



### Frequently asked questions (FAQ)

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## Account set-up

### Q. Is an Instagram business account free?

A. Yes, a business account is free of charge, and anyone can switch their profile from personal to business at any time.

### Q. Can I have a business account on Instagram without having a business page on Facebook?

A. No, when you create a business account for the first time or switch your existing profile from personal to business you will be prompted to link up a Facebook Business page. You must be an Admin to do this, and settings must be 'public'. If you don't already have a Facebook Business page you can create this at the point of sign-up through Instagram.

### Q. Can I promote more than one business or creative output on the same account?

A. Yes, this is an individual choice. Some makers use one profile to join up multiple strands of work whilst others separate their core business from their side hustle! If your outputs share a natural crossover in style and audience, having more content to pull from can keep your feed diverse and lively (e.g a ceramicist that also dabbles in jewellery making). If, however your work differs aesthetically and suits a niche audience, it is best to distinguish accounts and ensure your content is relevant to the right people.

Whatever you opt for, aim for a consistent look, and feel across image treatment, fonts, branding and tone-of-voice in text. Check out the recording of our recent [Spring-back talk: How to define your brand values with Alexandra Lunn Studio](#) for more guidance.



## Q. Should I merge my personal account and business account?

A. There is no right answer as there are pros and cons to both approaches. Many creatives prefer to promote the *real*/person behind the brand, blurring the line between business and home. This allows followers to buy into your lifestyle and values as well as your products. At first glance this might seem like an efficient way to consolidate your social media efforts in one place, but it comes with its own risks. Before using a personal account consider the following:

- Will your target customer respond well to your personal life content?
- Do you post your work often enough to attract new business leads?
- How will new audiences find and recognise your products?
- Do you speak to your friends and family in the same way you liaise with potential customers?
- How will you monetise content to drive sales?
- Will your wellbeing and privacy be affected with less work/home boundaries?

Instagram business accounts also gain access to additional tools such as reporting insights, swipe-up links (if you have over 10,000 followers) and paid advertising. If this sounds useful, we recommend creating a business account. A full summary of pros and cons can be found on this [useful article](#) by business.com

## Q. What is the blue tick on some profiles and why does it matter?

A. Instagram's sought-after 'blue tick' is a verification badge that appears next to select usernames. The symbol confirms the authenticity of an account which may belong to a public figure, brand, or organisation. It was created to help users distinguish between fake and real accounts and improve search results. To request a blue tick head to *Settings* → *Request Verification* and complete the form. It can take a long time for household name brands and celebrities to be approved (if ever!) so do not stress over this step as a small to medium sized business.

## Content

### Q. What are Stories and how do they work?

A. [Instagram Stories](#) are portrait-mode images and videos that time out after 24 hours. They appear as circles at the top of your newsfeed and can be pinned to your profile as a 'highlight'. The position of stories is decided by an algorithm that prioritises content you engage with most. Stories were developed in response to Snapchat and allow users to customise content with interactive stickers, gifs, audio, geo-tags and more. Stories tend to be more lo-fi than content that appears on the main feed so your content can be less polished and more fun. Use Stories as a space to share behind-the-scenes content, real-time updates, inspirations, live



discussions and even invite trusted guests (e.g craft peers and creative influencers) to hold a guest takeover on your channel.

#### **Q. What are Reels and how do they work?**

A. [Instagram Reels](#) are Instagram's answer to TikTok. These short and snappy 15-30 second video clips are intended to entertain and inspire. Content can be filmed and trimmed within the Instagram app or lifted from your camera roll. The more addictive and visually pleasing your content the more viral potential your Reels will have, helping you reach a world-wide audience. Aim to 'stop the scroll' with fun snapshots of your skills, process, and materials to build brand awareness and make users smile.

#### **Q. What is IGTV and how can I use it?**

A. [Instagram TV \(IGTV\)](#) is a long-form video service accessible via the primary Instagram app or as a separate app. It was launched in response to the success of streaming services such as YouTube and Vimeo and offers users a full-screen immersive format for mobile. Videos can last longer than 60 seconds and content is personalised to the user, making it easy to discover new creators that match your interests. IGTV can be viewed by clicking the TV icon on a creator's profile or as a preview post in the main feed. If an IGTV video is longer than 60 seconds the feed preview will prompt the user to tap 'Keep watching' to open the full video. IGTV content can also be grouped as a 'series' allowing you to create themed auto-play playlists. Use IGTV to connect with your audience on a deeper level and tell your brand's story. Content might include day-in-the-life vlogs, online masterclasses, studio tours, interviews, and product teaser-trailers.

#### **Q. What is a Carousel and why should I use it?**

A. Instagram Carousels allow you to share up to 10 photos and/or videos in a single post. They appear on your profile and in the feed without overwhelming followers as individual uploads. Content can be square, landscape or portrait, however the orientation you select on the first image will apply to all content in the same carousel. To create a Carousel, begin a new post and select the 'layered square' icon. Select images from your camera roll and tap next. Now you can edit each photo individually and rearrange the order of content by dragging left to right. Use carousels to group chronological content and tell a full-bodied story about your product. Uses might include step-by-step instructions, multiple ways to style the same item, mood boards, event coverage, and customer testimonials.

#### **Q. How do I delete content?**

A. Before deleting any content, take a look at the Instagram archiving feature. This allows you to hide posts from your profile so that it only appears for you under 'archived posts'. Once content is deleted from the archive it is gone forever, so to tidy up your page without losing your history, tap on the settings menu in the top right of your profile then tap the clock icon to view your archive. This is also where you can view and pin past Stories to your Highlights.



## Q. What are sponsored posts and how do they work?

A. Content that has been published by a business, celebrity, or influencer in exchange for compensation (paid or unpaid) must be tagged as a branded partnership. Instagram defines branded content as *'content that features or is influenced by a business partner for an exchange of value'*. You can read their full policies [here](#).

Sponsored posts are flagged in-feed with a label that reads 'paid partnership with [insert brand name]' appearing under the username. By providing a disclosure, account holders are meeting legal standards whilst promoting fair transparency - which helps users trust your brand. To find out if your content meets regulations visit the Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) website or download their handy 'Is my post an ad?' [flowchart](#). More information can be found in Instagram's [help centre](#).

## Shopping

### Q. What is Instagram Shopping and who is it available to?

A. The Instagram [Shopping](#) feature allows users to tap product tags to view details, save items to private wish lists and checkout via the app. To make a purchase users simply tap the 'Buy on Instagram' or 'View on website' button before checking out with [Facebook Pay](#) (currently unavailable outside of the US) or your preferred method. This is a helpful feature for businesses as it increases product exposure, reduces steps in the customer journey, and allows you to directly link posts to your website's product page.

To take advantage of this feature you must have a Business or Creator account. To view set-up instructions and find out more please read Instagram's [business guide](#).

### Q. Do I need a Facebook business page in order to have an Instagram Shop?

A. Yes, Instagram is owned by Facebook and to get the most out of their business tools you will need to link a business page. Without an associated Facebook account, you will miss out on advertising and Shopping features. To view a full list of restricted features [click here](#).

To view a step-by-step for connecting your account please read Instagram's [business guide](#). If you are yet to create a Facebook business page, read Facebook's [start-up guide](#).

### Q. Can purchases be made through the Instagram app?

A. Currently Facebook Pay is not available in the UK, so most brands integrate a third-party app like Shopify or a link to their main website for checkout. No transaction takes place within Instagram, but the option to tag products within a post provides a clear signpost for users with intent to purchase. Oberlo's [ultimate guide to setting up an Instagram shop](#) provides more detail.



### Q. What does it cost to include a Shopping button on my content?

A. Instagram Shopping is a free feature. All you need to get started is a Facebook business page and an Instagram business profile (both of which are free). After connecting the two you will be able to upload your product catalogue and start selling.

### Q. Do you need a certain number of followers to start a shop?

A. No, Instagram Shopping is available to any eligible business. To be eligible you only need to meet the following criteria.

- Your business is located in a [supported market](#)
- You are selling an eligible product
- Your business complies with Instagram's [merchant agreement](#) and [commerce policies](#)
- Your business owns a web domain in which you can sell from

## Engagement

### Q. Is it better to place hashtags in the post caption or as a comment below?

A. This topic attracts a lot of debate! However, a recent study found that small to medium businesses with less than 100,000 followers can gain a better reach rate by placing hashtags in the caption of a post rather than the comment section. However, there are other benefits to separating out your hashtags, such as keeping your image caption tidy and retrospectively adding hashtags to past posts, so they continue to generate new interest.

### Q. What are the peak times for posting?

A. This will vary depending on your business and target audience. To monitor peak times for content performance we recommend using a scheduling app such as Sprout, Hootsuite, or Sked to publish content in advance and access detailed reporting. To start testing, ask yourself '*How does Instagram fit into my customer's day?*' For some users Instagram is a fun way to kill-time whilst travelling to work or university, for others it's a 5-minute burst on a lunch break. Other people use it to message friends and family in the evening or share a personal update over the weekend. Factors such as age, location and interests will also affect user behaviour. For instance, a Gen Z user may start their day with a scroll in bed after turning off their phone alarm whilst a mature user with their own children may limit activity until after 9pm. If you have international customers, it is also important to factor in time zone differences. For more general guidance on global peak times to try out, read Lifewire's article '[The best time to post on Instagram in 2021](#)'.

### Q. How can I convert hits on Reels into web traffic?

A. As Reels are intentionally addictive it can prove tricky to convince users to leave the app and take action on your website. It's best to use the Reels feature as a way of establishing your authority on a subject through educational and



entertaining content (e.g ‘how-to’ tutorials and product reviews). This handy [article](#) from digitalmarketer.com offers efficient ways to include Reels in your wider comms strategy and drive conversion.

#### **Q. How can I repost another user’s content?**

A. Instagram's [Terms of Use](#) require written permission to repost. Before resharing someone else’s content you should ask for their permission to share the content by commenting on the original post or sending a Direct Message. Once you have their consent to repost, simply tap the paper airplane icon and select ‘Add post to story’ or screenshot to upload the image/video as a new post on your profile. There are also reposting apps that take care of this step for you, such as InstaRepost and DownloadGram. Read Hubspot’s article [‘Four different ways to reshare content from other users’](#) for a complete step-by-step.

#### **Q. Why have I seen a dip in my content’s reach despite posting regularly?**

A. Instagram’s algorithm is always evolving, and the biggest change of note is a shift from chronological content to suggested highlights based on your prior interactions. Generally, to win the algorithm and reach new audiences it’s important to incentivise engagement (i.e., likes, saves, comments and shares), upload frequently and use hashtags– the more niche the better! Paid promotions also get prioritised so if you can spare some marketing budget, it’s a good idea to pivot from organic to paid marketing when you have an important message or product to push.

Instagram also systematically removes inactive or ‘ghost’ followers. When a new account is set up it’s common to accumulate lots of new followers in a short space of time, but often these profiles are bots or spam accounts. If you see a sudden dip in your follower count without a clear cause and effect (e.g a recent post), don’t worry – those profiles may have been doing more harm than good to your algorithmic ranking.

For more information see Later’s article [‘How the Instagram algorithm works in 2021’](#)

#### **Q. How can I find relevant people to follow and connect with?**

A. Instagram is crammed full of sub-cultures and specialist interests so whatever you’re into, there’s a community waiting! From mood boards and artist portfolios to travel diaries and recipe books – users push the limits of the grid to create a digital ‘shop-window’ for their personal blog or business, so it’s easy to recognise profiles you might like. To get started finding your community, visit the explore page or search for hashtags – the more time you spend on the app the more Instagram will learn about your preferences. This means it will surface similar content next time you open the app. Follow any accounts that catch your eye and if you’re feeling confident, add a complimentary comment to your favourite post or send a DM – this makes you more visible in their notifications and they might return the favour by looking at your content too. As a result, in time users with like-for-like characteristics will be more likely to see your content as a recommendation in their feed. To find profiles in a specific locality, tap on the



search bar and toggle to 'Places' for content tagged by location. This can be great for connecting with local organisations, shops, and venues.

For inspiration we also recommend following your favourite brands, magazines, public personalities, artists, musicians and local heroes – plus [@CraftsCouncil](#) and [@CraftsMagazine](#) of course! If you are an emerging maker or graduate you can also share your work using our go-to hashtags for discovering new talent: #newmakers #craftgrad

#### **Q. Where should I start with paid advertising?**

**A.** Instagram has several advertising formats for businesses. Before planning your content and budget, it's important to define your aim. Oberlo's article '[The complete guide to growing your business with Instagram](#)' covers this in-depth, including how to create SMART targets.

#### **Q. How do I know if my content is reaching the right audience?**

**A.** Tap on the 'Insights' button under your profile name to access your business account's reporting dashboard. Here you can view anonymised demographic data, including age-range, gender, and location alongside the time of day most people visited your profile and how they've engaged (e.g screenshots). Instagram does not track who is viewing what content or how often someone engages, prioritising user privacy. For more specifics on monitoring your audience, read Tech Junkie's article [How To Tell Who Views your Instagram](#).