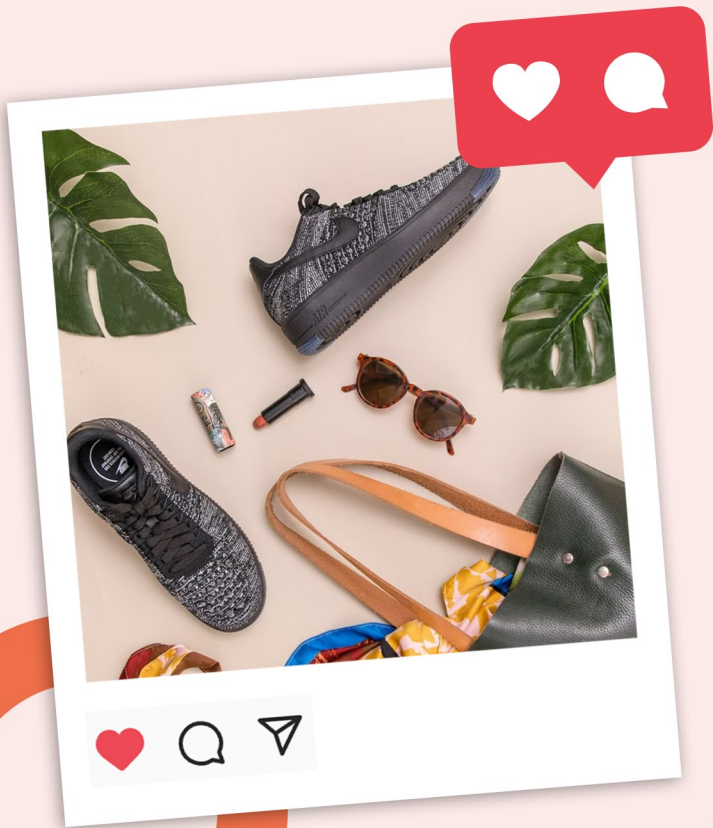




THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO INSTAGRAM



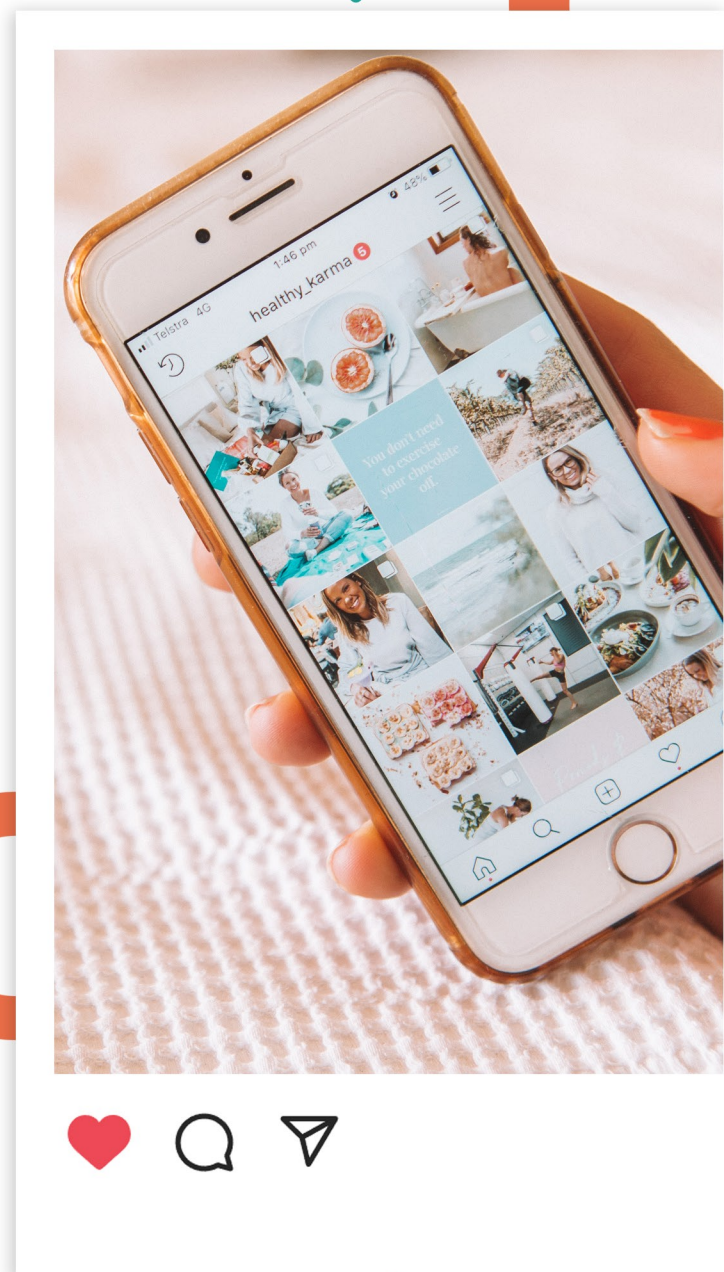
What is Instagram?

Instagram is now arguably the most popular and active of the main social media channels.

As of 2022, almost 1.5 billion people use the app daily to share images and video content.

Quickly adopted by predominantly young users when it launched in 2010, the platform has become the place to explore fashion, fitness, food, travel, celebrity culture and more.

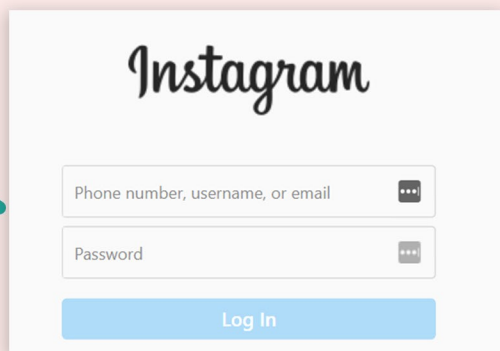
If your brand fits, you can gain an audience by posting visually pleasing content and interacting with influential, trendsetting accounts.



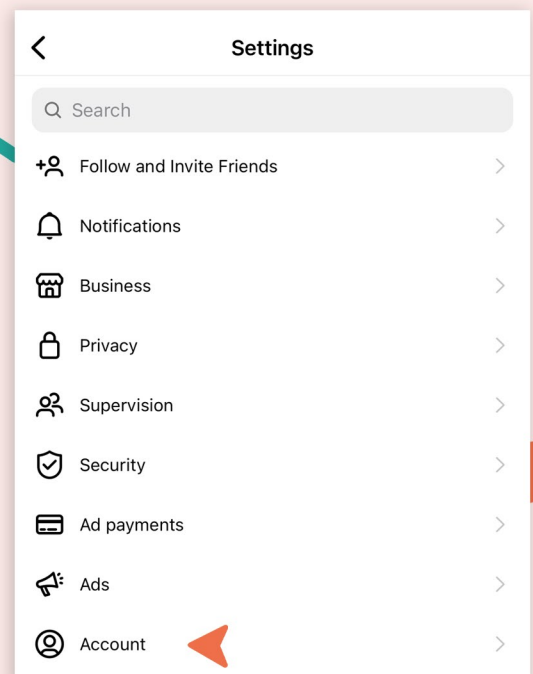
Instagram Business Accounts

It's straightforward to set up a new Instagram Business account or make your personal one professional.

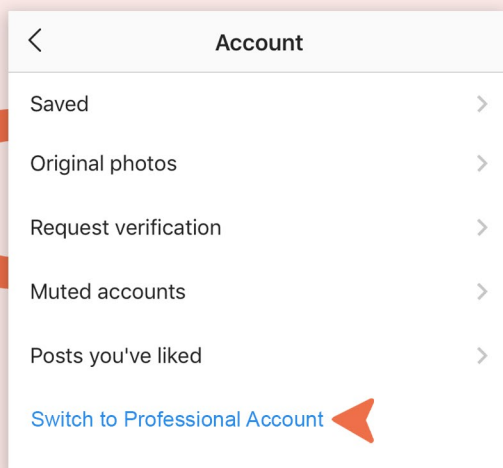
1 Download the Instagram app and sign up.



2 Once signed up, go to your profile and tap on the menu icon in the top right corner and tap Settings and then Account.



3 Choose Switch to Professional Account.



4 Select the category that best defines your business.

What best describes you?

Categories help people find accounts like yours. You can change this at any time.

Q Search Categories

- Artist
- Musician/band
- Blogger
- Clothing (Brand)
- Community
- Digital creator
- Education
- Entrepreneur
- Health/beauty

Next

Your next step is to complete your profile.

1 Choose a profile picture. Instagram is a visual platform so pick one that captures the spirit of your brand as well as the eye. Your logo will likely be the best option.

Complete your profile with a short bio and company details such as opening times, contact details and your website address. Instagram is all about being punchy, so keep it short.

3 If you have a Facebook Business page, you can link your Instagram and Facebook so that any posts you make, are posted on both platforms, at the same time.

The basics are done! **Now it's time to start posting engaging content.**

1

Start with a hello post.
Introduce your business to the Instagram community!



Big Lemons Thank you and welcome to our new account! We are a proud family-owned restaurant. Food served with a modern twist. Open daily 10AM-10PM!

2

Start following and interacting with accounts you have something in common with. This includes commenting on posts, direct messaging, liking and sharing other accounts' content. Don't be shy.



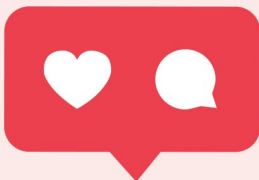
178 likes

18 HOURS AGO

Beautiful! Love the colours. You capture the themes so well ❤️ |

Post

3



Remember to stick to business. You want people to visit your account and learn more about your company - not your personal life.

Generally, the more accounts you follow, the more accounts will reciprocate, and follow you back. The best results will come from targeting relevant companies in your area, informational pages that provide news on your industry or specific influential figures in your industry.

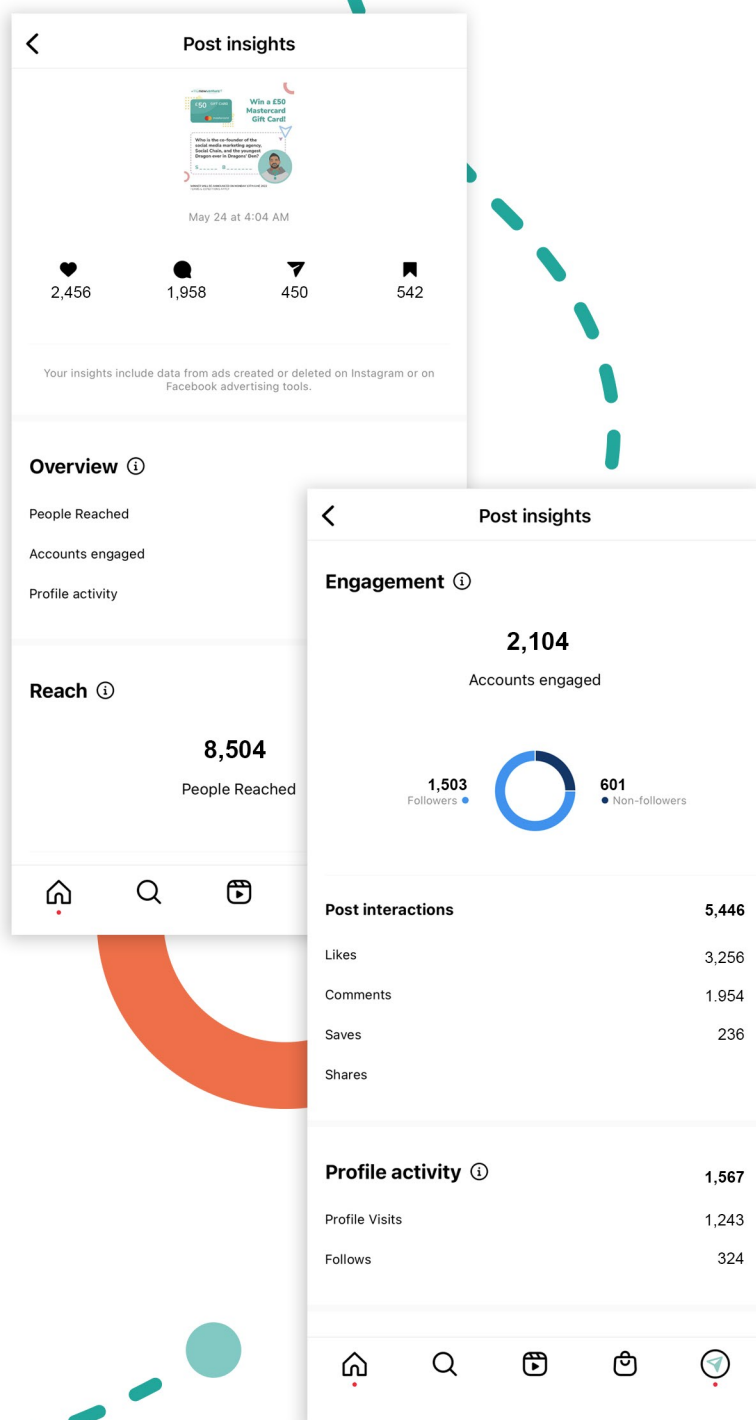
Instagram Insights

Before investing time in developing an Instagram strategy, it is best to first explore Instagram Insights.

This is the platform's analytics tool and will provide a range of data benchmarks.

See what metrics suit your business and set some targets for growth and engagement.

It's worth noting that Instagram Insights is only available to professional accounts so make sure you've switched over!

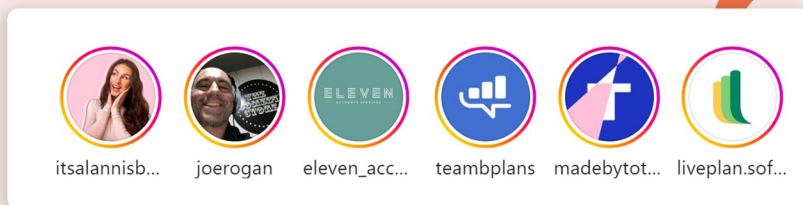


Instagram Content Types

Reels

Instagram reels allow you to entertain, engage and inform audiences with short video clips, under 90 seconds in length.

Use trending audio clips and onscreen text to help increase your reel's reach.

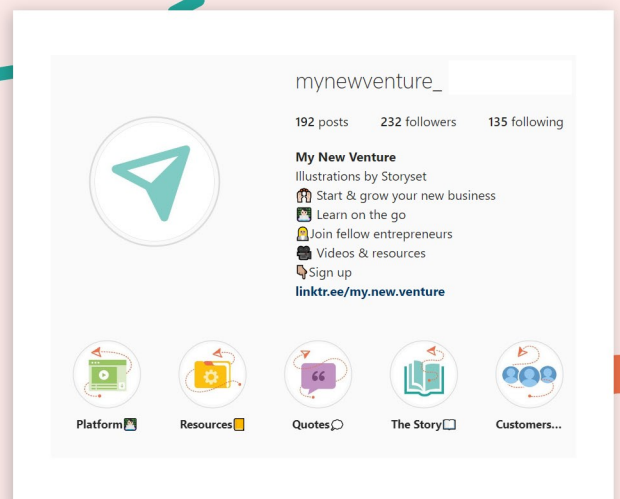


Stories

Instagram Stories are photos and videos that appear at the top of the Instagram app, rather than in the news feed. Designed to make a splash, they disappear after 24 hours but can include eye-catching stickers, polls, gifs and filters. You can save stories to highlights on your profile.

Highlights

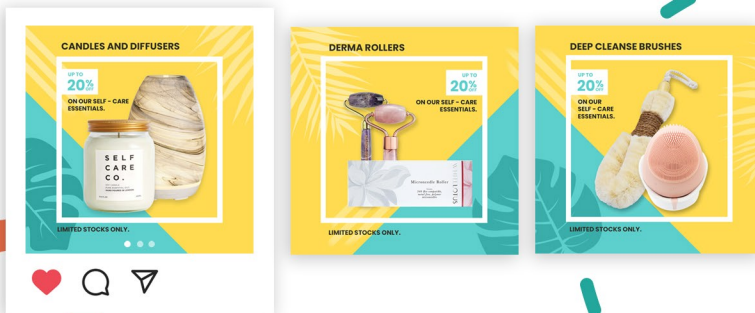
Highlights are libraries of your Instagram stories and appear at the top of your profile. You often have more than one and group them into different categories of content and information.



Example highlights for a hairdressing business may include 'Client Photos' 'Price List' and a 'Read Me' highlight detailing important information like how to get to the business premises and the cancellations policy.



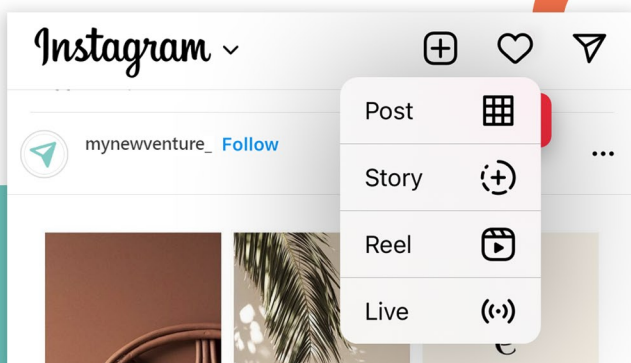
Carousels



Posting an Instagram Carousel on your profile means posting more than one photo or video at a time, in the same post. This is great if you have a collection to sell or a range of products to advertise.

Instagram Live

Tap this function and you can broadcast video live on the platform using your phone. It's a quick and easy way to get noticed.



To create any of the above content, go to your feed or profile and tap on the big + button.

Growing Your Audience

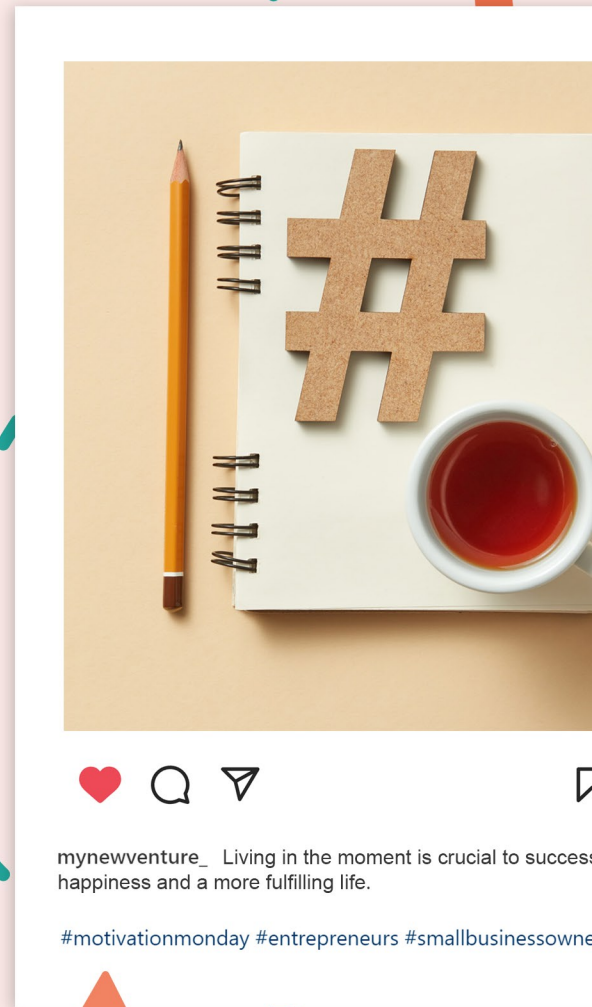
➤ Hashtags

Instagram users tag content with [#hashtags](#) to make it searchable. Hashtags quickly relate to trends and can be a great way for you to get seen.

Examples include [#love](#), included in almost 2 Billion searches in 2021, and [#fashion](#) which reached 800 Million.

Hashtags can be anything and other examples include [#parenting](#), [#startups](#), [#entrepreneurs](#), and [#nomnomnom](#), if you like your food.

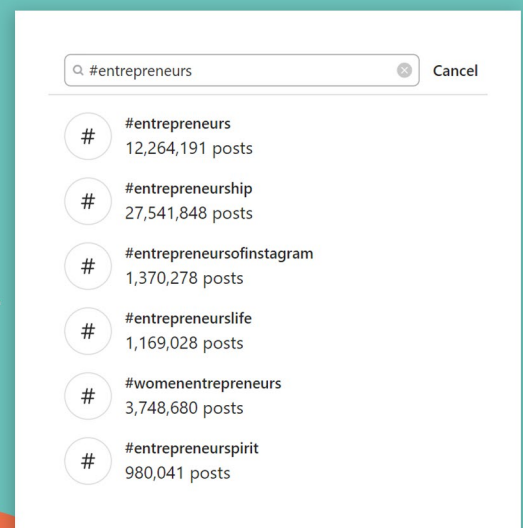
Better yet, consider leading a trend and starting a hashtag of your own.

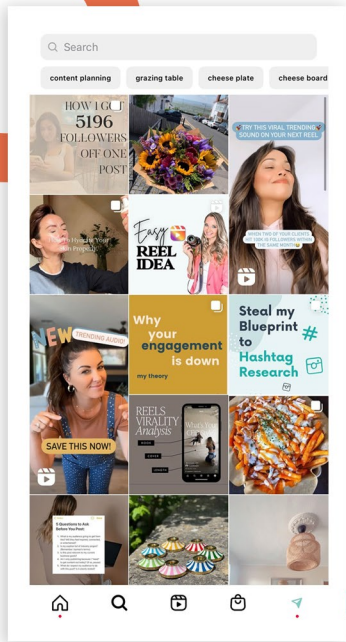


The easiest and most cost-effective ways to find popular hashtags related to your industry are done via the app itself...

1

Test industry-related buzzwords and topics on the explore page of the app. Type the word as a hashtag into the search bar at the top and see how many posts have been used with that hashtag.





2

Go to the explore page to find popular and trending posts similar to your brand's content. See what hashtags they have used.

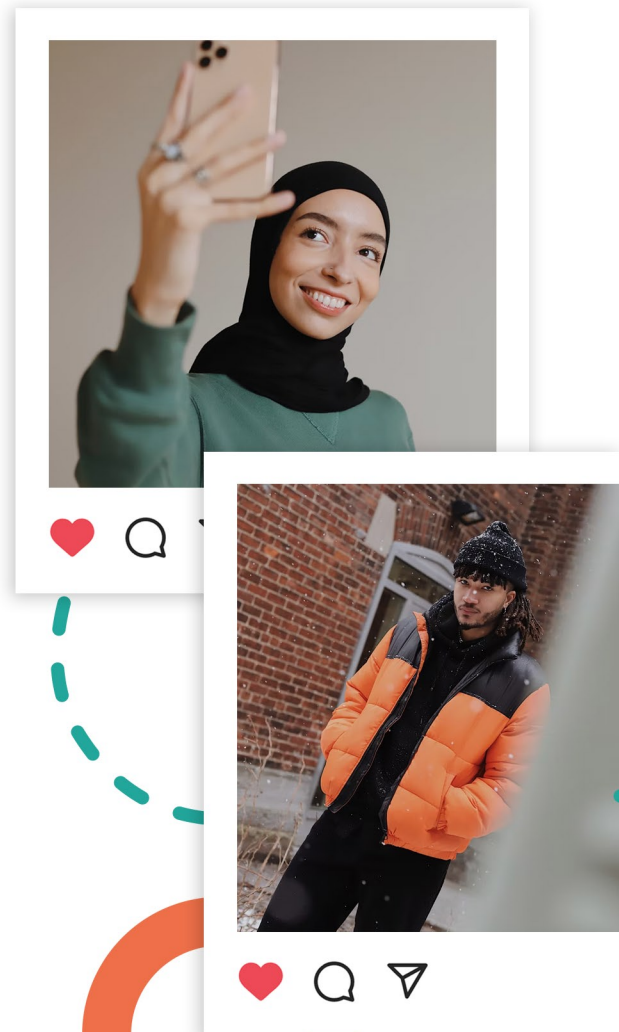
3

See what kind of content and hashtags the accounts that you follow are posting.

➤ Influencers

The term 'influencer' has come to mean accounts with large followings, often high-profile individuals, that can help to drive traffic to your professional profile. This is sometimes through a commercial arrangement and for a fee. In other cases, it might be in return for free products or services.

While it is common across much of Instagram, the use of influencers is seen as controversial by some. It needs to be carefully considered and Instagram rules state that you must be transparent about any content that is paid for. Some influencers will talk to you directly and others will have agencies who communicate on their behalf.

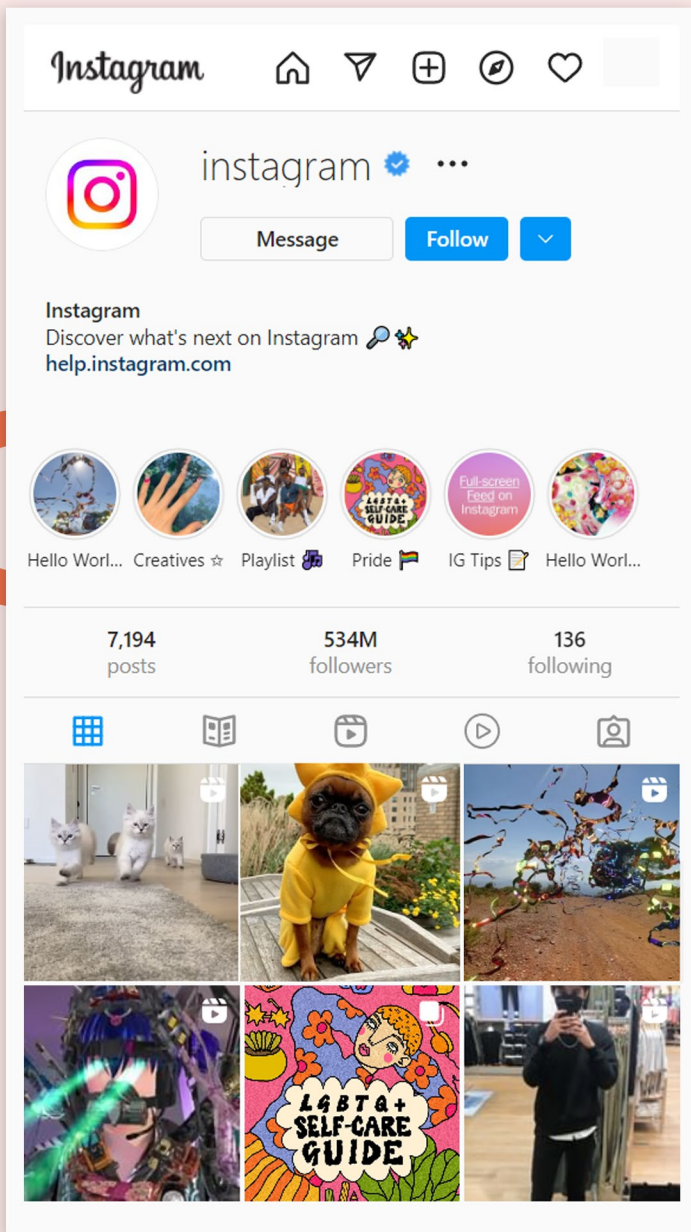


➤ Verified Badges

Identity is generally not tightly policed on Instagram. Many people use aliases and nicknames.

To protect users from deception, notable accounts including celebrities, politicians and sometimes influencers, have a blue tick next to their profile name.

This indicates they have undertaken steps to verify their identity. You can apply for your account to be verified too if you feel you have a presence that might attract copies, parodies or fraudulent accounts.

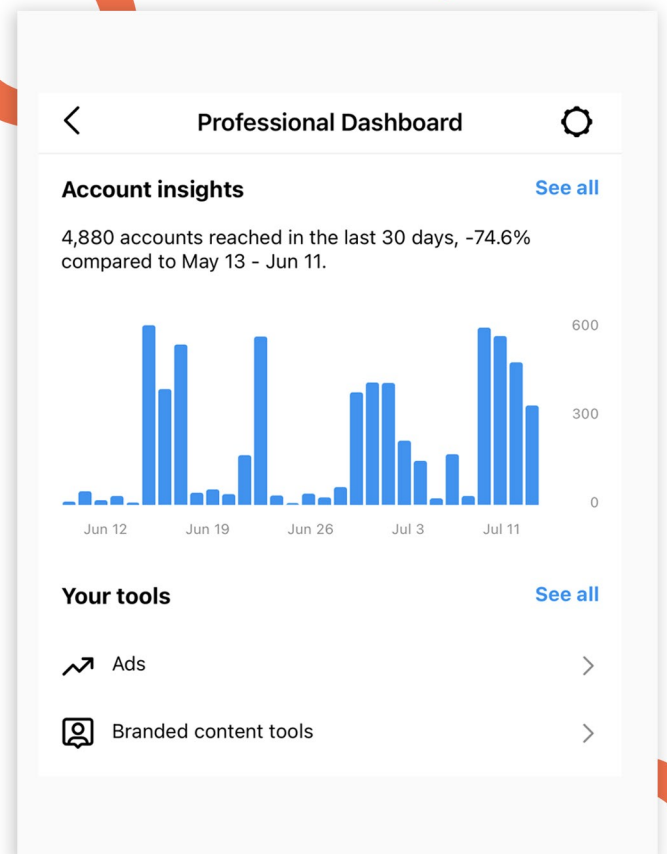


➤ Instagram Ads

Instagram is a free service to end-users, funded by a sophisticated network of advertising.

If you think your products and services fit with Instagram's brand of lifestyle and image-focused content, and that your target audience hangs out here, you might benefit from Instagram Ads.

You can use Instagram's Ad Manager tools to choose an audience based on demographics, location and interest. You only pay for clicks you achieve within a set budget so it can be very cost-effective for small businesses.



Summary

With 70% of global users under 34 years old and content being focused on aesthetically pleasing visuals, Instagram won't be for everyone.

However, if it fits your business, and you've got compelling visuals, there is an ocean of opportunity for you to explore.

As a platform, it is incredibly accessible and interactive. Results will depend on how much time and effort you put in to posting and nurturing a community. The use of [#hashtags](#) and reels specifically, will help you reach more accounts organically.

If you are committed to growing faster, it may be worth considering influencers and paid advertising to give your business a boost.

