

How to guide

How to use Instagram for Business

Instagram is a free social media app available on iPhone and Android devices. Individuals and businesses can upload their photos or videos and share them with their followers, while other features include direct messaging, live streaming, and short-form videos.

Instagram has become an indispensable marketing tool and an especially popular way to connect with brands – there are more than 200 million business accounts on Instagram today – and you can track your data to learn what content works well with your audience.

Getting started

Download the Instagram app and create a new account, or log in with your Facebook account. Once logged in you can set up your profile, which is a hub for all your photos and videos, as well as where you can keep track of who you're following and who is following you.


This is also where you can access your settings. In settings, find Account and tap Switch to professional account. Pick a category that best describes your business, then select Business. Now you can complete your profile.


On your profile page, tap on Edit Profile to change your name or username (this starts with the '@' symbol), write a catchy bio about your business, add a link to your website if applicable, and enter your business address and contact details.

At the bottom of the screen is a menu bar, which is accessible from anywhere in the app. The Home icon is your main feed where you can scroll through photos and videos posted by accounts you follow; the magnifying glass icon takes you to the Search & Explore page, where you can search for accounts to follow or specific content; the plus icon is how you start a New Post; the Reels tab shows short videos from users you may or not be following, and you can scroll to the next video by swiping your finger from the bottom of the screen to the top; and lastly the Profile icon takes you back to your profile page.

At the top right of the screen, the heart icon is where you can see your Notifications, such as likes, comments and mentions, while the paper aeroplane icon takes you to your message Inbox.


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Uploading, editing, and posting photos

To share a photo or video:

1. tap on the 'Plus' icon at the bottom centre of the home screen, or the top right of your profile page
2. choose 'Post', and select from your phone's camera roll. Next you can edit your image or add filters, then tap the arrow when you are happy
3. write a caption. On the next screen you can write a caption to go with your image. Aim to lead with the most important information, use a consistent and personal tone, and keep your caption short and to the point
4. tag other accounts. You can also 'tag' or mention other Instagram accounts using the '@' symbol, and add relevant hashtags to make your content more discoverable
5. there is also an option to add your location, so customers can find your business
6. finally, tap on the tick icon to publish your post

Reels

Instagram Reels are short, entertaining, and easily discoverable videos that let you bring your brand to life. They are a great way to promote your products, introduce yourself to new customers and get creative. Reels can be up to 90 seconds long if you record them in the Instagram app, or 15 minutes long if you upload a video from your camera roll, and they come with many unique editing tools as well as an extensive library of audio.

Posting a Reel:

1. tap the 'Plus' icon and select 'Reel', then you can either press and hold the record button to capture footage, or upload video from your device. Reels can be recorded in a series of clips or all at once, just tap the record button to end a clip and then tap it again to start a new clip
2. once you're done with recording, you can add audio, stickers and text to your Reel, or make other edits using the icons on the editing screen
3. when you're finished editing tap 'Next' to go to the next screen, where you can select a cover image for your Reel, write a caption, tag people or other businesses, add your location, and choose where your Reel is posted
4. when you have edited and are happy with your Reel, tap 'Share' to upload your Reel.

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Stories

Unlike Reels, Stories are short videos that disappear from your profile after 24 hours. Each photo or video uploaded to your Stories acts like a slide in a slideshow, with photos showing for seven seconds while videos can be up to 15 seconds in length. Stories are great for keeping your brand fresh in users' minds because they are always at the top of the Instagram screen, above regular feed content, making them the first thing people see when they open the app. They are a useful tool for providing off-the-cuff, informal content that humanises your brand, such as behind the scenes footage, tutorials or personal anecdotes. Stories also offer engagement and conversation opportunities via options to add links, emoji stickers, polls, countdowns, quizzes and mentions.

1. from the homepage, tap on your profile icon or the plus icon to post a Story. As with Reels, you can tap on the record button to start filming or upload from your camera roll.
2. then you can add text, or tap on the sticker icon to add hashtags, links, polls and lots more.
3. when you're finished, tap on the arrow at the bottom right of the screen, choose 'your story' then tap 'Share' to publish.

You can also share content from your profile page as a Story. Simply tap on the post you want to share, tap on the paper aeroplane icon and select 'add [post/reel] to your story'.