Image Quality Training

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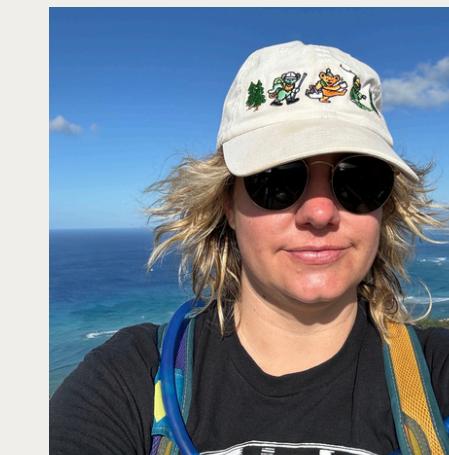
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For all questions and inquiries contact us at zappos-vendorimagery@amazon.com

Table of Contents

Glossary of Terms

White Balance- Image is not appearing too cool or too warm, when white colors appear white all other colors in image should be accurate

Underexposure- when colors on an image are too dark and details are hard to see

Overexposure- when colors on an image are washed out and appearing too bright

Pixelation- stems from being able to see the individual pixels on an image because the quality is so low, referred to as low quality low resolution imagery

Faked Image Size- product is too small and background or white space was expanded to meet image size requirements

Aspect Ratio- the size, orientation and dimensions of an image

FBA- Fufilled By Amazon (Zappos product sold on Amazon.com)

Focus

Intentional soft focus

In photography, depth of field can be used to focus in on certain details you want to highlight, making other details in the photo "fall off" or appear slightly out of focus. If the whole image is not in focus there should be a focal point, which is a clear portion of the image that is being highlighted.

For apparel, this should only be a method used for close up detail shots. This can vary on accessories or bags but this technique should never be used on the MAIN or PAIR image, only details that follow.

Intentionally soft focus on the inside of the hat, because they are highlighting the bill stitching and emblem, which is fully in focus.

Intentionally soft focus on the arm because they are highlighting the logo stitch on the side of the hem, which is fully in focus.

Key part of the image is in focus

Unintentional- out of focus

Entirely out of focus imagery can be spotted when the whole image is blurry, details cannot be made out and texture is lost. Think of this as if you were to take off your glasses, or question if you may need glasses.

Focus issues can occur due to a camera error or if the model was moving during the shot. This is referred to as motion blur.

Focused

Out of focus
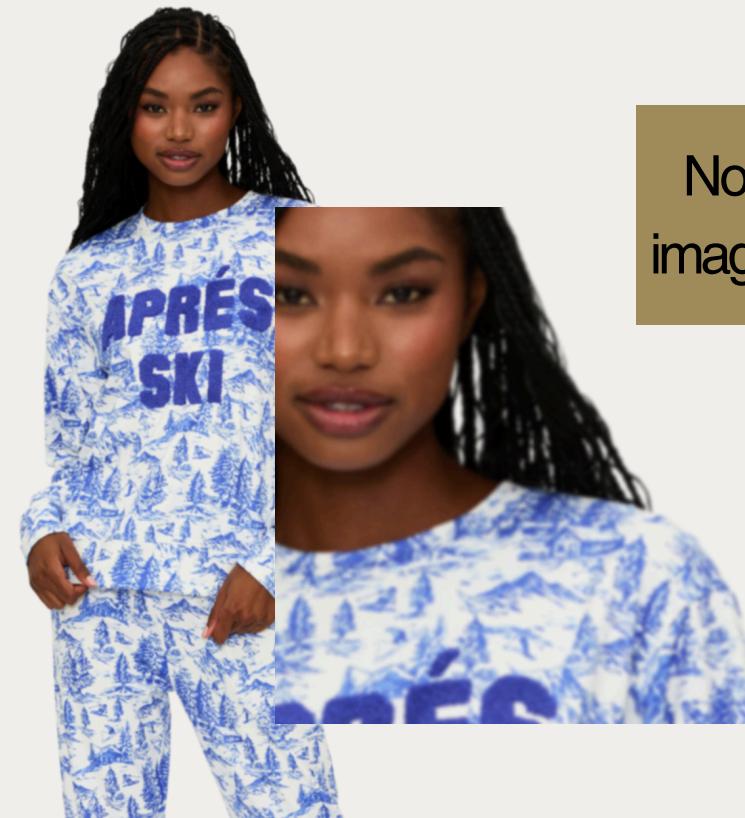
No part of the image is in focus

Pixelation on Site

What is Pixelation?

Pixelation refers to the distortion of an image where it appears grainy, blurred, or blocky. Pixelation can occur unintentionally, for example when resizing an image to a dimension that exceeds its resolution. If the product needs to be removed from the background during Zappos retouch, and if the product accounts for less than 75% of the total image, it could become pixilated during the retouch and export process.

How to prevent pixilation when retouching and exporting images?

Image should be large and at its highest resolution to increase flexibility during editing and resizing, while also limiting the padding around the image.

When viewing the thumbnail image, it seems to be of great quality without pixelation, but once you click on the product, you will notice that the images will become a bit blurry or grainy. You'll also notice that when enlarging and zooming into the images, it appears pixelated/blocky.
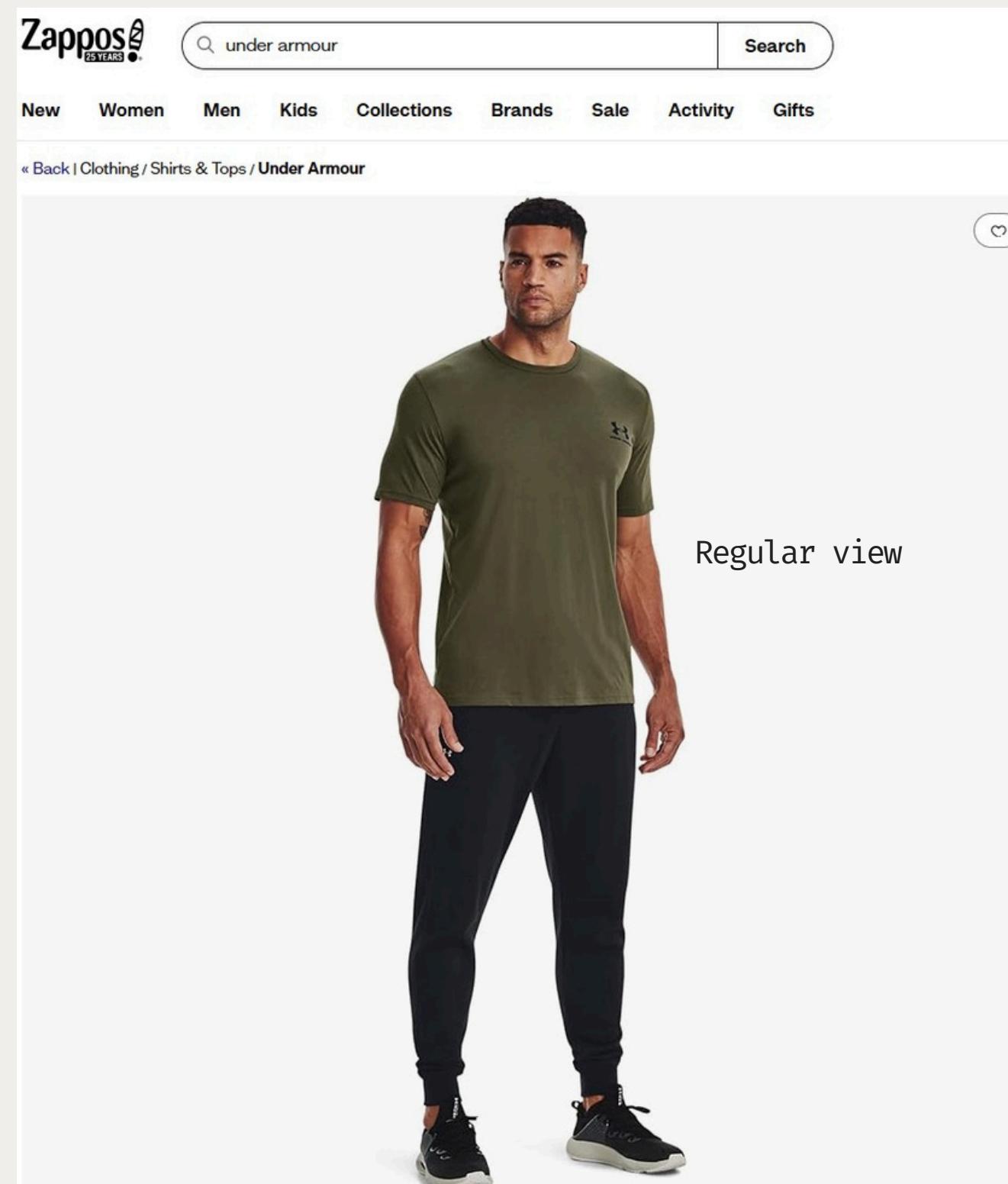

Regular view
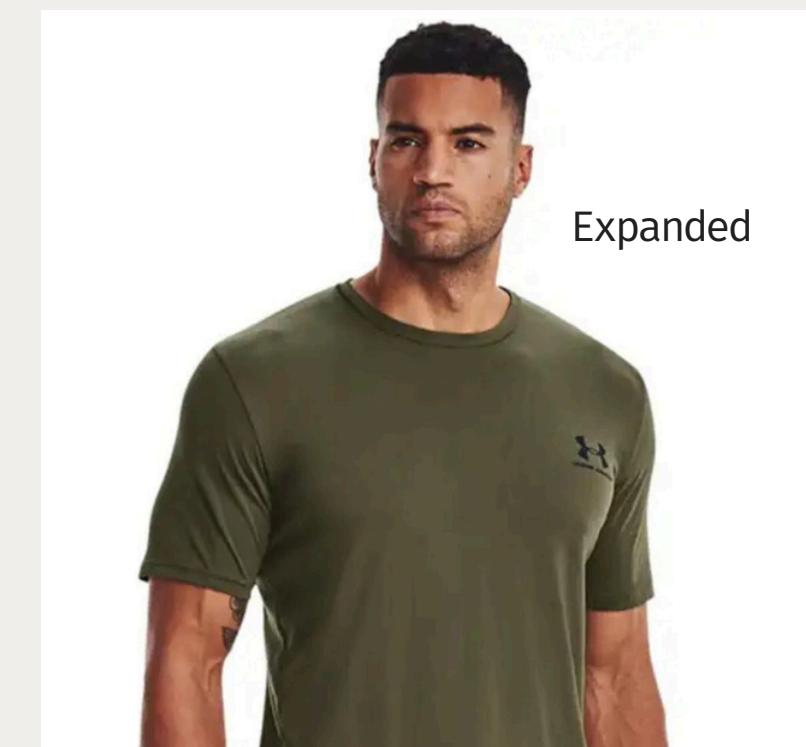
Expanded
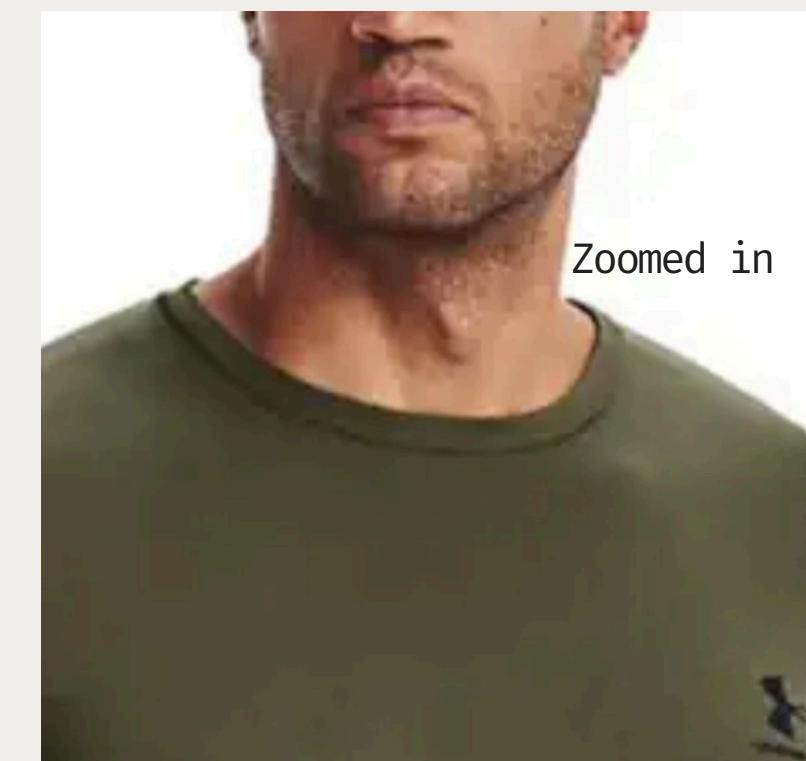
Zoomed in

What is a White Background?

White backgrounds are ideal for site, and will not need to be retouched to have the background changed to white.

If the background is pure white, it will be reading 255 all around.
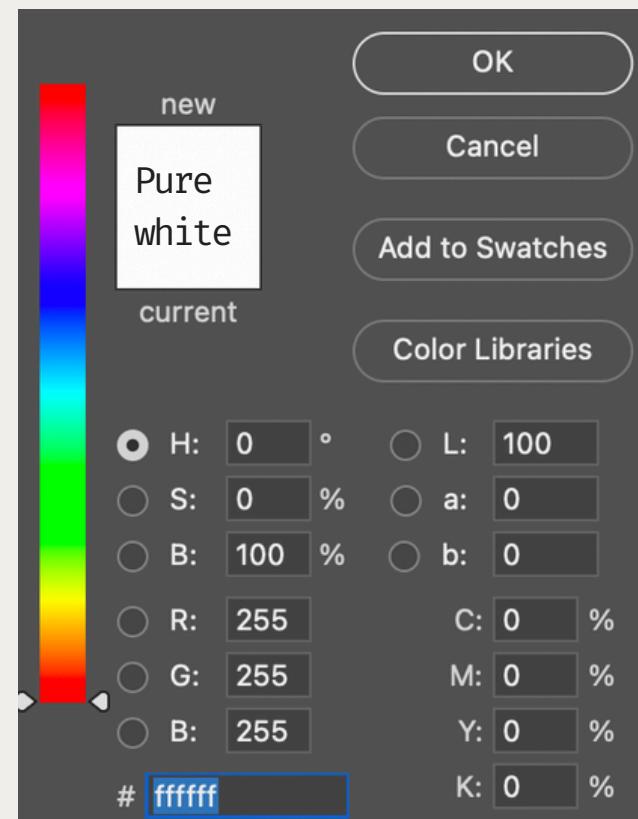
Pure white

Non-white background, appears close to white but slightly grey

Non-white background

White Space

Acceptable white space for retouch

If item fills 25% or less of the frame it will not be approved because we cannot ensure the integrity of the product will be kept when product is blown up to fill frame

For items that fill 50% of the frame, the product must be of good quality and not pixelated

REJECTED

75%

WHITE SPACE

shoe only fills 25% of the frame

PHOTOZ

50% WHITE SPACE

shoe only fills 50% of the frame

At this stage the quality of the product must be clear and crisp

PHOTOZ

25% WHITE SPACE

shoe only fills 75% of the frame

ZIMA

shoe fills the frame and has reasonable amounts of padding

Aspect Ratios

Preferred Aspect Ratio

Preferred aspect ratios for the site are 2:3 or 3:2 depending on if the images are horizontal or vertical.

Other aspect ratios are acceptable but will need to go to retouch to be converted to work on site.

2:3 (vertical)

3:2 (horizontal)

4:3

1:1 (square)

Editing Mistakes

Errors in processing or post

Many things can happen in post to appear as a defect on an image.

Things to look for:
- Background left in
- Background in hair
- Paint brush strokes on image
- Pieces of image erased
- Filters on image
- Skin discoloration
- Pieces of product are different colors

Background has been left in/behind hair.

Reflection was attempted to be removed but done poorly, paint brush strokes can be seen.

Image appears to have a grainy filter over it.

Colors on image look hazy and blacks are appearing washed out.

Parts of the shoe have been erased.

Editing

Mistakes Cont.

Color Authoring

Color Authoring is when a brand shoots one colorway of an item and changes the color of the item for the rest of the colorways by painting the new color in.

This can sometimes be done well, and is virtually un-noticable, but generally only if the new color is close to the original shot color. Drastic changes can make the texture look off.

Additionally, sometimes the garment if neon can cast a certain hue on the skin that is not noticed until the color of the shirt is then changed, leaving the original hue behind.

Poor garment color change also referred to as "color authoring" You can see parts of the original garment showing through due to lack of precise selection when painting the new color on.

Green hue on arm and in hair, shirt may have initially been lime green.

original

faked

Here we have color authored the image on the left, originally pink, but changed the color to red. You can see that it does not appear natural and looks flat.

Color

Color Inconsistencies

The color of an item must be the same across all shots.

If an item is blue in the front but green in the back shot we cannot trust the color accuracy and no images will be approved. At this point we are unsure the actual color of the item.

If the item is not the same color across all views.

Skin is green and model looks jarring.

Color Balance

When images are incorrectly white balanced, neutral colors like black and white will appear to have a hue such as pink or blue instead of being neutral.

We can spot these issues when we know that an item color is "pure white" or "charcoal black" but is appearing blue.

Additionally, incorrect color balance can affect how the skin appears and look unnatural.

Whites are not white balanced causing skin to appear pink and product to appear blue, this is a black sweater and not navy.

Cropped Imagery

NOT FOR HERO IMAGE

Tight crops

Tightly cropped imagery is only acceptable as a detail shot following the main shot

If limbs or product pieces are not in frame this is one of the reasons an image could suppress in FBA

We cannot fix this in post, and new imagery will need to be provided or a reshoot will be done.

Here the edge of the garment has been cropped off, you are missing details and this will not be approved for a MAIN or PAIR shot.

Heads can be cut off and approved to comply with model contracts.

Here her elbow has been cut off, even though it is not the actual product being cut off this cannot be a approved for a MAIN or PAIR shot.
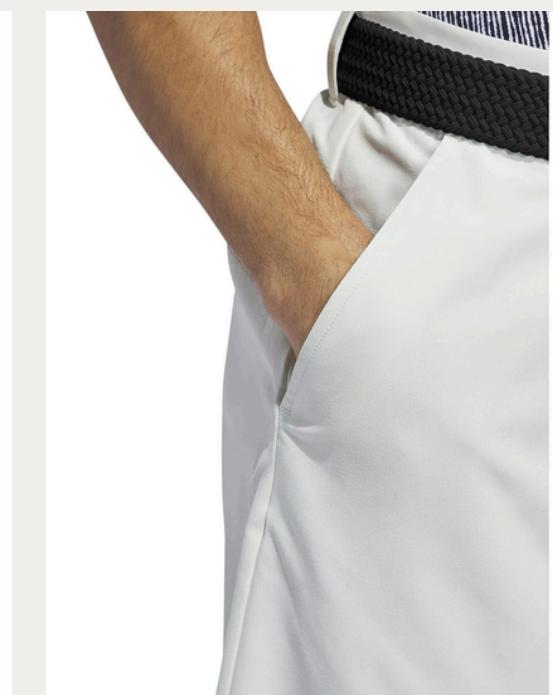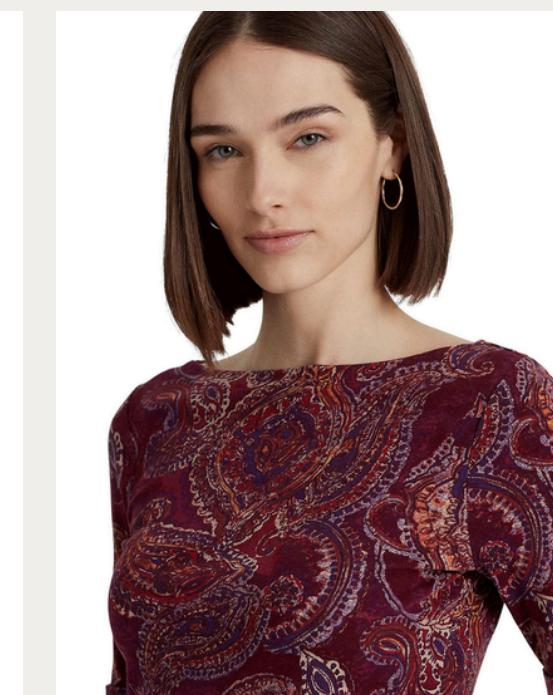
These types of shots can be approved for the detail images, anything following the front and back of garment.

Detail Images

Detail images will usually follow the front and back shots (the first two shots in the PDP). These shots that follow are subjective, but can count as an image for a required angle if they are after the *main pair shot,* which must be the full product in view.

For handbags and backpacks that require an inside shot if you have less than 3 images, the inside shot can be a detail shot and does not have to be a full shot of the open back as this is sometimes hard to achieve.

For apparel, as long as the product is not cropped and in full view in the MAIN shot, the required back shot can be cropped in.

DETAILS

FRONT

BACK

INSIDE

FRONT

BACK
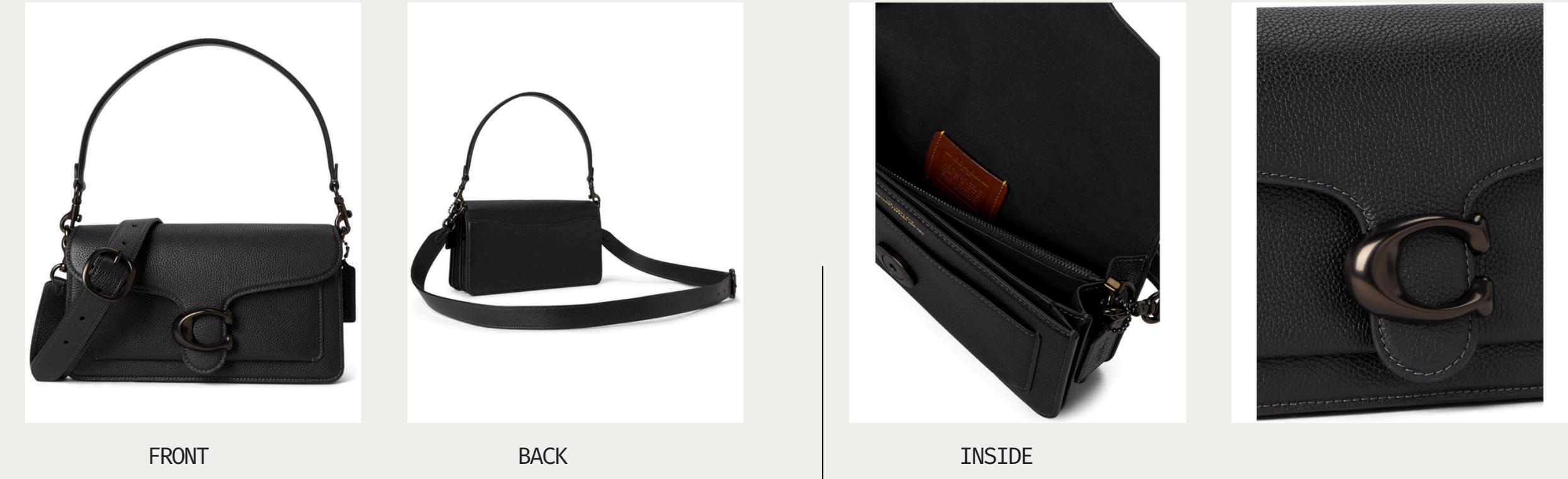
Styling / Nudity Standards

Styling, cropping and editing

Bras and underwear need to be styled as intimates and not as tops or other clothing items. For products such as bodysuits, the main hero image should show the product styled with bottoms. The product can be un-styled in additional imagery.

Keep in mind, no visible nudity is allowed on our site, and should be cropped or edited out when possible.
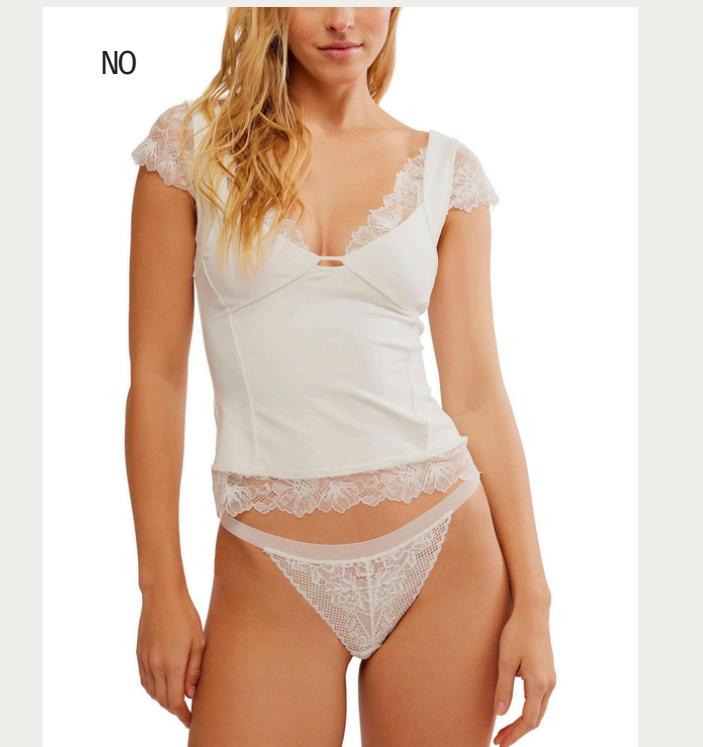
Tops and bodysuits must be paired with pants in the MAIN shot. The example on the right can be an additional detail image.

NO

YES

Any item that is not a bra or part of an intimate set needs to be styled with pants.
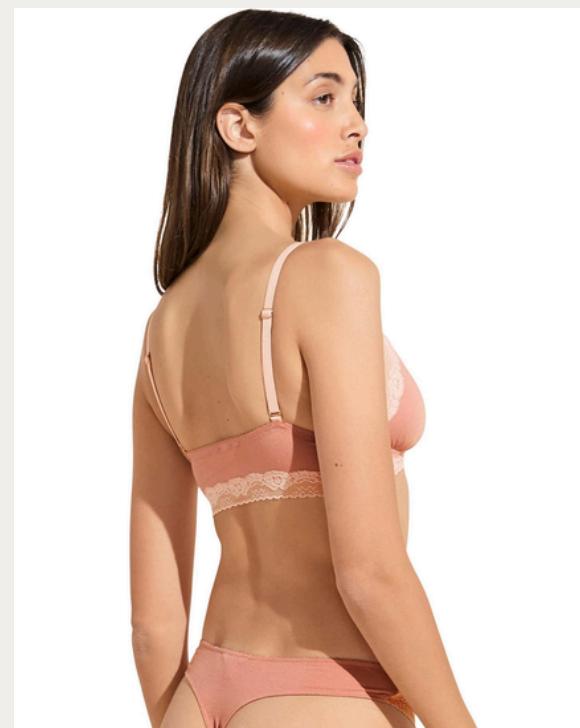
Thong type undergarments need to be cropped or turned to the side like above.

At all possible times modesty pasties, or accompanying sanitary covers should be edited out prior to being submitted. Additionally, no visible nudity or graphic areas should be in image.

Footwear Imagery

Why does Zappos not accept Vendor Imagery for Footwear?

Imagery Consistency & "Footwear First Initiative"

In 2024, Zappos Leadership aligned that increasing consistency across our site was key to better serving our customers. To support this strategy, we made the decision to remove footwear from the Vendor Imagery program.

For context, footwear imagery on Zappos.com has strict requirements to ensure a seamless user experience. We found that we achieve the best results when we control for 100% color accuracy and proper aspect ratio, which is why all footwear images are now captured in our studio. Additionally, zappos.com and FBA have different requirements when it comes to footwear imagery:

- For Amazon, the main image must feature a single shoe facing left at a 45-degree angle. This positioning highlights important sellable details, such as those on the toe.
- For Zappos, however, the main image must show a pair of shoes, and additional images must also feature the shoes fully facing left. Even when we use vendor imagery on Zappos, we still set the main image to the pair shot.

This angle is required for Amazon.

If the shoe is not facing a 45 degree angle any sellable details on the toe will not be visible.

This angle is required for Zappos.

The pair shot is required as the main image for Zappos. These are examples of acceptable pair shots. Pair Shot simply means a pair of shoes, these are then used for search page imagery, and the first image displayed in the Product Detail Page.

Standard Pair Shot

Showcases vamp, laces, and outsole.

Overhead Pair Shot

Showcases graphics and strap designs.

Image Issues We Can Fix

Shadow

For shadow that is large and obstructive we can feather this in post so that it becomes more natural.

Background

Unnatural or colored studio backgrounds can be removed in post to fit onto site.

Image Size

Images that are outside of our normal aspect ratio dimensions 2:3 or 3:2 can be resized to fit this requirement for site.

*It is important to keep in mind that we can downsize an image but we cannot expand an image and make it larger

This means if an image comes in below 4000 px total, we cannot enlarge it as it will pixelate

BEFORE

AFTER

Shadow retouch and resizing

BEFORE

AFTER

Background removal

IDEAL SCENARIO

LARGE IMAGE SIZE TO START
(above 3000 px total)

*Aspect ratio and image size

REDUCED IMAGE SIZE (POST RETOUCH)

Why Does Zappos Follow Amazon FBA Requirements?

While Zappos image guidelines are mostly the same as FBA (Amazon), there are some requirements we are held to to prevent image suppression and listing removal from Amazon. By providing imagery to Zappos that complies with Amazon requirements, we can prevent time to site delays, and sellability of products.
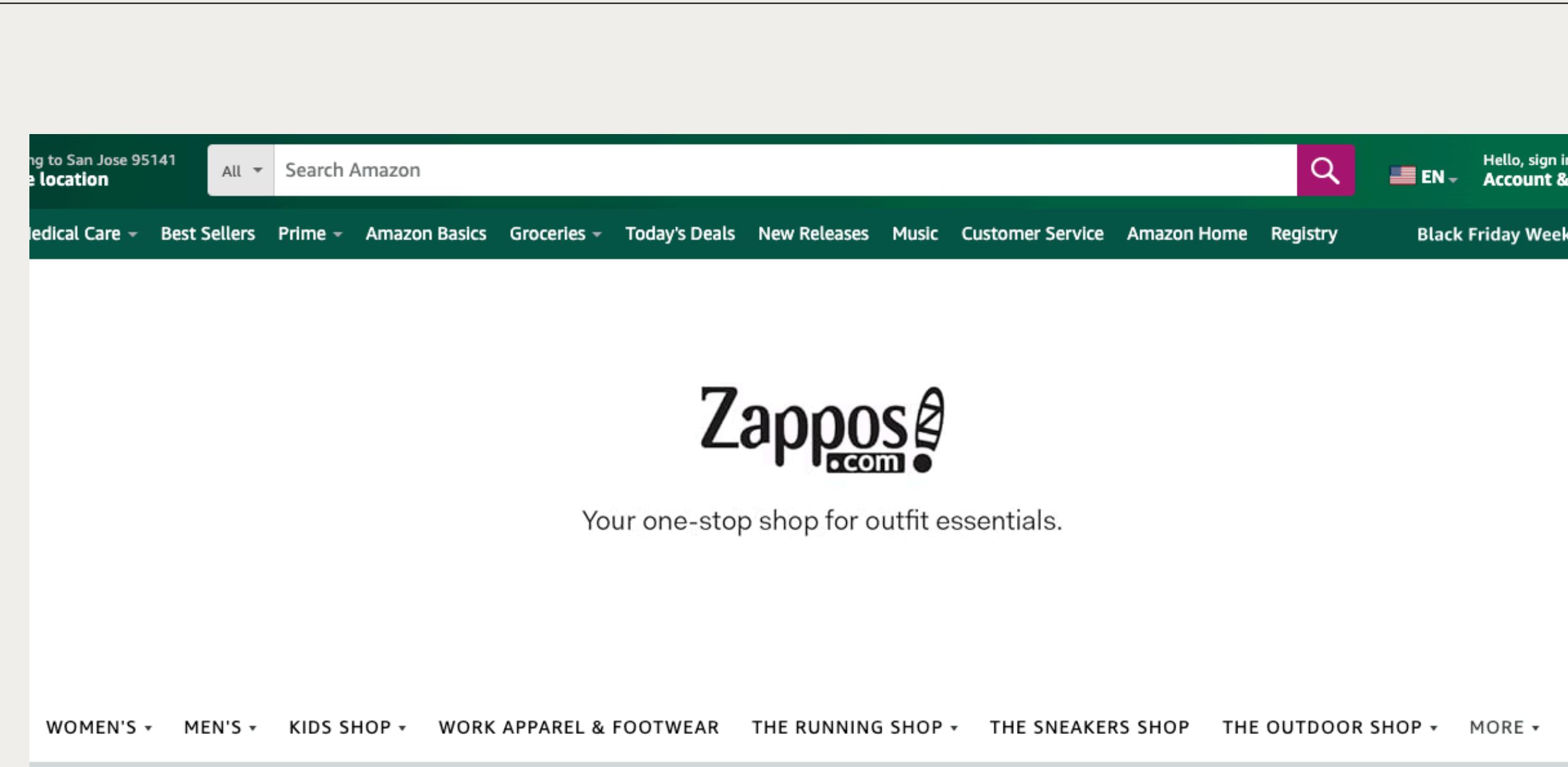
FBA Requirements

White Background

MAIN image must have a pure white background and must be a photo of the actual product (not a drawing).

Not only does this image not have a pure white background, it is very clearly a CAD digital drawing of a shoe.

Shadows

Shadows should not be large or obstructive. Harsh glares should also be avoided as they will read as shadows. Minimal shadow around the product is acceptable.

The glare seen at the bottom of this image will read as a harsh shadow, causing image suppression.

This image contains both a harsh shadow and a non-white background.

FBA Requirements Cont.

Image Size & Cropping

Products must fill at least 85% of the image and the main "hero" image cannot be cropped. All model limbs and product pieces must be in frame. Tightly cropped imagery is only acceptable as a detail shot following main imagery.

The optimal zoom experience for detail pages requires files to be 2000px or larger on the longest side. Zoom has been shown to help enhance sales.

Multi-product Views

Cannot show two or more distinct views (i.e. in terms of scale or perspective) of the same single product per image.

Here the garment and model's elbows are cropped and will not be accepted as a main product image.

This type of image can be approved as a detail shot but n**ot** as a main hero shot since the product is cropped.

This single image contains a front and back view when they should be separate images.

FBA Requirements for Apparel

Adult Apparel

Human models are required and only permitted for adult apparel and must be standing.

Kids Apparel

Kids and baby apparel must be shown flat with no model.

Props, Mannequins, & Logos

Images must show only the product that is for sale, with no props or accessories, no logos, watermarks, or inset images. There cannot be a visible mannequin or hangers. Images may only contain text that is a part of the product.

Model is sitting, preventing a clear view of the product being sold.

Model is holding an accessory which could cause confusion to the customer on if it's included with purchase.

Acceptable

Not Acceptable

Kids apparel cannot be on-model and must be shown flat.

Vendor Imagery Rejection Review

To maintain consistency and image quality for site, we conduct monthly reviews of all vendor imagery suppliers to identify those with a high image rejection rate. The goal is to work with buyers and suppliers to make in-house adjustments, or update the image path to Photo PO or FC Pick if higher quality images cannot be provided, setting suppliers up for long-term success in product setup and time to site.

By conducting regular reviews, we can address vendor image quality issues promptly or pivot new styles to be imaged in-house to ensure there are no go-live delays. This is especially key during seasonal refreshes and holiday shopping events.

In the event a supplier is able to make in-house corrections, we expect the supplier to maintain quality going forward.

Rejections & Quality Assurance

The Vendor Imagery Queue (VIQ) is worked by multiple team members. While everyone receives the same image quality training and we strive for objective and glaring issues, images that may have borderline quality issues sometimes get rejected incorrectly. In these cases, the images are reviewed by leadership to determine if the rejection is valid or not. The examples shown here are images that were initially rejected but reviewed by leadership and ultimately approved for site.

Got rejected?

Reviewers leave notes as to why an image is rejected however if you would like additional clarification, please contact us at vendorimagery@zappos.com.

Rejected for having an accessory. This should have been approved since the garment is in full view for the customer and the accessory does not obstruct the product.

Rejected for low quality. While the subject is not super crisp, the product is not blurry and texture can still be seen.

Style: 6438401
Product: Granville 30 Carryall bag
Brand: Arc'teryx
Supplier: Arc'teryx Bags and Accessories
Color: Tatsu
Image size: 3750x5000
Aspect ratio: 3:4
Amazon SI: No

Style: 6438401
Product: Granville 30 Carryall bag
Brand: Arc'teryx
Supplier: Arc'teryx Bags and Accessories
Color: Tatsu
Image size: 3750x5000
Aspect ratio: 3:4
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Product: Granville 30 Carryall bag
Brand: Arc'teryx
Supplier: Arc'teryx Bags and Accessories
Color: Tatsu
Image size: 3750x5000
Aspect ratio: 3:4
Amazon SI: No

Rejected for not having an inside shot, however minimum requirement of 3 images was provided which is acceptable if there is no inside shot available.