An Introduction to Instagram

Learn what the Instagram social media platform is for, and how people using the platform interact with each other.

What is Instagram?

Instagram is a social media platform, where users can upload and share photos and videos from their mobile device. You can access Instagram by downloading the app to your mobile device.

Only download apps to your mobile device from either the official App Store for Apple devices, or the Google Play Store for Android devices.

The Instagram app

Let's take a tour of the most important features, starting with the **Home screen**. This displays a continuous feed of photos and videos posted by other Instagram users that you follow, that you can view by scrolling up and down the page. You will also see some ads.

At the top of the Home screen are three important icons:

- The **+ icon** lets you add a new photo or video

- The **heart** icon lets you see notifications and review your activity

- The **paper plane** icon lets you send direct messages to other Instagram users.

Instagram

Use Instagram on your phone or tablet to share photos and videos

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At the bottom of the Home screen are icons that allow you to access:

- The **Home screen**
- The **Search** function
- **Reels** (videos from other Instagram users you follow)
- **Shop** (items for purchase based on who you follow and your search history)
- Your **Profile**.

You can swipe right from the Home screen to access the camera on your device and create **Posts**, **Reels** and **Stories**. You can even stream live video to your followers. Swiping left from the Home screen lets you send **direct messages** to other users.

Understanding followers

Instagram lets you follow, or link to, other users, and see their posts.
You can interact with posts by:

- **Liking** them
- **Commenting** on the photos or video in them
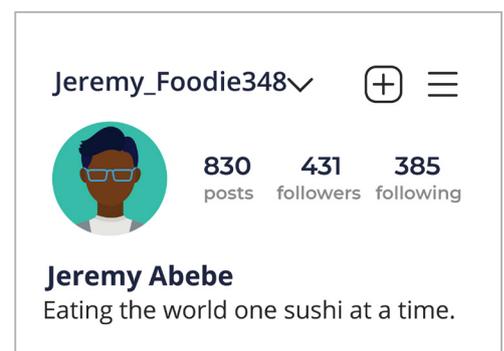- **Sharing** posts with others who you follow.

Following are the users you've linked to, while **followers** are the users who have linked to you.

Your profile

Tap the **Profile** icon to see the photos and videos you have posted, the number of followers you have, and the number of users you follow.

Add a new photo or video by tapping the **+ icon**, and access your settings by tapping the **Menu icon**, which looks like three horizontal lines.

You can customise your profile by adding a profile picture and creating a **Bio** description.
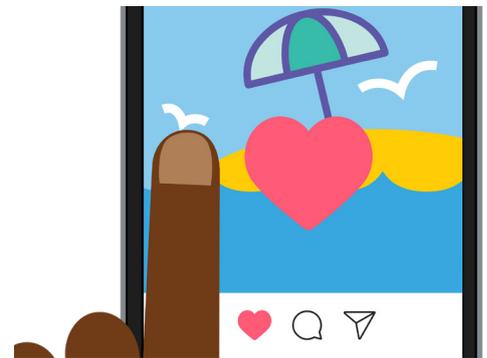

Jeremy_Foodie348

| 830 | 431 | 385 |
| posts | followers | following |

Jeremy Abebe
Eating the world one sushi at a time.

Your profile shows information about you

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Likes, comments, and shares

Each photo or video in your feed has three small icons below it:

- **Like:** Double-tap a photo or video to show your appreciation

- **Comment:** Tap to add a comment using the on-screen keyboard

- **Share:** Tap to share the photo or video with another Instagram user.

Double-tap a photo or video to show others that you like it

Instagram Stories

Instagram Stories are short videos or photos that only display for 24 hours. You can see suggested stories in the top of the Home screen. View a story by tapping on the icon.

Tapping your **Instagram Story icon** (on the far left of the **Home** screen) lets you film a short video, post some pictures, or even re-share the stories of other users to your own Story feed.

Remember, Instagram Stories only display for 24 hours, then they are removed automatically.

The Search feature

You can use the Search feature to look for users and content based on your interests. Tap the **Search icon** to show a list of genres, or types, of content that you can tap to select. Or type a specific search term into the **Search box** at the top of screen.

Searching by hashtag

Hashtags (#) identify Instagram content by category or topic. You can add hashtags when you upload photos. For instance, when you post a picture of a cake, you might add hashtags such as: **#baking #food #cake**.
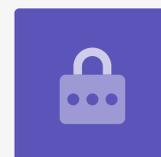
Hashtags help to search for content by topic. For example, you can search for the hashtag **#vintagecars** to view photos of old cars.

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How to create an Instagram account

Instagram is owned by Facebook, so you can use your Facebook account details to sign in. If you don't have a Facebook account, you can use the Instagram app to safely create a free account.

Only download apps from the official app creator. You should check who created the app, and the app's star rating.

1. **Download the app.** Search your mobile device's app store for the official Instagram app, and tap it to install.

2. **Sign-up**. When the Instagram app is installed, tap its icon to open it. The sign-in screen appears.

   If you use an Apple iPhone or iPad, tap **Create New Account**.

   If you use an Android phone or tablet, tap the **Sign-up with email** or **Phone Number** icon to start the sign-up process.

3. **Choose a username and password.** Follow the steps to create your Instagram username. It's important to know that the username is how you'll be identified on Instagram. So, it's a good idea to not use your full name or date of birth.

   If your username is already in use by someone else, Instagram will suggest an alternative.

4. **Add profile information.** Instagram will now ask for some information about yourself:
   - A link to your website (if you have one)
   - A nickname
   - A Bio line describing something interesting about you.

You can add a profile picture by tapping the **+ icon** in the top-left corner of the screen. Select a photo that is already saved to your mobile device or take a new one using the camera.

If you have signed up using Facebook, your Facebook profile picture will be displayed. You can change the picture by tapping **Edit Profile**.

5. **Choose people to follow.** Instagram suggests other Instagram users you can follow based on:

- Your **Friends list** from a linked Facebook account
- Your **Contacts list** on your mobile device.

For help creating an Instagram account, or using Instagram in general, type **https://help.instagram.com/** into your web browser's address bar, to visit the Instagram Help Centre.

You should choose a password that is easy for you to remember and difficult for others to guess. Strong passwords have a combination of upper and lower-case letters and include one or more numbers or symbols.

Controlling your Instagram privacy settings

You can protect your privacy and personal details while using Instagram. Keep in mind, however, that because Facebook owns Instagram, Facebook has access to your information and owns the rights to the photos you post on Instagram. This is contained in the terms and conditions that you need to agree to when you sign-up to Instagram.

Let's look at some privacy settings in the Instagram app:

1. From your **Profile** page, tap the **Menu** icon in the top-right of the screen. It looks like three horizontal lines.

2. Tap **Settings**.

3. Tap **Privacy**.

You'll see some options that let you control what other users can see on your Instagram account.

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Private vs public accounts

The **Private** account option is switched off by default, which means your account is Public and all Instagram users can see your photos and videos.

When the Private account option is switched on, your Instagram account can only be followed and viewed by users you have approved.
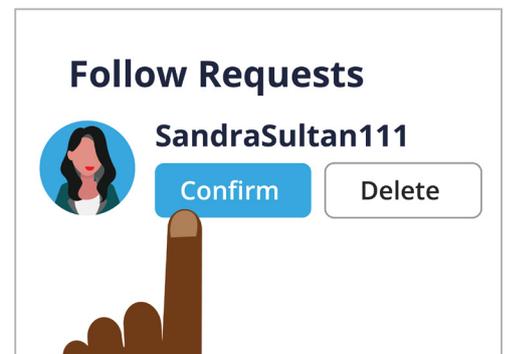
Tap the switch to turn it **On**. A pop up will ask you to confirm this, so tap **Switch to Private**.

Accepting or denying follow requests

While your account is set to **Private**, every time someone requests to follow you, you'll receive a notification asking if you want to accept or deny their request.

When your Instagram account is set to **Public**, anyone who decides to follow you can do so. You will still get a notification that a new user is now following your account.

Public accounts still let you prevent other users from following your account. You can choose to either **Remove** the account from your **Followers list**, or **Block** users so they can't see your posts in the future.

You can control who follows you by setting your account to Private

The Close Friends group

Close Friends are a small, intimate group of your followers, chosen by you. You can share some photos or video just to this group, while other follows won't see them. This is useful for sharing family photos or other more personal content.

Controlling interactions with your photos and videos

Other privacy settings let you control who can:

- Comment on your content

- Tag you in their own content

- Mention your Instagram username in their own posts.

You can, for example, adjust your **Privacy Settings** to allow only **People You Follow** to comment on your own photos and videos.

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How to Create a Close Friends group

The **Close Friends** option is accessed from your Instagram **Profile** page:

1. Tap on the **Menu** icon (it looks like three horizontal lines)
2. Tap **Close Friends**
3. Scroll through your list of **Followers** and tap on those users who you'd like to add to your **Close Friends** group.

How to block and report other users

You can control the content you're exposed to by **Blocking** another user account, or **Reporting** their content or behaviour to Instagram if it's particularly offensive.

Follow these steps to safely block or report another Instagram account:

1. Navigate to the profile of the user you wish to block or report
2. Tap the **Menu** icon in the top-right corner
3. Tap **Block** to block content or comments from that account. Once you block another Instagram account, that user won't be able to locate or search for your account again
4. Tap **Report** to report abusive or offensive behaviour to Instagram.

Manually approve photo tags

Instagram users can **Tag** you in their posts. This means they identify you by adding your Instagram username as part of their post. Other users can then link to your Instagram from that content.

You can manually control the posts you're tagged in from the Instagram **Profile page**:

1. Tap the **Menu** icon in the top-right corner
2. Tap **Settings**
3. Tap **Privacy**
4. Tap **Tags**

Use a tag to identify people in a post

5.   Tap **Manually Approve Tags**

6.   Tap the switch next to **Manually approve Tags** to turn it **On**.

A pop up explains how the **Manually approve Tags** feature works. Once you've read it, tap **Turn On**.

Posting a photo on Instagram

Now that your Profile is set up and ready to go, it's time to learn how to post content of your own.
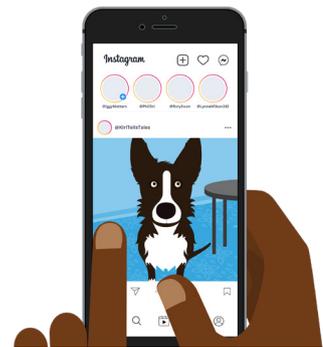
Step 1: Adding a new photo

From the **Home** screen, tap the **+** symbol at the top of the screen. You will then see a grid view of photos you've taken with your mobile device. You can scroll the grid to see less recent photos.

To select a photo on an Apple device, tap it and then tap **Next** in the top right corner.

On an Android device, tap the arrow in the top-right corner.

If this is the first time you've created an Instagram post, you'll be asked to grant permission for Instagram to access your device's camera roll. This is a requirement to use Instagram on your device.

Instagram lets you post images saved on your mobile device

Step 2: Applying filters

Instagram includes filters for your photos, which can be a fun way to personalise them. The filter options appear under the photo and you can browse through them by swiping to the left. Once you've found the filter you want to use, tap on it.

If you don't want to apply a filter to your photo, select **Normal** from the list.

Step 3: Editing your photos

The **Edit** option lets you adjust the photo by cropping and straightening, adding highlights, adjusting the shadow, sharpening the image, and more.

Experiment with filters and the editing features, to find options that work best for you.

To finish editing and applying filters on an Apple device, tap **Next**.

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On an Android devices, tap the arrow in the top right of the screen.

The changes you make to a photo that you upload to Instagram won't be applied to the original photo on your mobile device. So, you can play with filters and editing without worrying about losing your original photo.

Step 4: Adding a caption and hashtag

To add a caption, tap in the **Write a caption...** field at the top of the screen. The on-screen keyboard will appear and you can add text that describes the photo.

Add a hashtag to your caption, to identify the content you upload by category or topic and make it easier for others to find. Any word following a **#** symbol is treated as a hashtag by the Instagram app.

Add a location to your photo by selecting from the suggested location options, or by tapping **Add location** and then typing in the location where the photo was taken.

> **New Post**
>
> Happy birthday 😍 to my favourite dog! #dog #kelpie #party
>
> **Cafe bones, Leichhardt**

Adding hashtags helps make your post easy to find

Step 5: Tagging other Instagram users

You can add the names of other users who appear in your photos. This is called **Tagging**. To tag someone:

- Tap **Tag People**
- Tap an area of the photo, such as a face
- Type in an Instagram username
- Move the tag around on the photo to better represent who the tag is for.

You can also tag people in the photo caption.

- Tap the caption. The on-screen keyboard appears
- Type the **@ symbol** followed by an Instagram username
- Make sure there isn't a space between the @ symbol and the username.

You can use other sharing options to post your photo, caption and photo location to your Facebook, Twitter, or Tumblr accounts, if you've already linked them to your Instagram account.

You can tap **Advanced settings** to turn off commenting for photos that you post. This will stop other users from writing comments under that photo.

Step 6: Share your photo with your followers

To share your photo, tap **Share** in the top-right corner of the screen if you're using an Apple device. On an Android device, tap the **tick** in the top right.

If your Instagram account is not set to private, all users can see your photo, if they know your username.

If you have set your account to private, only your **followers** will be able to see the photo.

Posting a story on Instagram

An **Instagram Story** is a short video or photo that is uploaded to your feed and visible for 24 hours only. Many users post stories to highlight what they are up to, right now, but of course you can post whatever you like.

Step 1: Adding a new story

On the **Home** screen, you can see **Instagram Stories** from other users. To watch the story of someone you follow, simply tap on the circle with their username under it.

To add a story of your own, tap on the circle that says **Your story.**

An Instagram Story is visible to other users for only 24 hours

Step 2: Taking a new photo or video

Instagram stories allow you to post photos or a 60 second video, straight from your mobile device's camera. When adding a new story, the screen shows a live view of what the camera can see.

- To take a new photo, tap the circle in the centre of the screen

- To take a video, hold down the circle in the centre of the screen.

You will see a thin line move around the circle as you hold it down. This line shows you how much longer you have left to film. An Instagram video can be up to 60 seconds long.

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Step 3: Reviewing your photo or video

The screen shows the photo or video you just took. If you're not quite happy with it, tap the **x** symbol to delete it, and try again.

Step 4: Personalising your photo or video

You can personalise Instagram Stories by adding text, emojis and stickers. These optional features can be a way to add some fun to your Instagram Story.
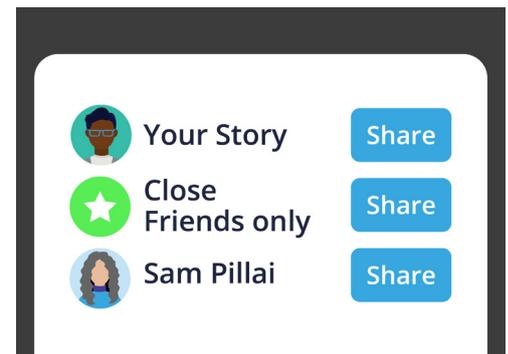
* **Stickers** let you add a location, mention other users or include a hashtag
* **Hashtags** categorise your content and make it easier for other users to locate and view your posts.

Step 5: Posting your Instagram Story

You're now ready to post – or publish – your story for your followers to see. There are three posting options:

* **Your Story** lets your post your story for everyone to view for 24 hours
* **Close Friends** allows you to post your story so only your nominated close friends can see it
* **Sent to** allows you to send your story to one or more users of your choosing.

Tap the option you'd like to use, and your story will be posted.

You can share an Instagram Story in different ways

Step 6: Checking your story

After you've posted a story, you can see who has viewed it. From the **Home** screen, tap the circle labelled **Your story**, and then look in the bottom-left corner of the screen.

To add another story, tap and hold the **Your story** icon from the Home screen and then tap on **Add to your story**.