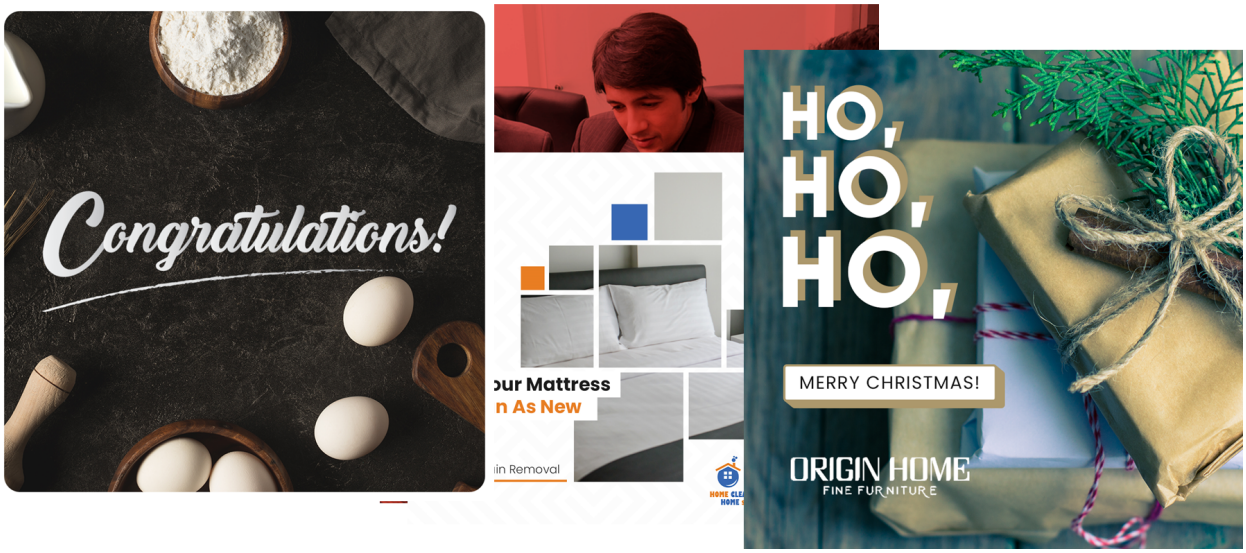
Before



After



More Examples



17. Blending Options - this is a quick technique to to boost your visual creativity

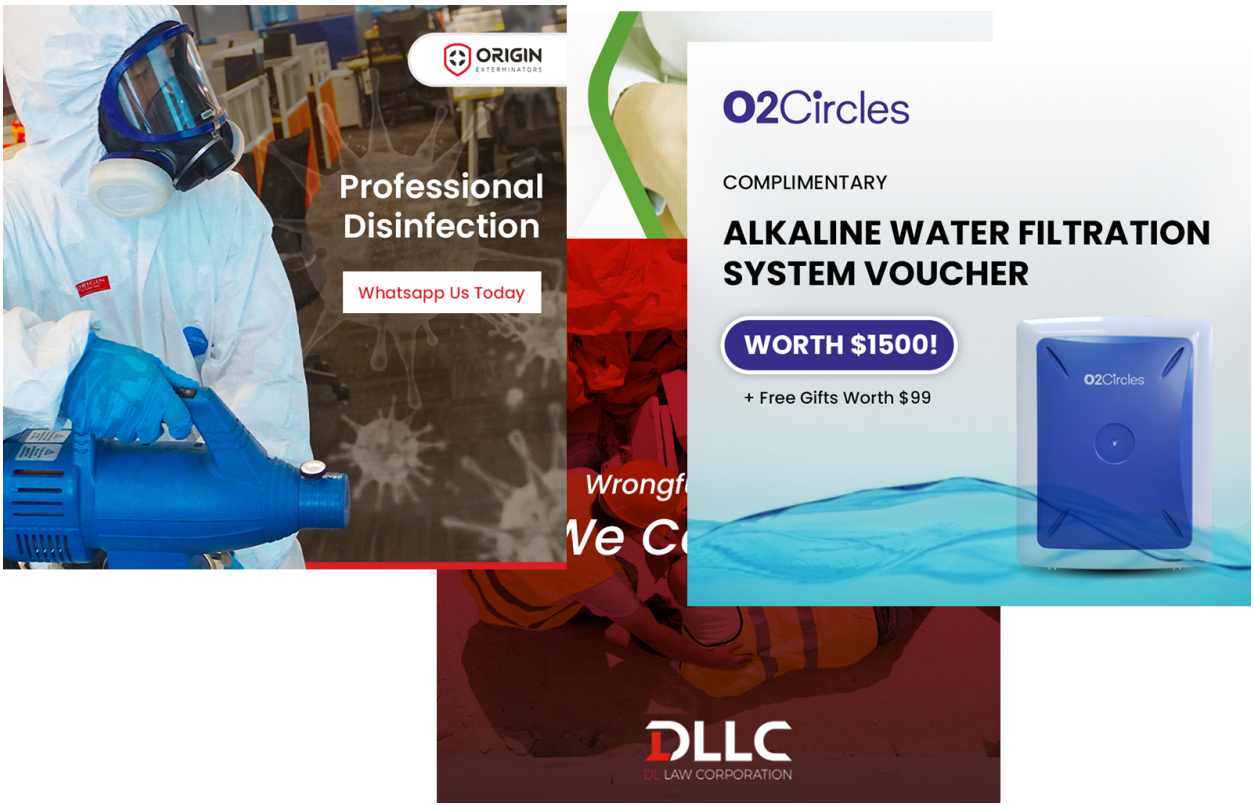
Before



After



More Examples



18. 2-in-1 Design & Info - combine bold texts into the visual to make a bold statement

Before



After



More Examples



19. Eye candy - play with exciting and striking colour palettes to embolden a design or brand

Before



After



More Examples



20. Combine Real & Flat - Combining The 2D and 3D can give your visual liveliness

Before



After

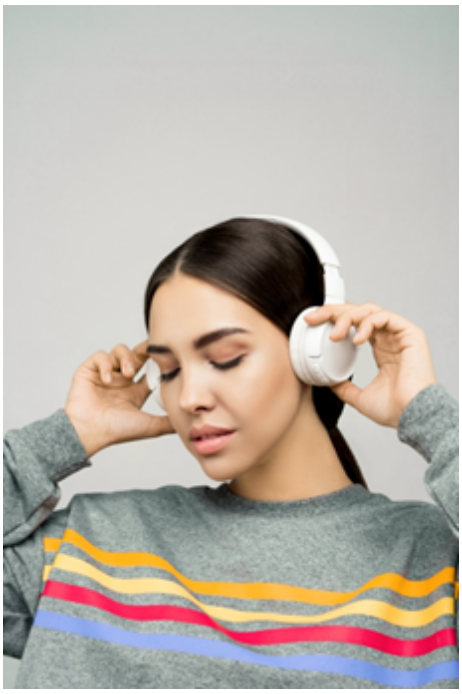


More Examples

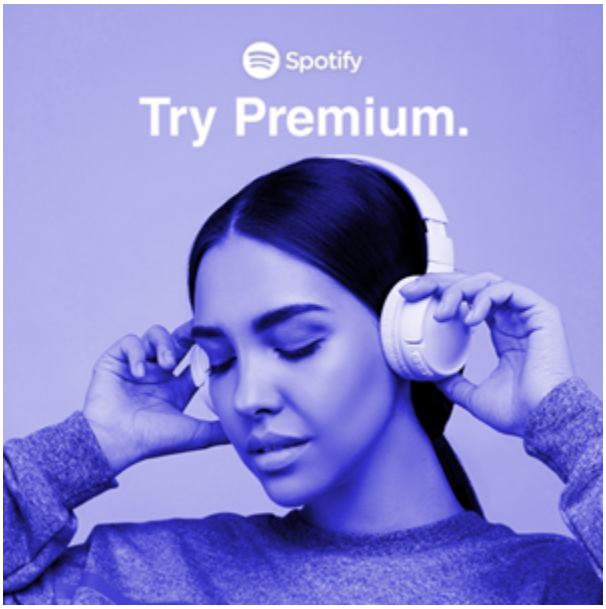


21. Manipulate the saturation and hue, adjusting the level to be consistent with your branding

Before



After

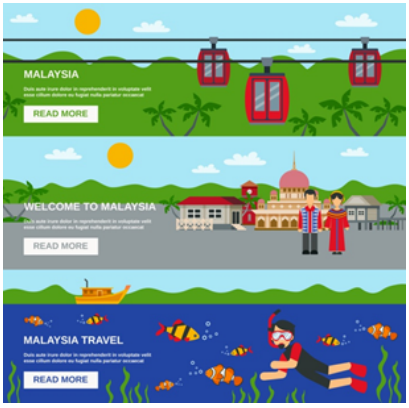


More Examples



22. COMBINE SEVERAL ILLUSTRATIONS AND BLEND THEM INTO ONE SETTING FOR A GREAT AND COMPACT GRAPHIC

Before



After



More Examples



23. Combine interesting elements with themes that connect to each other (e.g. women & flowers, wood & fire)

Before



After



More Examples





24. Keep an eye our for visuals that can be cropped effectively

Before



After



More Examples

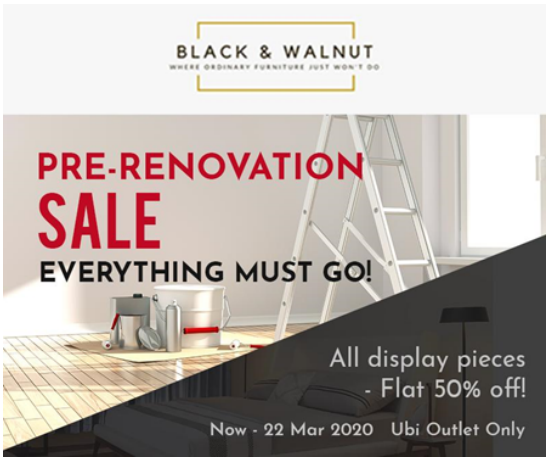


25. KEEP IT SIMPLE - FLIP IMAGES FOR TEXT SETTINGS

Before



After



More Examples



26. Utulise humor & inject some fun in to your visuals - remember, customers are people who respond to humour!

Before



After



More Examples



27. If your products are vastly different, combine them under a single colour

Before



After



More Examples



28. Make a strong and irresistable proposition

Before



After



More Examples

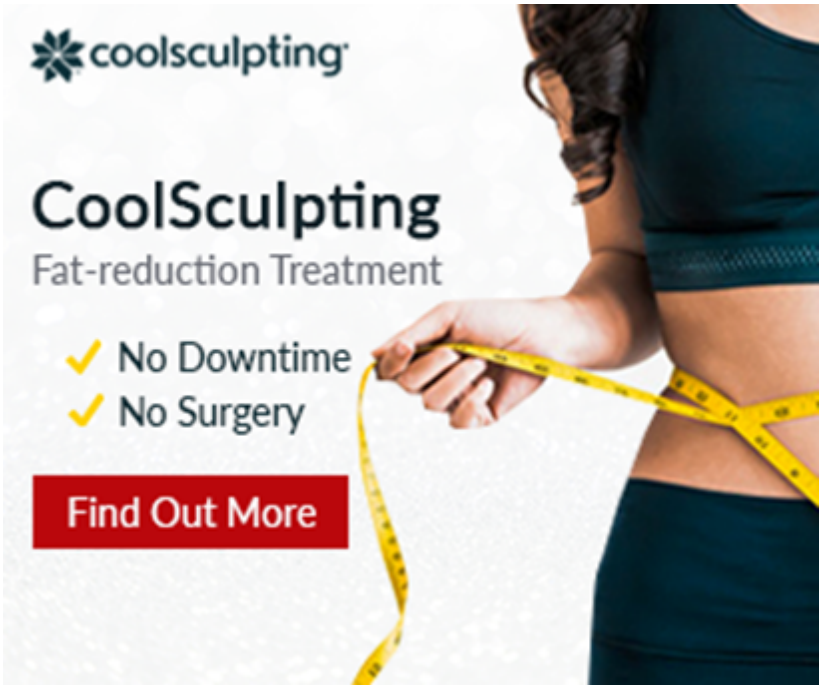


29. BEHIND EVERY GOOD DESIGN IS GOOD APPLICATION OF CONTRAST

Before



After



More Examples



30. Make full use of photoshop to single-out your product's main color

Before



After



More Examples



31. With some photography and styling, you can add other top view elements to support the main product

Examples









32. Mix it up - combine your actual product with a stock vector or 3D illustration

Examples


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