

Online Blogging

# Your Step-by-Step Beginner's Guide to: Instagram for Business

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## Your Step-by-Step Beginner's Guide to Instagram for Business



Instagram has more than 300 million users (Source: [Instagram Blog](#)). Is your brand tapping into this mobile-friendly, social network source of visual content and ready buyers?

According to Instagram's owners, Instagram has grown into a community that shares more than 70 million photos and videos every day. Many business niches, such as food and fashion, are using this platform. For example, brands like Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream have embraced Instagram to keep and gain followers by sharing mouth-watering images of their newest flavors.

Even if you aren't in one of these niches or don't have a tangible product, you can still use similar strategies to gain a following on Instagram. The NBA doesn't promote products on Instagram. They develop an emotionally charged experience. Their page gives followers a small sample of being courtside, which tempts fans to get the full experience in person.

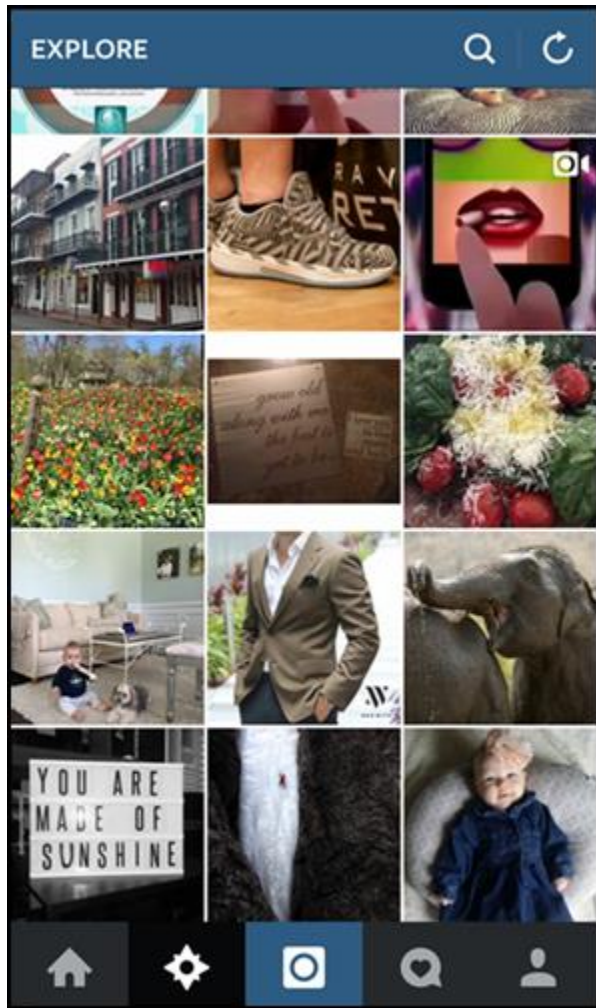
### **Still not sure your business can benefit from using Instagram? Consider these facts:**

- Instagram users primarily interact with smartphones, so it's readily accessible.
- Nearly 7.3 million people use Instagram daily.
- The average user spends about 257 minutes on Instagram per month.
- The average number of daily likes is 1.2 billion.

With those kinds of numbers, it's easy to see the business-boosting potential Instagram can have on your business. Before you get excited about the numbers and jump in, you need to know a few more details to make your experience more pleasant and profitable.

### What is Instagram?

Instagram, a combination of the words "instant" and "telegram", is a mobile visual content sharing app and social network. In 2012, Facebook purchased it from its founders, Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger. As of December 2014, it's gained more than 300 million users.



Instagram is unlike any other social network in that it is based solely on visual storytelling with photos and videos. Users can post images and short videos up to 15 seconds long. Every photo and video published on the Instagram app are square, much like the old Polaroid pictures. This feature gives the app a more streamlined look and inspires creativity among its users

### **Why should your business use Instagram?**

You may be using Facebook and Pinterest for business already. So why would you want use Instagram as well?

- Like no other social network, Instagram provides solutions to common problems, which plague mobile photographers and video enthusiasts. They provide advanced tools to make free mobile images more professional looking. They also optimize upload times, making it quick and efficient for users, compared to other platforms.

- Instagram lets you show your customers the human side of your business. You can post pictures showing the positive aspect of your company and the actual people behind your brand.
- All the visual content you share on Instagram helps you to connect with your target market or one of its subsets. For instance, sharing your latest product and showing how people use it, attracts repeat customers and potential customers.
- Almost every business has some visual content they can share with their clients. Instagram is one of the best platforms to do this.

The first step is to get an Instagram account set up. Use the site for a while, and you'll get a feel for how it works. Follow your competitors and favorite brands to see how they use it and what kind of response their activities get.

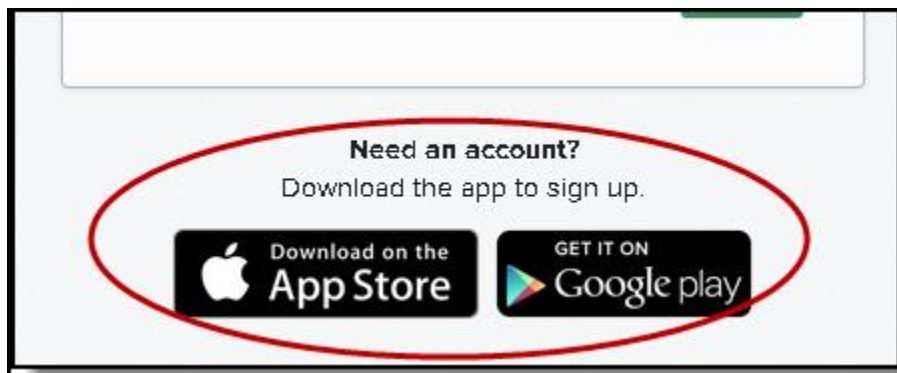
Are you ready to get started with this visually appealing app? Follow this step-by-step guide to set-up your account and leverage the power of Instagram.

Getting started: Setting up Your Instagram for Business Account

Setting up your Instagram account is easy. You will quickly be adding photos and videos and connecting with your potential customers.

The first step in setting up your Instagram account is to download the app and choose an account name. Ideally, you'll want it to be your business name, so that's tied to your brand.

Many people use Instagram's app to their iOS, Android phone, or tablet. It's in both the Apple App Store and the Google Play store. Instagram is also available on Windows Phone 8 and later from the Windows Phone Store.



Important: You must create your account using the Instagram mobile app, not a computer. However, once you create your account, you can view Instagram on a computer.

Once you have downloaded the app, you are ready to create an account.



## To sign up:

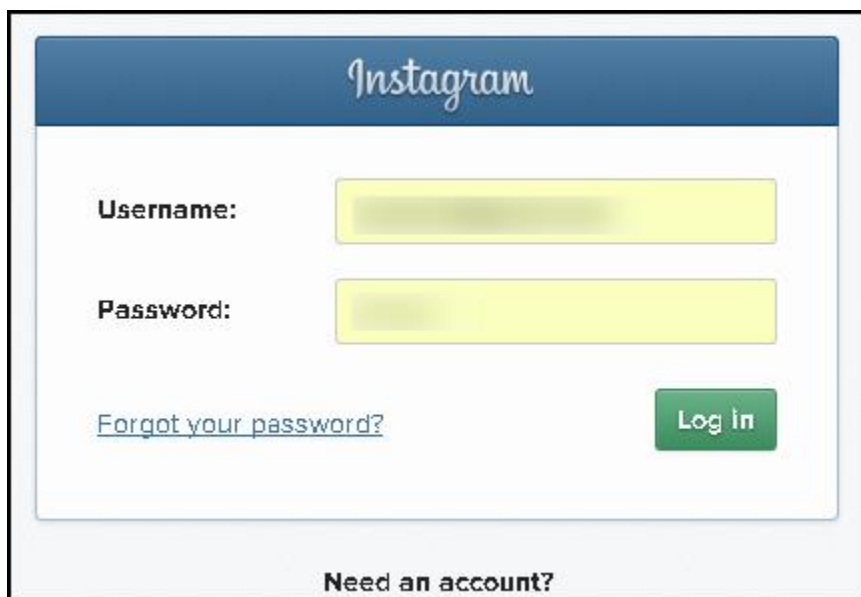
Once the app's installed, tap on the Instagram icon to open it.

You can sign up either with your Facebook account or with an email address.

To register with your email address, enter it and tap "Next." To sign up with your Facebook account, tap "Log In with Facebook."

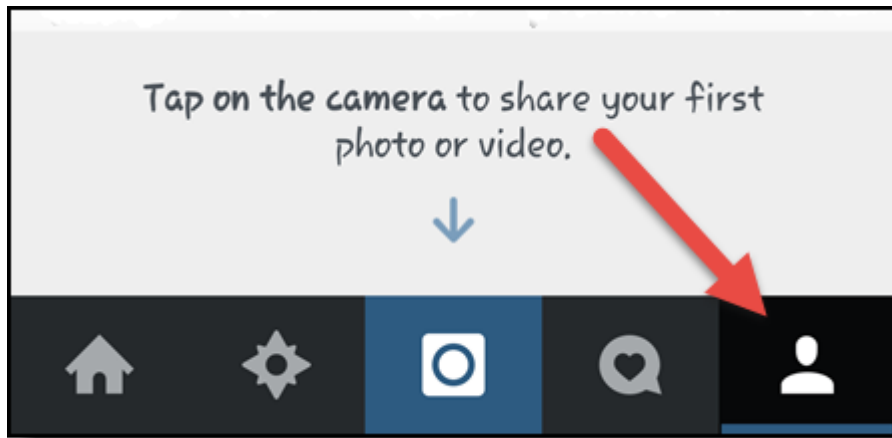
If you register with email, fill in your preferred username and a password. Complete the profile info and then hit "Done."

If you register with Facebook, you will need to log into your Facebook account. Your information will be automatically filled in, including your name and profile picture. You will need to create a username and password, however.

A screenshot of the Instagram app's login and sign-up screen. At the top, the word "Instagram" is written in a white, cursive font on a dark blue background. Below this, there are two input fields: "Username:" followed by a yellow rectangular box, and "Password:" followed by another yellow rectangular box. To the left of the password box is a blue link that says "Forgot your password?". To the right of the password box is a green button with the text "Log in" in white. At the bottom of the screen, there is a link that says "Need an account?" in a bold, black font.

Now that your account has been set up go to the Profile tab via the button on the bottom right of the screen to add more to your profile. Its where you will see your posts.

Click the "Edit Your Profile" button to change your name, username and profile picture. You can add your website URL and a short biography here as well as change your password, update your email address and phone number and toggle whether you want your posts private or not.



### **Adding a Profile Photo**

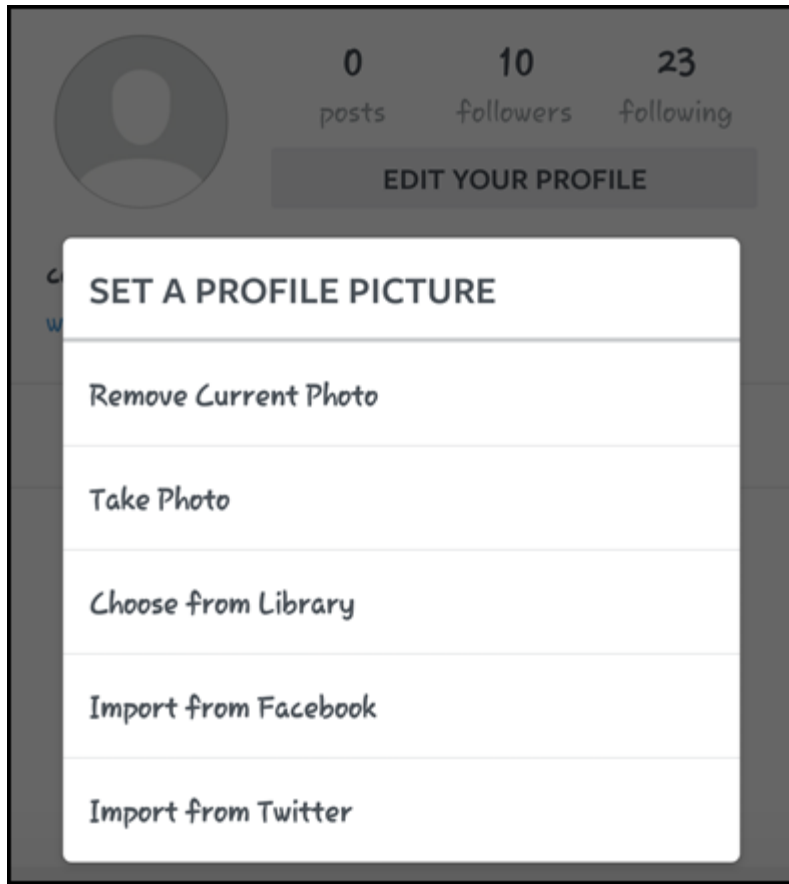
Now, you can only add or change your profile image from the Instagram app. To change your profile picture:

Go to your profile by tapping on the person tab at the bottom of your screen.

Tap on your profile picture. If you don't have a profile picture, tap the blank circle next to your name.

Choose where you want to get your picture:

- Take a Photo
- Choose from Library
- Import from Facebook
- Import from Twitter



**Simple is best! Use your brand’s logo or graphic symbol.**

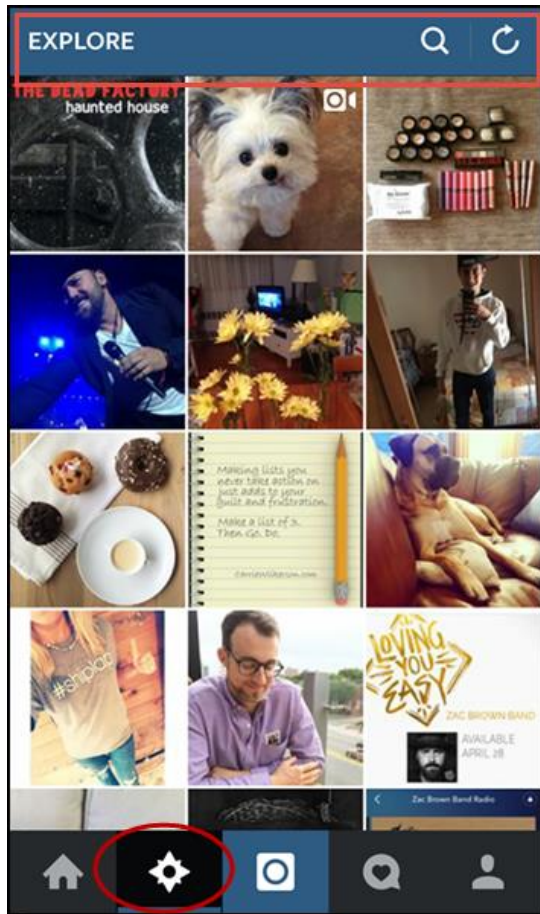
Your image will be cropped into a circle and appear as a very small 150 x 140 pixel image on most phones.

**Navigating the App**

Instagram is simple to navigate. The app is set up with five buttons, across the bottom of your screen – the home tab, search tab, camera button, activity tab, and your profile tab. Each button serves a different purpose.

The home page is where you see your own posts as well as the "stream" or most recent posts from people that you follow.

The Search tab lets you find compelling content and new users to follow. At the top of the Search page is a search bar. Here you can type in keywords and then tap Users to see those who have that keyword in their name or tap on the Hashtags to see what includes that keyword in the hashtag.

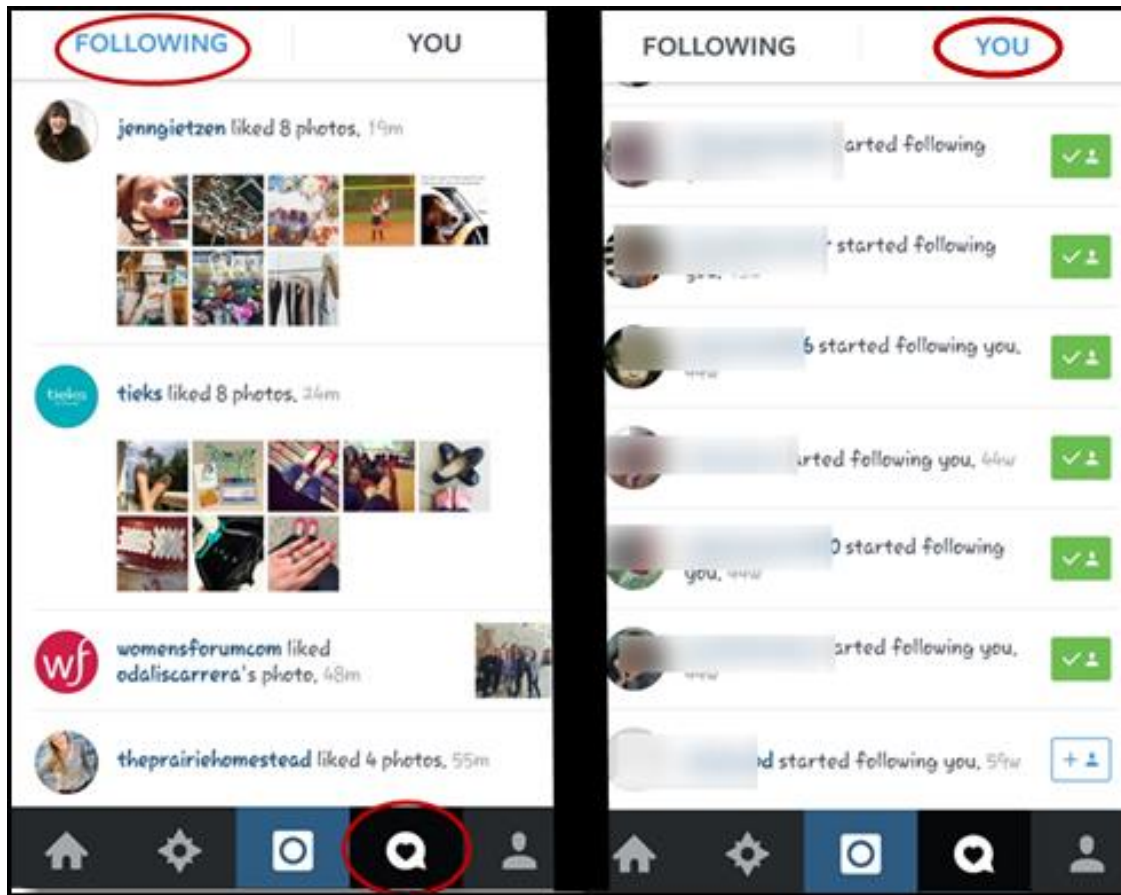


The camera button is where you create new posts. It also where you edit and add filters to your images. We'll go into this further later.

The activity page gives you two different streams of content. There are two tabs on this page: Following and You. The default page is the You page. It shows your most recent notifications, such as when a comment on your photos, mentions you, or likes your photos

**The Following tab shows the recent activity of users you are following.**





The Profile tab is where you see all your posts and where you can edit and update your settings. Under this tab are four buttons. The default view shows you your photos and videos as a collage. The next button allows you to see posts as a stream. The third button gives you access to your photo map for geotagging in your posts. The final button will show the picture.

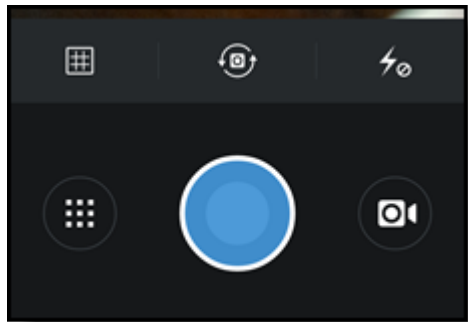
That's it. You're ready to begin using Instagram for your business. Get familiar with how the site works by reading up on anything you aren't familiar with and then practicing. When you're ready, we'll begin adding content in the form of video and photographs.

### **Take the Guesswork Out of Creating Visual Content with Instagram**

Instagram is a visual platform, so you have only two options when creating content: photos and videos. You might not think you are excellent at photography or take videos but with Instagram taking pictures and editing them is incredibly easy. It makes it extremely attractive for those wanting to take professional quality pictures when they feel adept at design.

In this module, you'll see how you can take and post a photo or video and how you can use Instagram's filters for editing it.

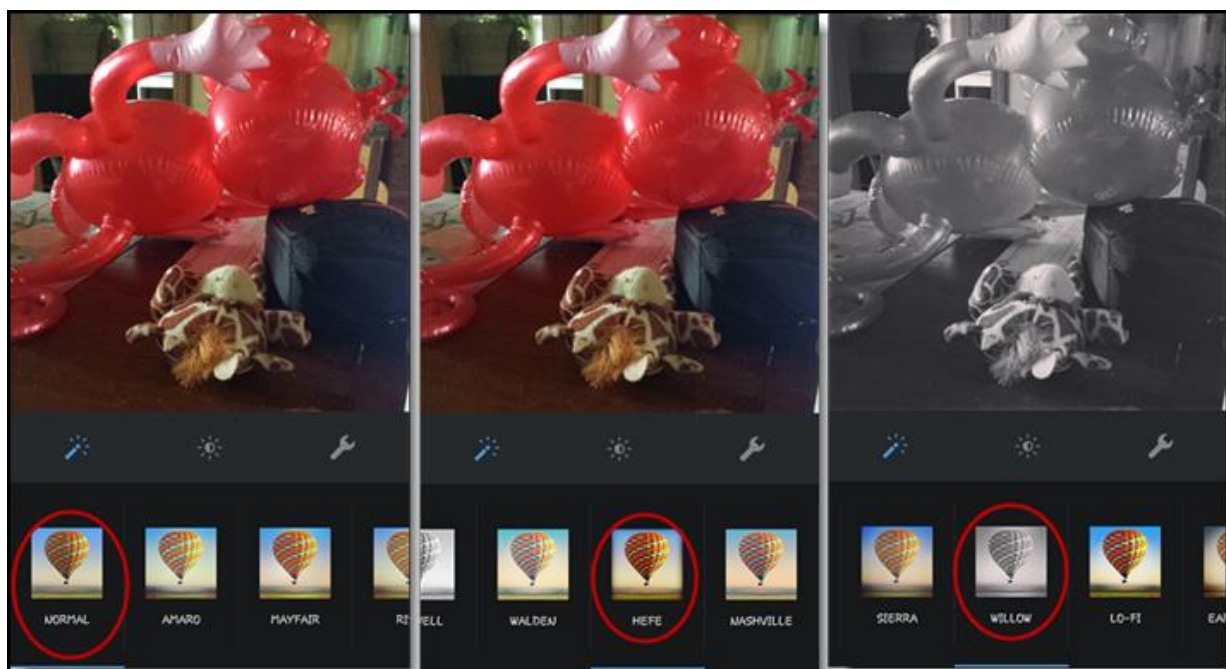
Let's get started. To post a new photo, tap the camera button on the Instagram app screen. To take a photo, tap on the big blue circle. You can adjust the camera to face you as well as add the flash. It's where you can also record the video.



You can also upload photos from your phone or tablet's library by tapping the page (iOS) tab or keypad (android) tab and selecting the photo you want to share.

Once you take your photo or video, you're taken to the editing section. Here you will see the filters you can use as well as a feature called Lux and the Tools button.

You can edit your image or video by applying filters by tapping on the screen button. Then draw in the picture filter you want to use. There are 24 filters from which to choose. They range from coloring to softness of the image. If you tap the name of the filter again, a slider opens. It lets you adjust the strength of the filter. When you finished, tap the arrow to save.



The Lux feature adjusts things like exposure and sharpness of the image. To do this, slide the bar back and forth to find the best look for your image. Tap the check mark when you're done adjusting.

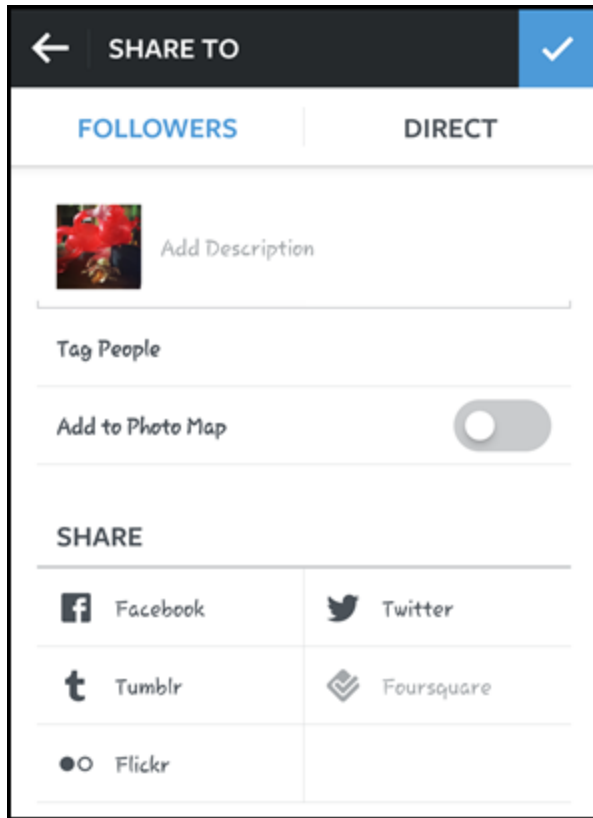
The Tools feature gives you several options. Here you can use the editing tools make your images more professional looking and appealing.

- Straighten to adjust the tilt and rotation of your photo.
- Brightness adjusts the light of the image.
- Contrast adjusts the light and dark values.
- Warmth adjusts the tone of the image from cool or blue tones to red or brown tones.
- Saturation adjusts the intensity of all of the colors in the image.
- Highlight adjusts the amount of the lightest areas.
- Shadows increase or decreases the shadows in the image.
- Vignette darkens the edges of the photo.
- Tilt Shift blurs the outside edges of your image.
- Sharpen focuses the image.

To record a video, tap the recorder tab once. To begin recording, tap and hold the red record button. Tap the arrow to continue to the editing features.

The options for editing videos are similar. You can add filters, adjust the screen size, and choose a cover frame for the video.

Once you are happy with the way your video or image looks, click "Next". On this screen, you can write a caption, add the post to your photomap, or choose to share it on another social network (Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and Foursquare). You also have the option to post the image or send it as a direct message. Click Share when you've completed this step.



Wait. You forgot to add a hashtag or tag someone. Don't worry. You can go to the image on your Profile page or the Home page and tap the ellipses button. Select Edit to update the image.

All of the steps and options might seem overwhelming at first but using Instagram's tools and filters for adding photos and video content is simple and fun even if you don't know what you're doing.

### **Ideas for Types of Photographs to Share**

Now that you understand more about taking and using photos, it's important to grasp the best practices. For example, using just any old photo or image won't help you accomplish your goals. Photos should convey a message that resonates with your viewer. In short, they should help you connect with people on some level. Of course, this will vary depending on your niche, brand, and the action you want them to take.

**To help you get started, here are a few visual content ideas you may want to try:**

- Images of your products or services
- Images of your customers using your products

- Events your brand is participating in
- Images of your employees or customers
- Photos showing how your product is made or specific features of your products
- Images of upcoming promotions, products or events
- Entertaining, funny, or cute images that show your fans you're human.
- Post exclusive deals on your Instagram for your followers. Share an image with instructions on how to use the deal.

**Here are six content strategy tips to help you choose the right images:**

1. Choose images that are cohesive to your brand. The colors, style, and message should all relate to your marketing message and should be cohesive to all your marketing materials.
2. Choose images that elicit an emotional response from your followers or create a buzz. For example, cute, funny, beautiful or inspiring all elicit some type of emotional response.

Here are six content strategy tips to help you choose the right pictures:

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3. Choose images that are cohesive to your brand. The colors, style, and the message should all relate to your marketing message and should be consistent with all your marketing materials.
4. Choose images that elicit an emotional response from your followers or create a buzz. For example, cute, funny, beautiful or inspiring all elicit some emotional response.
5. Follow a theme if possible. It ties all your images together and creates a storyline.
6. Try not to be overly promotional with your photos. Look for creative ways to include your products in your pictures. Share images related to your brand.
7. Create visuals around a text. Use quotes, helpful tips or inspirational thoughts with an appropriate image.
8. Keep the captions short and fresh with hashtags. Ask questions to engage your followers.

You don't have to be a professional photographer to use Instagram for business. But you do have to know what types of images to share and how to keep your audience interested in your company.

## 8 Tips for Leveraging Instagram for Business

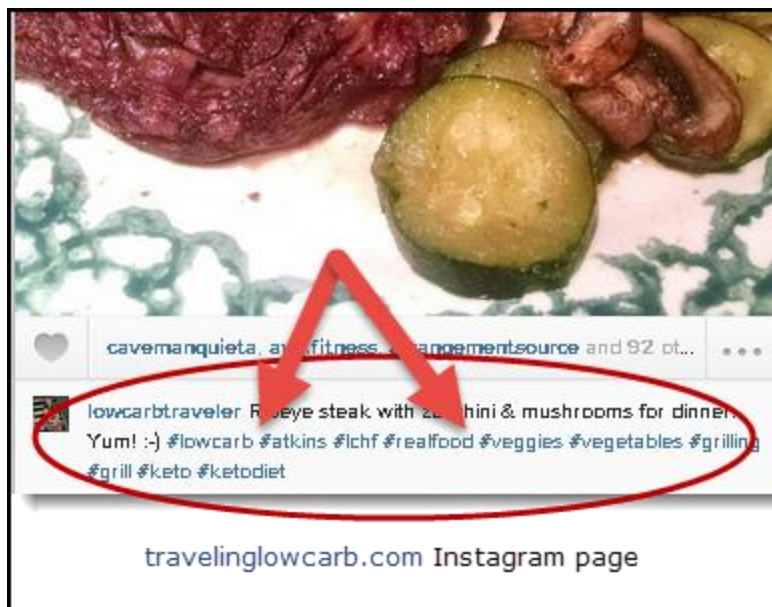


Now you're probably wondering how you can take advantage of Instagram to build your business. Instagram gives you the opportunity to engage and convert leads, partners, and current customers as well as build a long-term loyal customer base.

### 1. **Create a community using an actionable hashtag.**

This strategy is very versatile. It can be utilized across multiple social networks including Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest, just to name a few. Hashtags help with brand recognition, encourage your followers to participate, and help your images reach a broader audience.

Research the most popular or most searched for hashtags with a service like [Iconosquare.com](https://www.iconosquare.com). A few of the more popular hashtags at this time are #throwbackthursday, #tbt, #regram, #nofilter, and #latergram.



### 1. **Build trust among your followers.**

Gain the trust of your followers by providing value and establishing yourself as an expert in your field. Share the proof of your expertise with testimonials before you try to sell anything. For example, Kayla Isines, an Australian personal trainer, often posts individual workouts to her Instagram account. This allows her followers to preview her program before they make the commitment to buy it. Find ways you can offer value to your Instagram followers.



www.kaylaitsines.com Instagram Page

**2. Connect and collaborate with other influencers in your niche.**

Instagram, like the other social platforms has communities in every industry. The key is to reach out to many influencers. The more others see your products in a user's feed the more they will pay attention. Research and connect with Instagram influencers who are a good fit for your products. The influencer and his or her followers will probably have similar interests. This means that the followers are likely to be your potential customers. Consider collaborating with these leading influencers.

**3. Make it a habit to post regularly.**

The key to being successful on Instagram is to be visible. To be seen, you have to be consistent and post frequently. The Instagram feed is constantly refreshing, meaning it's essential to post frequently to stay in your followers' feeds. One way to stay on their minds is to post several times a day. Experiment with different post types daily and at different times of day. Then measure your results to find what works best.

**4. Partner with a good cause that supports your values.**

Promote and share partnerships with a good cause with your followers. Align your company's values with your consumers.

#### **5. Stay relevant to your brand while relating to your followers.**

Think in the mindset of your target market. You likely already have a few buyer personas established and have an idea of who your consumer is and what they like. Try to think about why they are on Instagram. For example, maybe you've discovered your target market likes high tech equipment and tend to follow popular tech brands on Instagram. You sell financial consulting services. Instead of posting pictures of high tech equipment all the time, what you might do instead is occasionally post images of the newest gadget with the caption of how they could own this when they start making better financial decisions. And give a call to action.

#### **6. Promote your Instagram account everywhere.**

Place an Instagram social icon on your homepage and product pages for visitors to connect with you. Connect your Instagram account to your Facebook account to pull in your friends. Run Instagram campaigns across all your social networks. Send out reminders to associates and partners to use your business hashtag and relevant hashtags.

#### **7. Get inspired from others.**

Follow incredible brands such as Charity Water, GoPro, Starbucks, and Taco Bell just to name a few. Follow top brands in your industry or a closely related field. Copy their best strategies with your own ideas. Copy their followers.

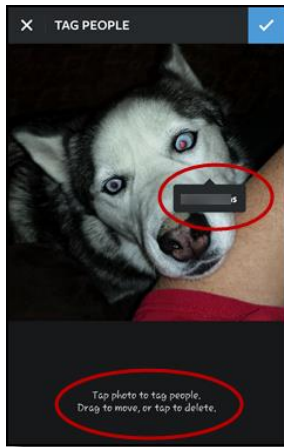
There you have it. Eight ways you should be leveraging Instagram for your business. These tips should help you get off to a good start on Instagram quickly.

### **The No-Nonsense Approach to Finding and Converting Customers on Instagram**

No doubt, about it, Instagram is a fast-growing resource for businesses to grow their business. You've already gotten some ideas for what kinds of content to share on Instagram and how you can leverage it for your marketing. Now it's time to build the following to make it all happen. In this module, you get ideas on how to get new followers.

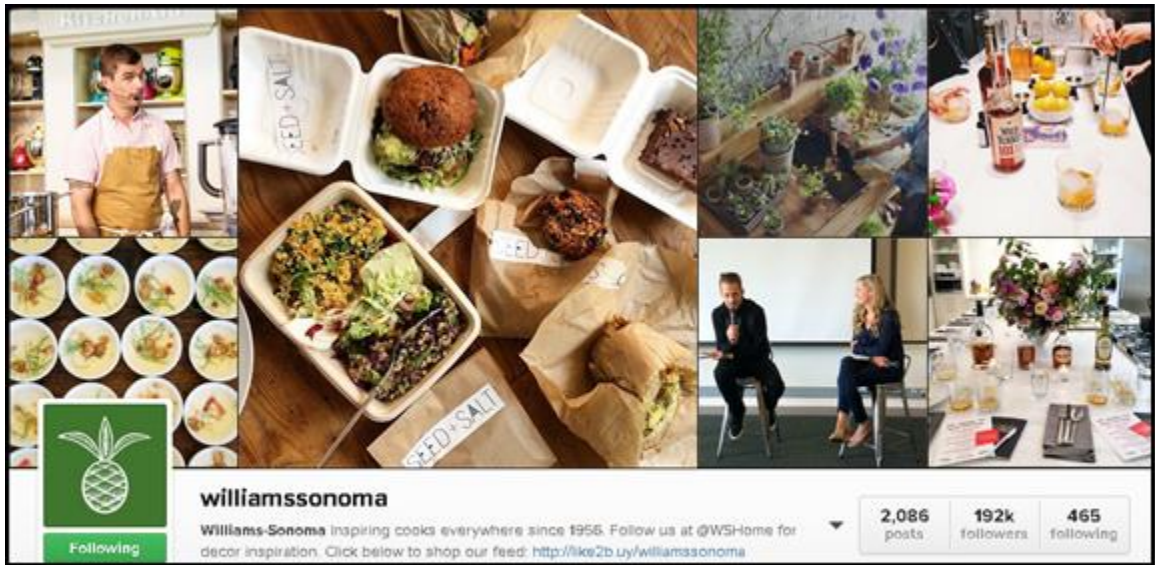
- Connect with your followers on other social media sites. Interact with them on Facebook and Twitter. Learn about them through their profiles. Keep in touch with them on other social media sites.
- Interact with other Instagram users. Tag other users in your photos or send them private messages. Tag them before you post an image or a video. Tap the Tag People option before sharing it. Then, tap in the photo where you want to add a

tag. Type in the person's name and add the name to create a tag. Once you share the photo, other users can tap the photo to see who's been tagged.



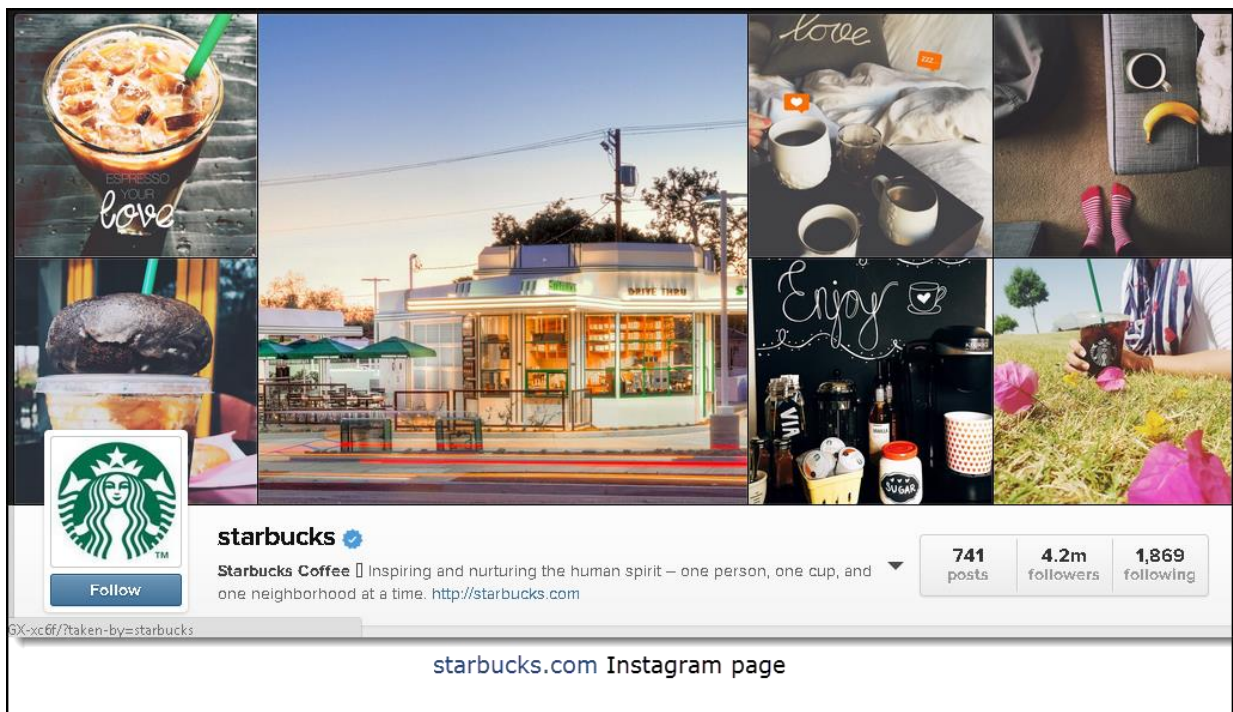
- Make use of the hashtag, location, and Photos of You tabs to find other people who have liked, added, or shared similar images as well as your own images. Interact with these new people by liking and commenting on their images. Hashtags help other users find your content on Instagram, which allows up to 30 hashtags in a post or comment. Use fewer hashtags for quality responses.
- Create contests to find potential clients. Contests are very popular among users. To get new followers from your contest, encourage customers to share the content using a specific hashtag for the contest or offer.
- Offer exclusives to get new followers and inspire loyalty. Do this by offering a sneak peek at a new product to your Instagram followers only. Offer discounts only your Instagram followers get.
- Encourage your followers to take action with enticing product images or events. The key is to create images that evoke a strong emotion in your followers. For example, if you are in a food industry, take pictures that make viewers hungry and their mouths water. [Williams Sonoma](#) does this well with images of food, parties, and decorating using their products.





WilliamsSonoma.com Instagram page

- Let your followers create their own content for you. Create opportunities by running contests or creating collaborative projects where users take pictures using your theme or motif. Starbucks partially built its Instagram followers by asking customers to make and share artwork with Starbucks cups.



starbucks.com Instagram page

- Be personable and likeable by creating and showing your company's face, whether it is your own or that of a spokesperson. The face of your company

should be on your profile and in content that you share. Interact with your followers as often as possible.

- Build relationships and a sense of community with your followers. Share content that triggers emotions, asks questions, or addresses a specific problem. People feel more comfortable buying from brands they are a part of and trust.

As you can see, finding and converting followers into customers is a lot like any marketing you do. Build relationships with your group. Take advantage of being a part of influencer's networks. Share relevant and fun content that readers want to see.

### **No More Excuses on What to Do Now**

Take a deep breath. I know this is a lot to take in.

So far, you have seen how Instagram is perfect for almost every type of business to begin sharing and building relationships with their customers. It's an easy to use mobile app you can use anywhere you are.

### **To get the most out of your Instagram account, these tips need to be kept in mind:**

- Instagram's photo tools help you resize images and add filters to make your images look inviting.
- Your posts should be related to your business or brand when possible. However, occasionally you can include images, which are related to your niche as well as an additional common interest. For example, if you have a catering business and one of your employees was caught in a funny photo while working, share it with a caption that highlights one of your company mottos such as, "The ability to see humor in situations is a big part of celebrating even the smallest, unexpected events."
- Giveaways and promotions are a great way to drive more people to your profile and get followers.
- Keep in touch with your followers. Reply to users' comments when they comment on your photos.
- Embed your Instagram posts on your website. This can be done with the desktop Web version of Instagram's embed code.



- Be sure to share your Instagram posts on Facebook and other social networking platforms. Posting your content on several platforms is a great way to build all your individual social media presence.

So far, you've learned how set up your Instagram for business account. You've also discovered how to take photos and videos that people will want to share. The next step is to decide how you want to incorporate these strategies in Instagram. Then start practicing the techniques to fine-tune your skills while interacting with your followers.

My Main Goal is to grow a valuable Blogging company. I hope this information can be a useful starting point for you in your Blogging.

### **You Might find these Beginner Blogging topics of Interest:**

[Essential Steps for Starting a New Blog](#)

[What's the Goal of your Blog](#)

[Blogging: Exactly what are your Benefits](#)

[How to Encourage Social Sharing of your Blog Posts](#)

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