Refined Search

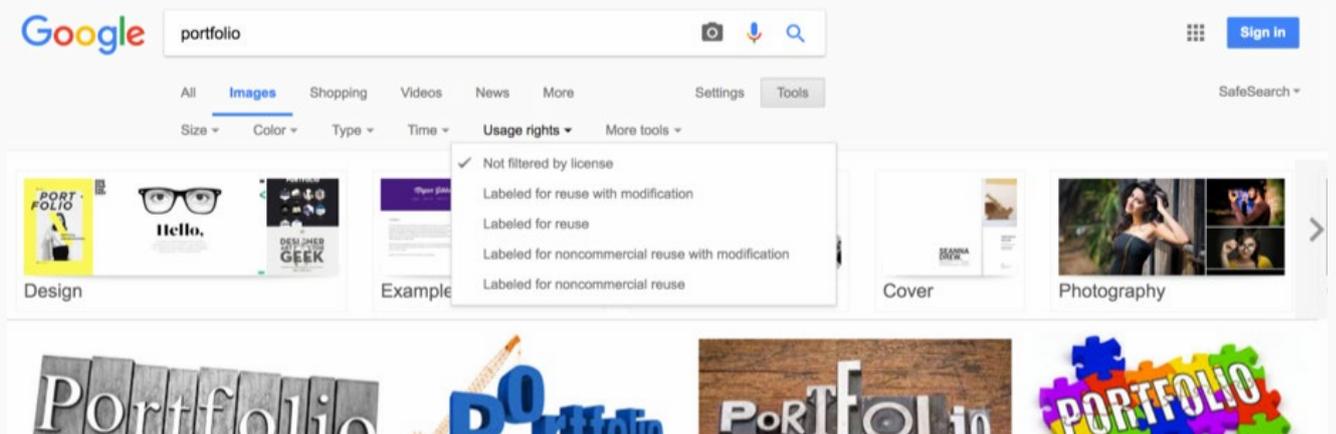## Best Practice: How to Implement Refined Search

By including a refined search option, the users can zero in on their desired content with greater speed than if the search engine produced results from all levels and categories within the user interface. If results from every category and section were displayed at once, there would, more likely than not, be a large number of *irrelevant* options to consider, options slowing the user down and which might be *very* frustrating. Implementing a refined search design pattern will be smooth and simple, with these steps:

1 | **Provide the users with an input field** in which to enter their search term.

2 | **Identify the different categories** of contents the users can use to refine their search. Assign logical names to these categories, so the users are in no doubt which section of the user interface search results will be generated from.

3 | **Put these different 'refine search' categories into another user interface design pattern**; typically, a dropdown menu is used for this purpose (see the example in the next page). As a default search option, you can select 'all', or simply leave the default option blank in the menu so the search is not refined at first.

4 | **Allow the users to select an option** in the 'refine search' menu using the mouse and keyboard. Once an option has been selected, the users should be able to move back to the input field by using the shift key or clicking on any area within the input field.