



INSTAGRAM FOR POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART 1 - GETTING STARTED

Welcome

Building a connection

Defining your mission

Getting set up

Knowing your surfaces

PART 2 - BEST PRACTICES

Feed

Stories

IGTV

Direct

PART 3 - SAFETY AND SECURITY

Passwords

Two-factor authentication

Safety in the comments

Block, Report, Restrict

PART 4 - INSIGHTS

Finding your insights

Deeper stories insights

FAQs



GETTING STARTED

BUILD A CONNECTION WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

Tell your story. Engage your constituents and the world in a visually compelling way by unlocking Instagram's ability to bring people closer to the people and things they love.

Around the world, public figures, political movements and politicians are finding new ways to reach large new audiences on Instagram through photos, videos, stories and messages.

Social media has tremendous power to engage people in politics - especially those who don't consume traditional political messaging and media.

Instagram is the place to showcase the passion that drives your policies, and the personality behind the politics. This guide will help you do it.



Your community is on Instagram:

1 BILLION

People a month are using
Instagram

Instagram data, June 2018

500 MILLION

Daily active users of Instagram
Stories every day

Instagram data, January 2019

BUILDING A CONNECTION

Instagram's unique set of creative tools are the perfect canvas to tell your story and help your audience get closer to you - and the policies you stand for.



Your authentic voice. Whether your account is followed by millions internationally, or by constituents at the local level, and whether you're posting on a nonpartisan government account or a deeply personal political profile, the key to success on Instagram is the same - speaking with a consistent, genuine, authentic voice that engages your followers, creates a connection with them, and builds a relationship that lasts. Your audience is on Instagram every day, and they want to hear from you.



DEFINING YOUR MISSION

Define your account's core purpose, goals, and voice. What are you trying to achieve on Instagram and what story are you trying to tell each day?

-What aspects of your work and personality will make for posts that resonate with your community?

-How will you make people aware of the key policy issues and programs you want to highlight?

-How much of your personal life are you comfortable showing on social media?

-How often will you post, and who will help create a day-to-day content strategy for the account?



On Instagram, showcase your personality while engaging people in the policies you're fighting for:

-People on Instagram want to interact with posts that tell a story, whether it's about your work or personal life.

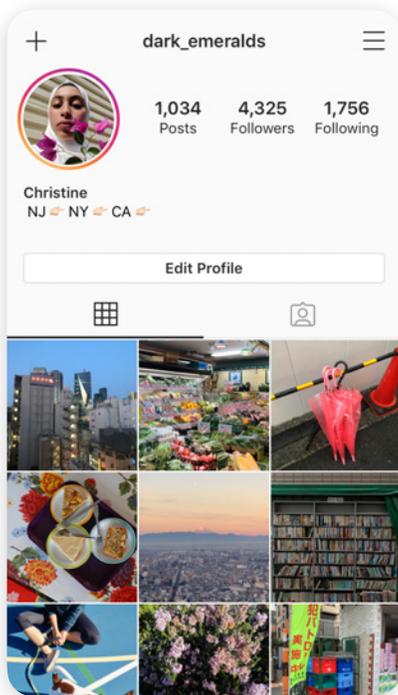
-When writing captions, remember to speak plainly and directly, and always guard against using government or press-release speak.

-Remember, you're a person (who happens to be a politician) using Instagram, not a politician using Instagram as a dumping ground for announcements.

-When managing an account, think about how you and your friends use Instagram every day. Remember the tone, feel and look of posts that resonate with you.

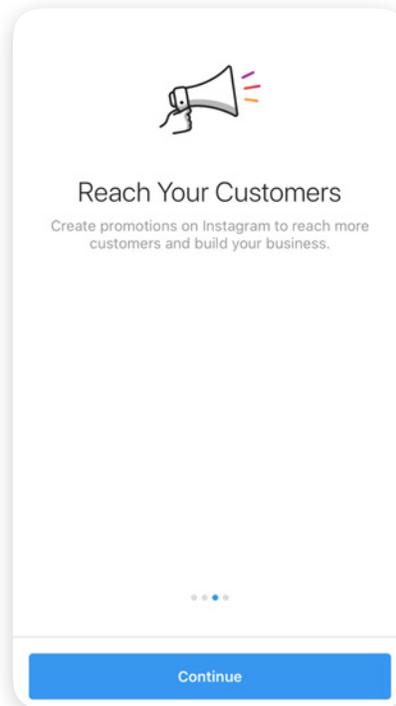
GETTING SET UP

Choose an account type, start posting, and promote your Instagram account everywhere your audience can find you.



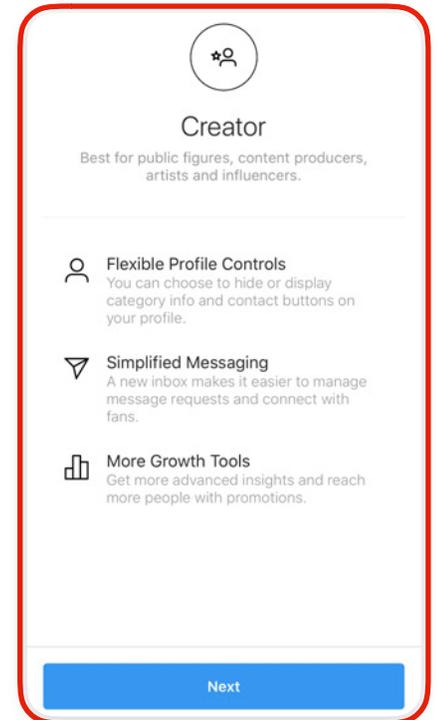
Personal

The standard personal Instagram account. We don't recommend this for public figures or institutions



Business

Ideal for companies and institutions, featuring better profile controls and user insights



Creator

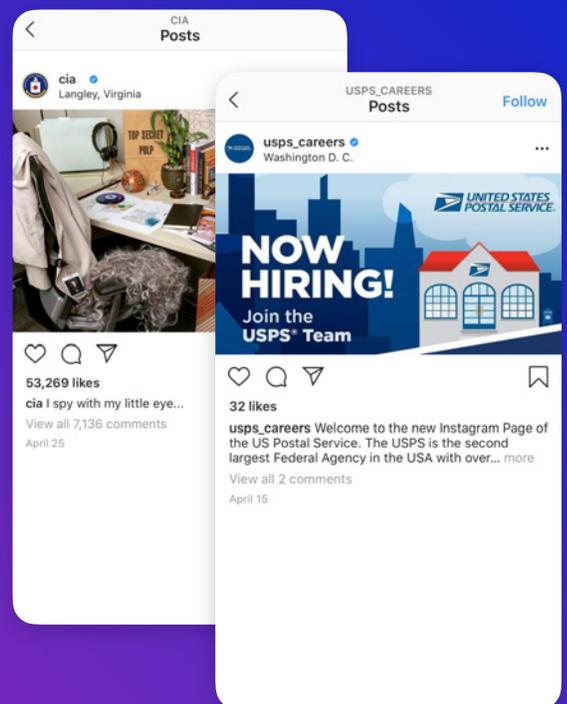
Ideal for politicians and public figures, with unique profile appearance and even more advanced user insights

DEBUTING YOUR INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT

-Plan to have a week's worth of content ready for Feed and Stories posts once you open the account - and keep a weekly content plan as part of your workflow.

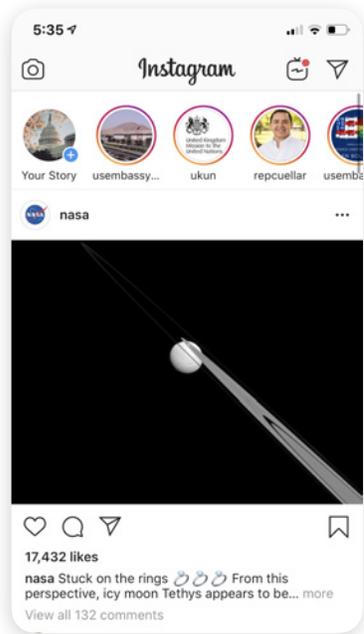
-Announce your account's debut on other social media such as Facebook and Twitter - link to your account and crosspost your content.

-Let friendly accounts and agencies know you're debuting, and have them share your handle on their posts.



KNOW YOUR SURFACES

One app, infinite ways to share. Make an impact, tell your story and connect with your audience in uniquely different ways across the Instagram platform. We'll delve more into each one on the following pages in this section.



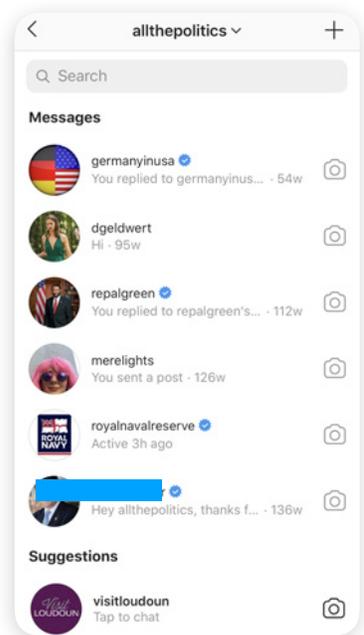
Feed

Feed is the place to post content you want to stay visible on your profile, and to people scrolling through their timelines.



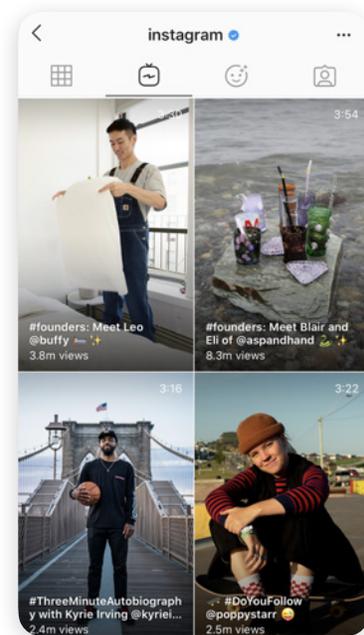
Stories

In the moment and ephemeral, Stories posts stay visible for 24 hours. Enhance them with a suite of interactive and visual tools.



Direct

Instagram's private messaging inbox. Read messages from your constituents or followers here, and choose how you're notified of new mail.



IGTV

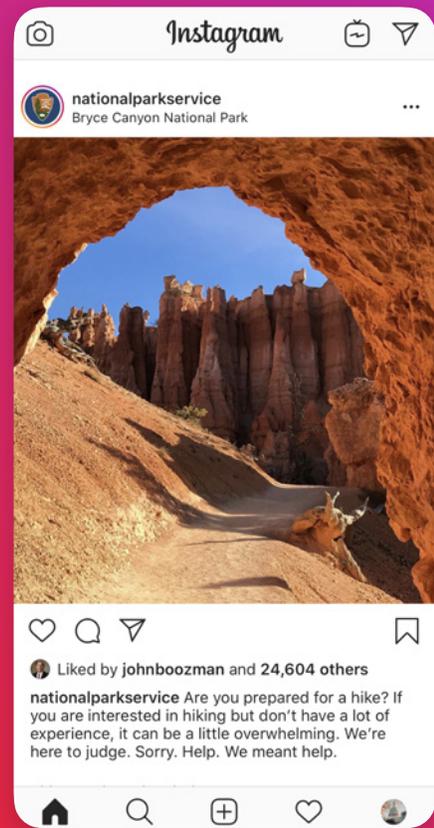
IGTV is the place for posting long-form video on Instagram. Post videos up to 60 minutes long, and easily post previews to your Feed.

INSTAGRAM BEST PRACTICES

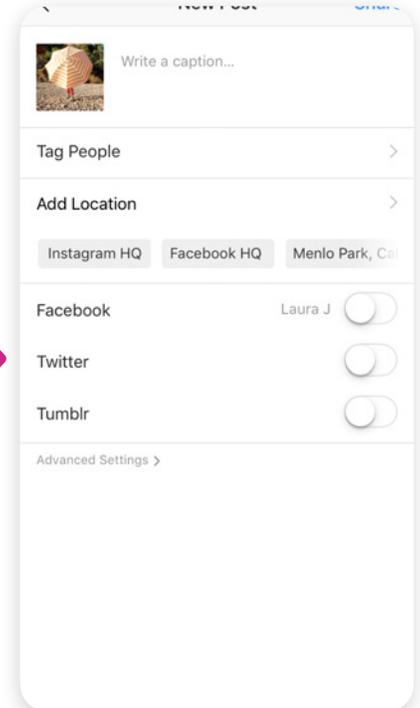
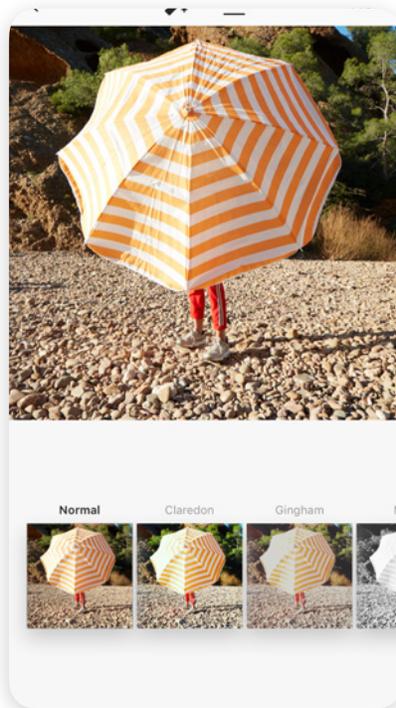
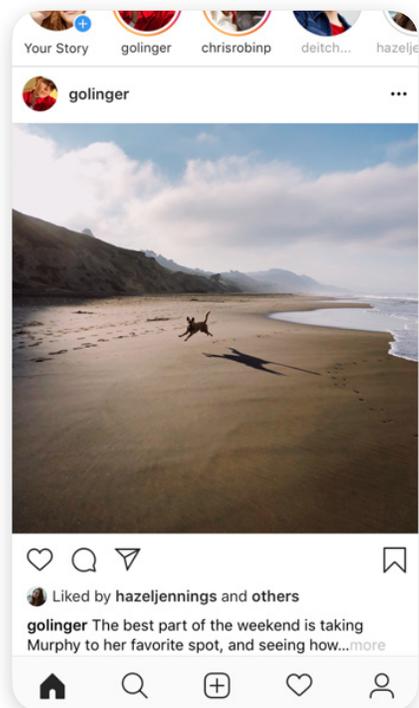
FEED

Share what matters to you most.

A striking photo from an event on the road. A laid-back moment at home with the family. A clip from your last speech. Or a simple graphic based on a powerful quote. Instagram's feed is the place to share who you are and what you believe with the people you want to reach.



Let's get started with some Feed basics



Step 1:

Hit the plus sign and select any photo or video to post - or post a series of images in one post, up to 10 items.

Step 2:

Choose a photo filter to set the mood, or a cover image for your video.

Step 3:

Caption your photo, tag other accounts, and set your location. Then post! You can easily crosspost to Facebook too.

FEED



Captions

The place to fully embrace your voice and express yourself. Making your account feel like an extension of your personality is your best bet for connecting with your followers. Each caption should try to capture your own energy, and complement your visuals. In other words, don't just describe the photo - tell a story.

There's no ideal length to a caption: Sometimes short and snappy will do the trick, and other times your audience will enthusiastically read a multi-paragraph writeup. The important thing is make sure your authentic voice shines through.

Hashtags & Location tags

Using hashtags helps audiences interested in a certain topic find you more easily, and adding them increases the discoverability of your content and account. Use them in moderation - adding too many to a caption can make your account look cluttered and spammy.

Similarly, tagging your location on Feed posts helps people find your content and see what you're up to. Tagging small towns and local businesses is a great way to show your involvement in your local community, and connection to people there.



FEED



Multi-item posts

When there are several great photos or videos from the same day or event worth posting at once, group them all in one post using the multi-post feature. People will want to swipe through them all, increasing their engagement with your account. It's a good idea to add "swipe left" or an arrow to your caption to remind people there are more items to see.

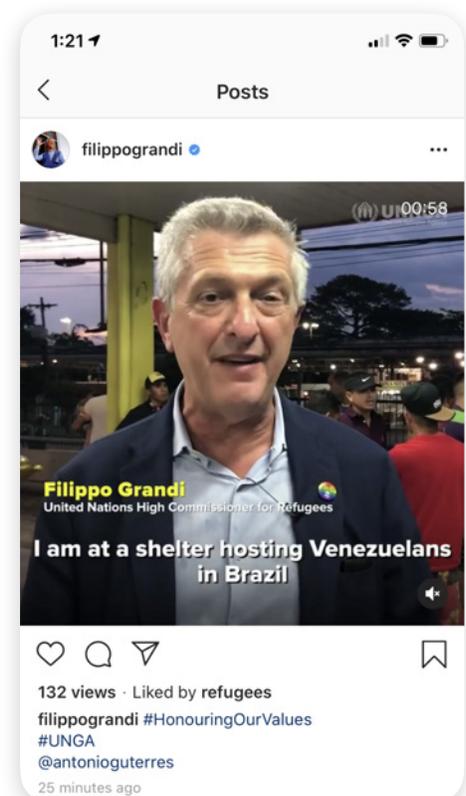
This approach is also handy when you need to showcase a number of different people or stakeholders who attended a single event.

Videos

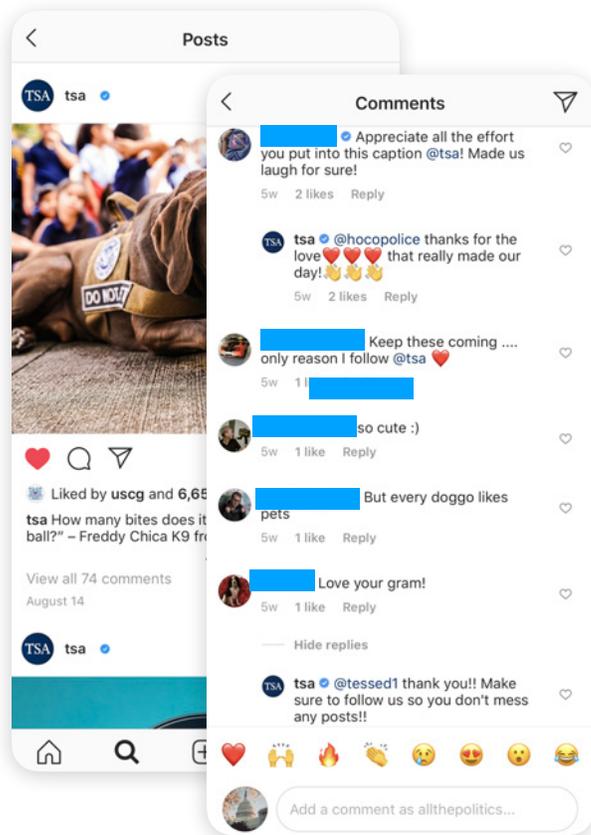
Videos in the Feed can be up to a minute long, and can be posted in either landscape or square format. Remember to pick a cover thumbnail during the upload process - this will be what your viewers see first while they're scrolling (many videos start with a frame of black, so be careful to avoid automatically posting a black thumbnail to your Feed).

Subtitles

A significant percentage of viewers watch videos with the sound off. As well, local accessibility laws may require government accounts to caption their videos. That's why it's always a great idea to add captions or subtitles. Any desktop editing software or mobile captioning app will suit your needs here.



FEED



Comments

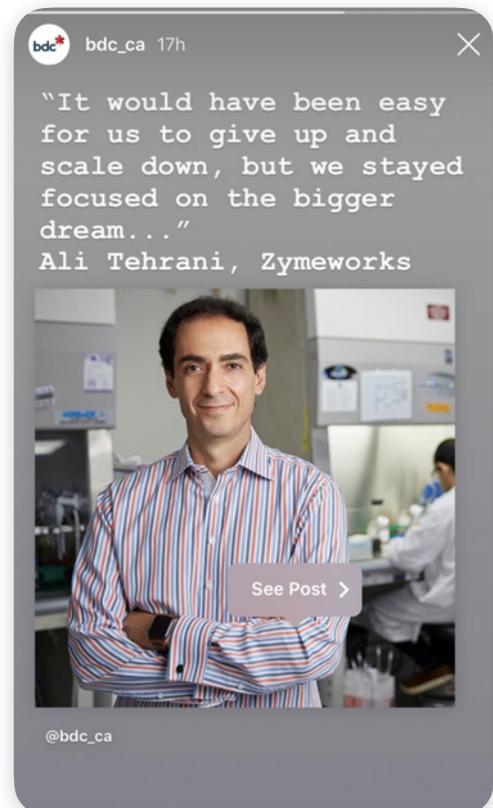
Going into the comments section of your posts to answer questions or thank people for their feedback is a great way to boost engagement and build goodwill for yourself, your organization or your Instagram account. Even a short "thank you!" can make a commenter's day.

Of course, you should never feel obligated to argue with critics or trolls in your comments section. Focus on engaging with those posting constructive comments or criticism, which helps build a safer online community on your profile.

Previewing Feed posts on Stories

Give your feed posts an extra lift by sharing them to your Story. Just click the paper airplane icon under your post, then customize the image any way you'd like - with extra text, graphics, or even by covering up the image as a strategic teaser. Your followers will be able to click on the Story post to see your Feed content.

There's more to come about posting great Stories in the next section.



STORIES

Be Yourself

Instagram Stories **is the place to share what's happening in the moment**, speak in a personal voice, and have authentic conversations with the people you want to reach. Make the most of Stories to create fun content people will keep coming back to watch.

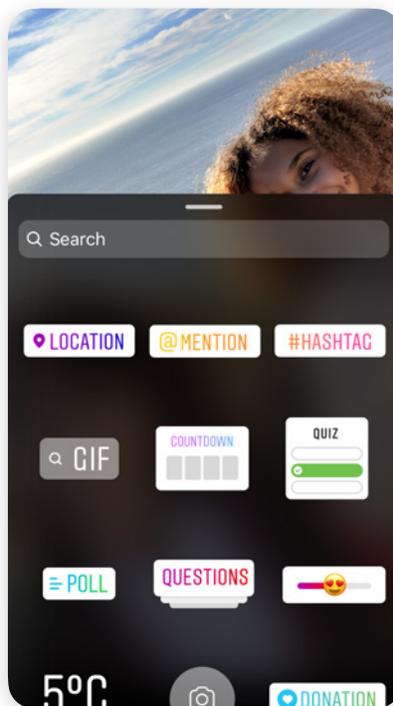


Your Stories stay active for 24 hours before disappearing. Here's how they work:



Step 1:

To post a story, tap your profile pic on the home screen, or swipe right. From there, take a pic or video, or swipe up to choose from your library.



Step 2:

Choose from a variety of stickers, GIFs, emojis and customizing features to better draw in and connect with your audience.



Step 3:

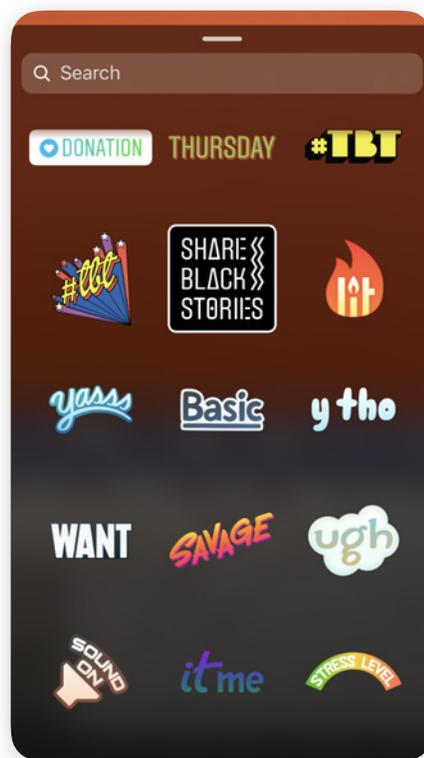
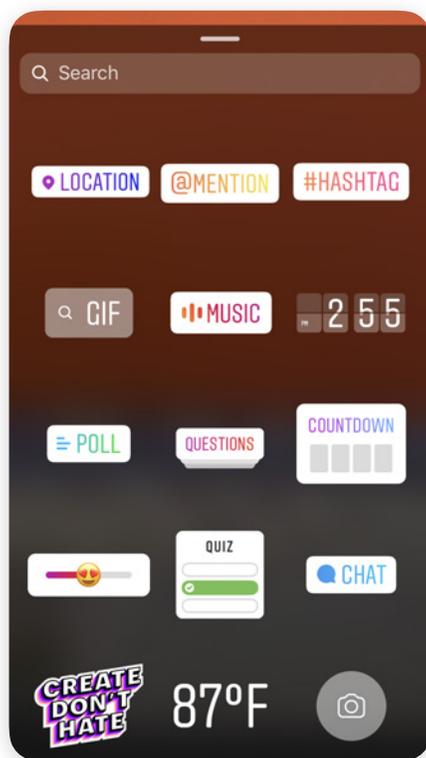
Caption your photo, tag other accounts, and set your location. Then post! You can easily crosspost to Facebook too.

USING STORIES STICKERS

Your Stories screen is a blank canvas, and stickers are the amazing and versatile graphics that help you communicate in an interactive, direct and personal way. Here's an overview of how they work, and how to get the most out of them:

The Sticker Tray:

Tapping the 🗨️ icon once you've added a photo or video to your story brings up the full array of stickers to choose from. Some are designed to promote interaction, some help your account be discovered by new audiences, and some are purely meant for fun!



Location, @Mention and #Hashtag

These three stickers are essential to helping you grow your account and connect with the people you represent. People browsing Instagram by location or hashtag will have a higher chance of coming across your profile when you've used these stickers, and just like we saw in Feed posts, tagging a location demonstrates your engagement with your community.

Similarly, @mentioning other accounts will encourage them to share your posts to their audience - which in turn helps you get discovered.



USING STORIES STICKERS

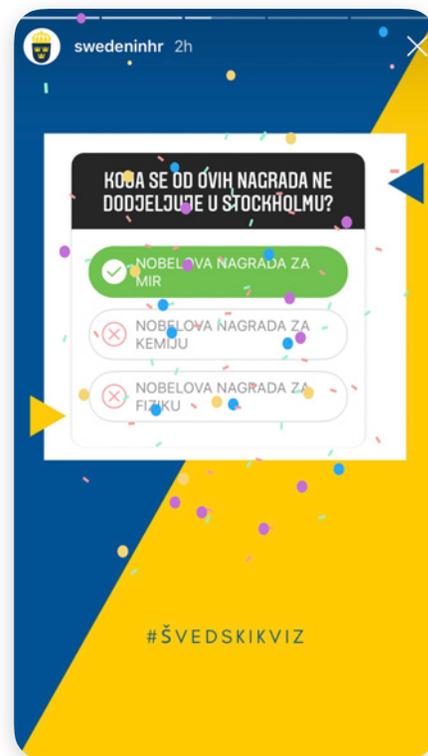
Get your audience actively engaged in your **Stories posts** with the versatile Questions, Poll and Quiz stickers.



The Questions sticker is a perfect way to speak directly to people on your terms. Take questions formally on any topic you want - or ask your audience one! Then share answers and replies back to your Story at your own pace, either with short videos or with text and images.

The Poll sticker allows you to ask questions with 2 possible answers, and to share the results after 24 hours. And the multiple-choice Quiz helps you find out how well constituents know you, the issues you care about or the bills you're working on.

All three are a terrific way to get your audience interested and participating in your IG presence.



BUILDING A GREAT STORY

Tell us something we don't know

When posting to Stories, always try to create a step-by-step journey that engages your audience and keeps them curious. For example, instead of posting a shot of someone giving a speech at a podium, use Stories to convey that speech's information in a more visually appealing way, using Instagram's stickers and tools to build interest and drive engagement. This gets your audience directly involved in the message you're trying to communicate.



Take your audience on a quick journey they'll want to tap through - beginning, middle and end.



Step 1:

Create curiosity with a compelling image and a question for your followers



Step 2:

Add context and information. Using interactive stickers is a great way to keep people engaged.



Step 3:

Make your point and call your audience to action - in this case asking them to "swipe up" to your website.

GOING LIVE FROM STORIES

Broadcasting live is a unique experience that helps draw your audience closer to your day-to-day job in politics and government, or helps you showcase a more personal side of yourself people might not get to see.



Do it live!

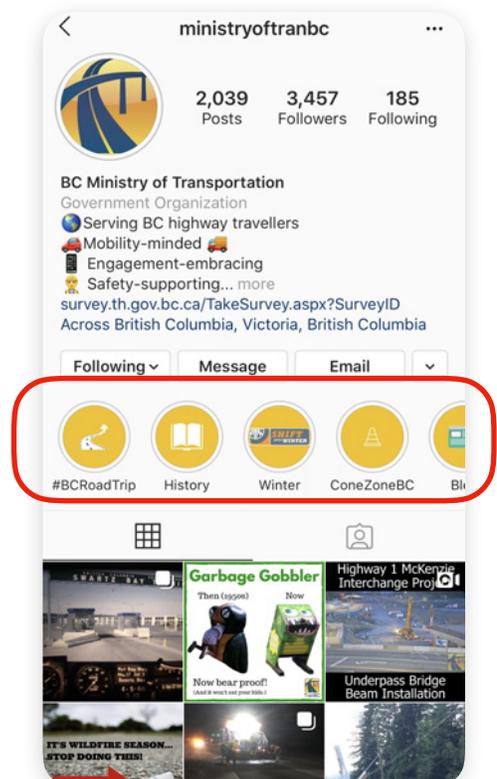
- Promote your broadcast in advance
- Make sure you have a strong wifi connection
- Use Live with a friend! This is an engaging way to invite constituents to ask questions, and also a great chance to invite other highly followed accounts to join your live video, and reach their followers too.
- You can also save and post your Live session so your followers can view it later.

Stories Highlights

Your Stories "expire" and disappear after 24 hours, but you can always re-post them as Highlight" at the top of your profile.

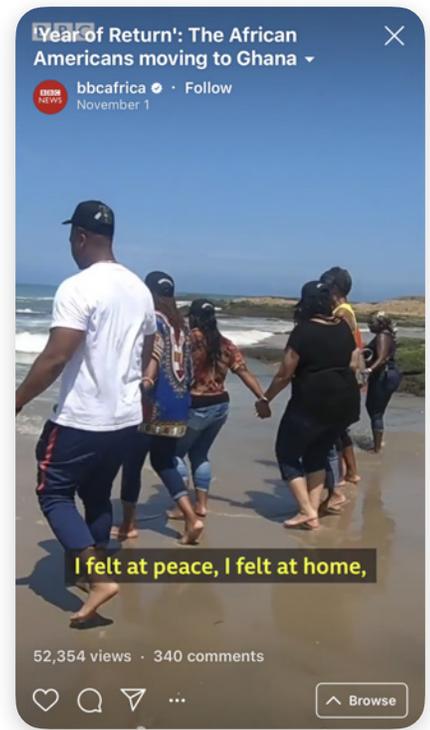
How do you make sure they're saved? In your profile menu, select "Archive," then tap the 3 dots, then "Settings." Selecting "Save to Archive" keeps them in a private archive for you.

From there, tap the + Highlight button on your profile to create permanent displays of your most engaging and popular Stories, grouped by theme, date or anything else you choose.



IGTV

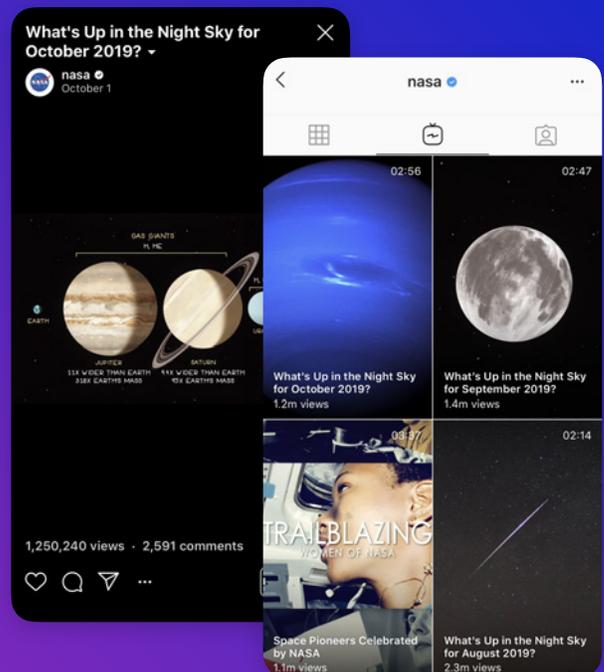
The IGTV section of your profile is the place to go beyond the soundbite and showcase your depth and creativity in videos up to 60 minutes long. It's also an ideal place to post full-length speeches or panel appearances. Shoot and post either vertically or in landscape mode.



CREATOR FEATURE: @NASA

Take a look at some of the versatile ways @NASA uses IGTV to showcase its work and subject matter, in landscape and vertical videos.

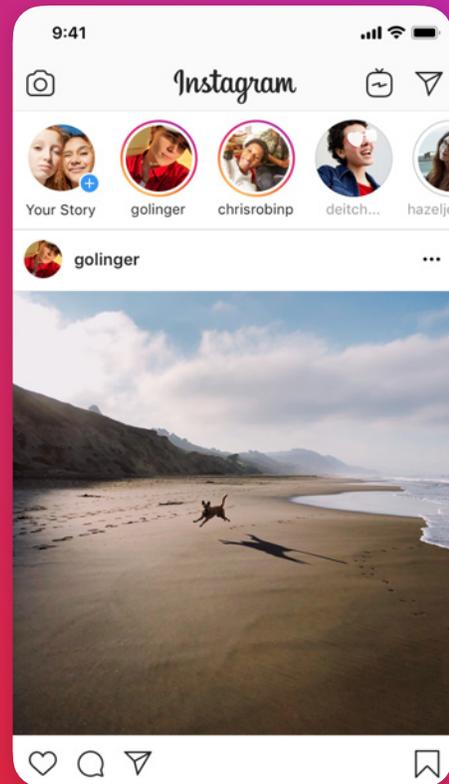
To find someone's IGTV videos, click the  logo above their profile content. Or hit the  icon at the top right of your Instagram home screen to see featured videos and search for an account.



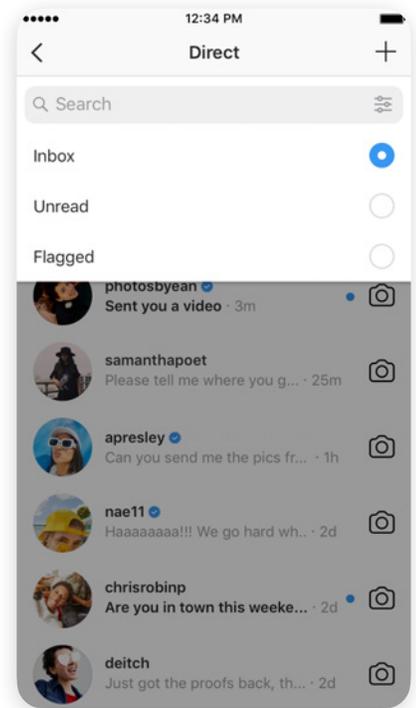
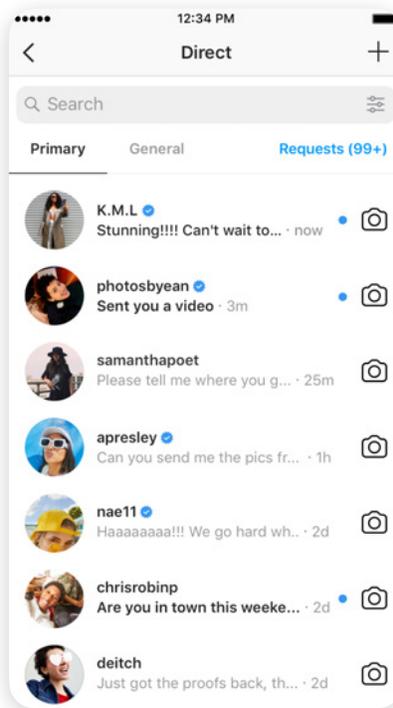
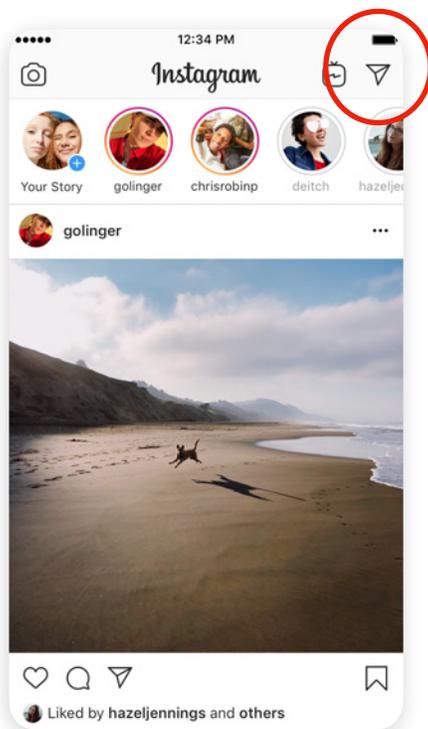
DIRECT

Stay in touch

The Direct inbox is where your followers and constituents can send you messages and start a conversation, and Instagram gives you the flexibility to manage those interactions in the way that works best for you. Set aside a regular time to answer messages, triage your inbox, or turn off notifications completely - the choice is yours.



Getting the most out of your DMs - or leaving them be.



Access:

Tap the paper airplane to access your messages.

Sort:

If you're using a Creator account, you can easily sort messages from friends into a Primary inbox.

Set Notifications:

You can regulate exactly what kind of notifications you get in your Settings menu.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

SAFETY & SECURITY

Protect yourself and your account.

Instagram is committed to making our platform a safe environment for people to connect in a positive and rewarding way.

Our account management best practices help keep your profile safe and secure. 2-Factor Authentication shields your account from hackers and bad actors. And advanced comment controls let you filter out profanity and abuse.

In this section we'll go over some basic tools to keep yourself safe and secure on Instagram, and keep your profile a positive place for your audience to gather and share ideas.



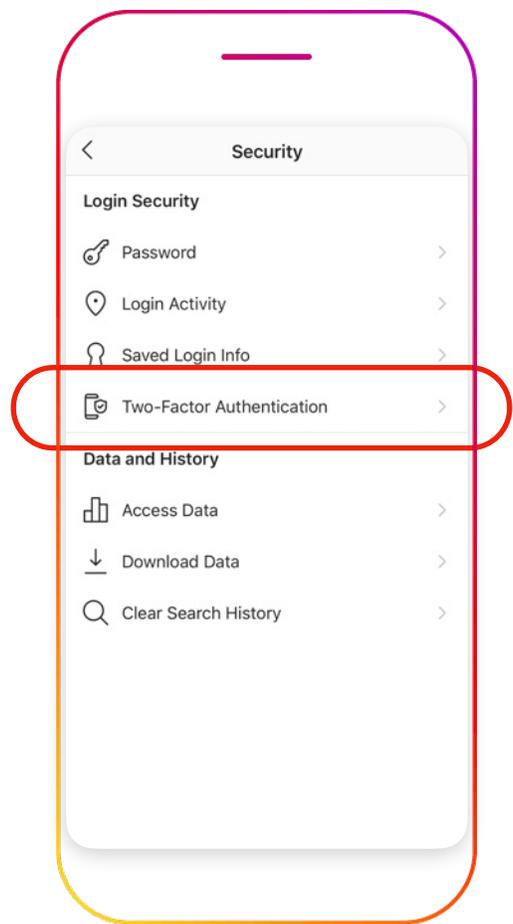
SECURING YOUR ACCOUNT: SET A STRONG PASSWORD



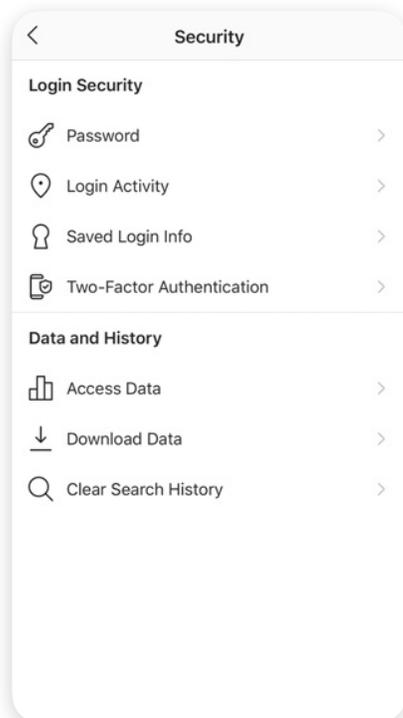
- Passwords help protect your private information and social media accounts. Some basic tips:
- Don't share your passwords with other people.
- Make sure your password is at least 6 characters long, and uses a combination of numbers, letters, and special characters like punctuation marks.
- Avoid passwords like your name, your date of birth or an easy combination such as "123456".
- Pick a password that is different from other passwords you use elsewhere on the internet.

SAFETY & SECURITY

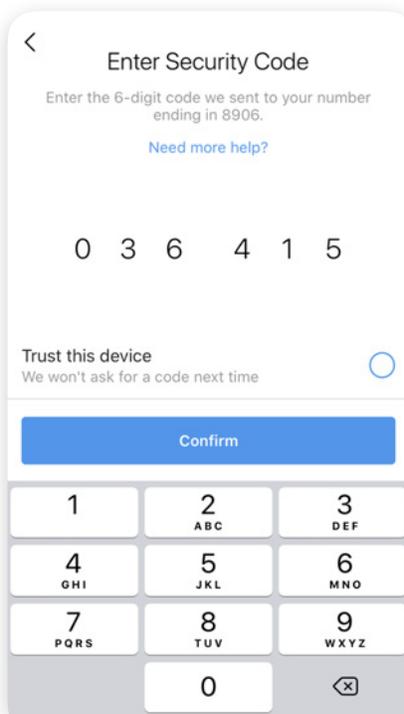
Activate two-factor authentication to help keep your account safe from hackers and phishing. When you turn on two-factor authentication, you'll be asked to enter a special security code each time you try to access your account from a new computer, phone or browser. You only need to enter a code once per new device. Here's how it works:



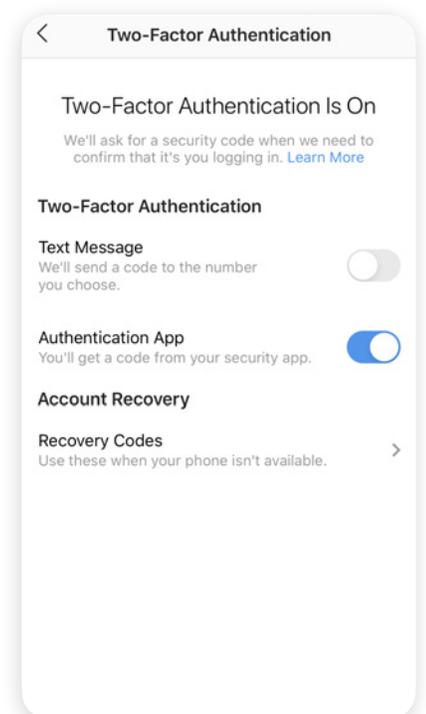
Setting up 2-Factor Authentication for one user, or for teams managing an account:



Go to Settings - Security - Two-Factor Authentication to easily set up an added layer of security on your device.



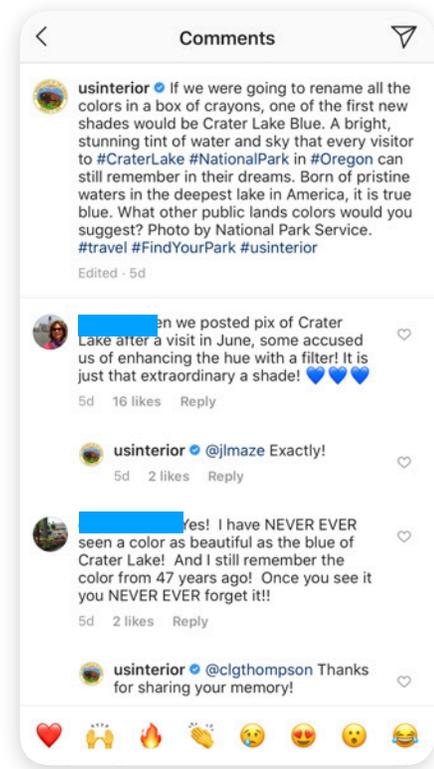
When a new device tries to log in to the account, the account manager is sent a one-time code that must be entered before access is granted.



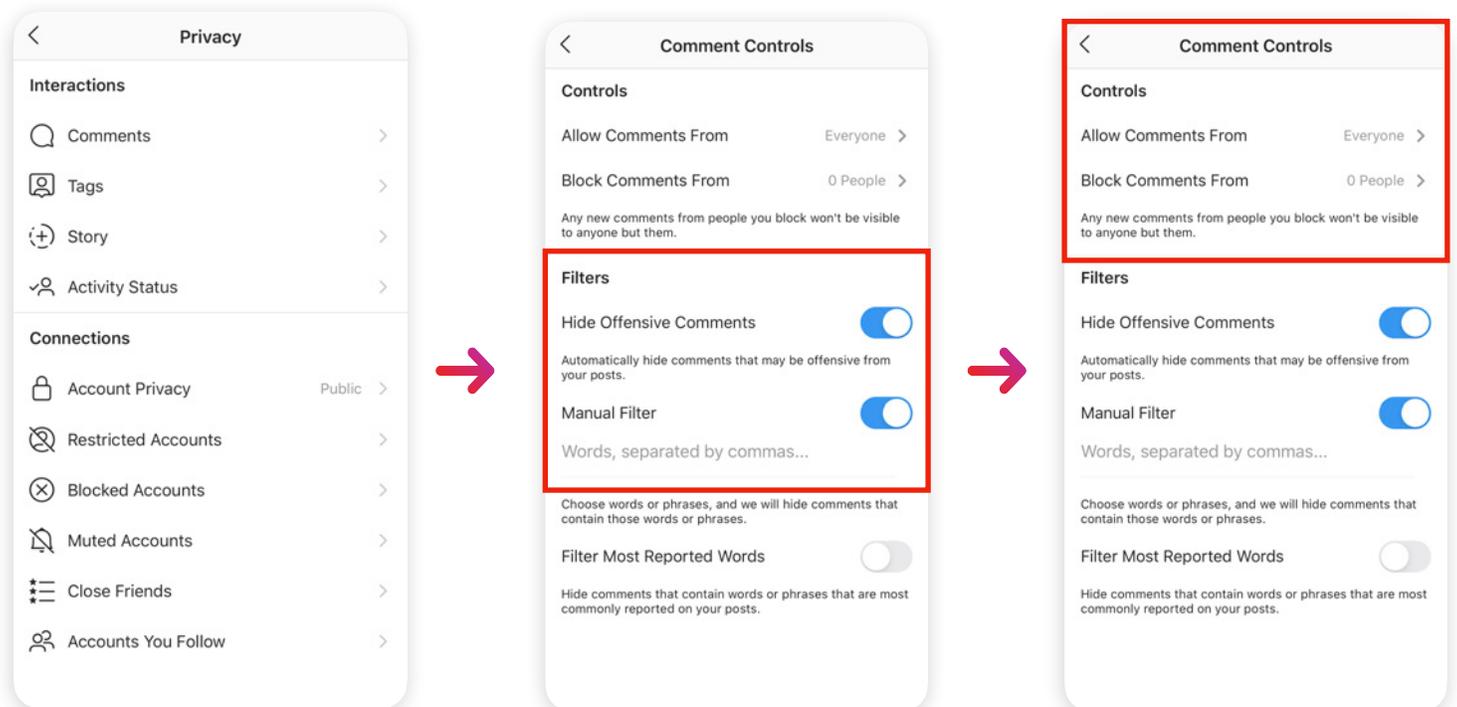
If your account is being managed by a team, you can also use an authenticator app such as Duo Mobile to streamline the process.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Keep the comments safe. Replying to your followers and constituents in the comments section of your posts can be a rewarding experience that creates meaningful connections. But we also know the comments section isn't always the most positive place. That's why Instagram's safety settings include several useful controls for keeping it free from profanity, vulgarity spam and abuse. They're easy to use and can be refined & customized anytime.



Filter comments by keyword, user, or by turning off comments on a given post



Step 1:

In your Settings, tap Privacy, then tap Comments.

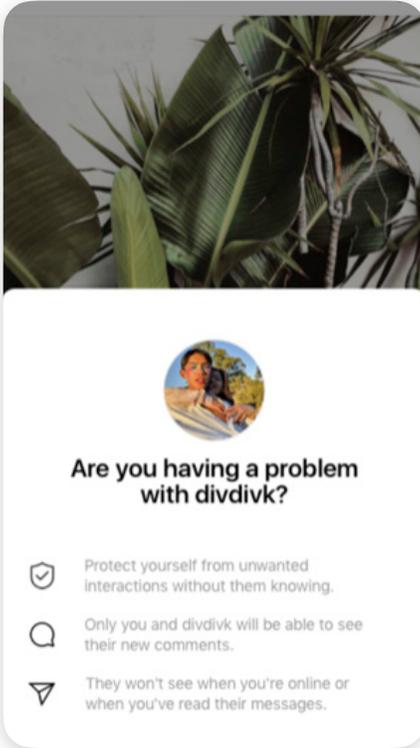
Step 2:

You can toggle "Hide Offensive Comments" and also manually add keywords to block.

Step 3:

You can also choose to allow comments from specific users only, or turn off commenting per post.

SAFETY & SECURITY

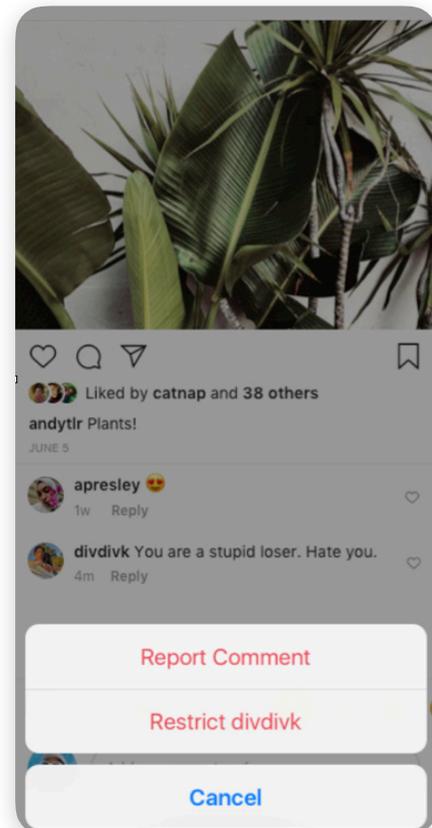


Block, report or restrict

Instagram's settings put you in control of who you allow to see and comment on your posts. Tap the three dots at the top on any user's profile to bring up a list of options, including the ability to Block, Report or Restrict any user.* Choose the option that best suits your needs, and keep your profile protected.

Reporting from comments

You can also take action against bullies, trolls and spam directly in the comments section of your posts. Swipe left on a comment to reveal the exclamation point icon. Then tap to report the comment or restrict the commenter. You can report an offensive comment for a variety of reasons, including if it's abuse, harassment, hate speech or spam. If you choose to "restrict" a user, their comments become invisible to people looking at your posts.

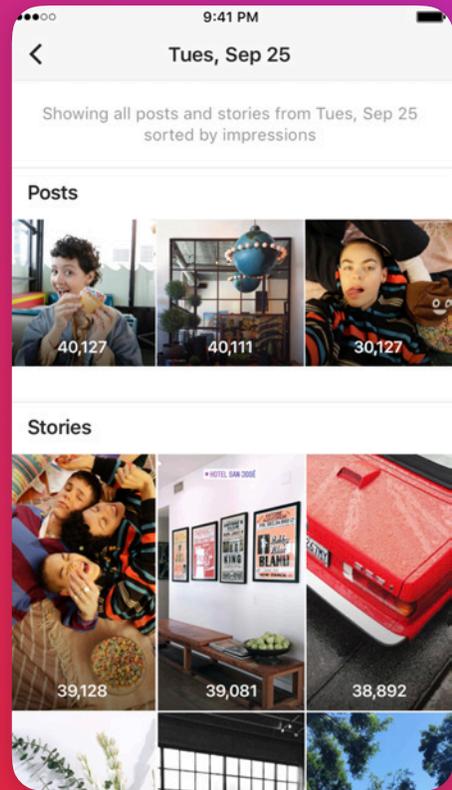


USING INSTAGRAM INSIGHTS

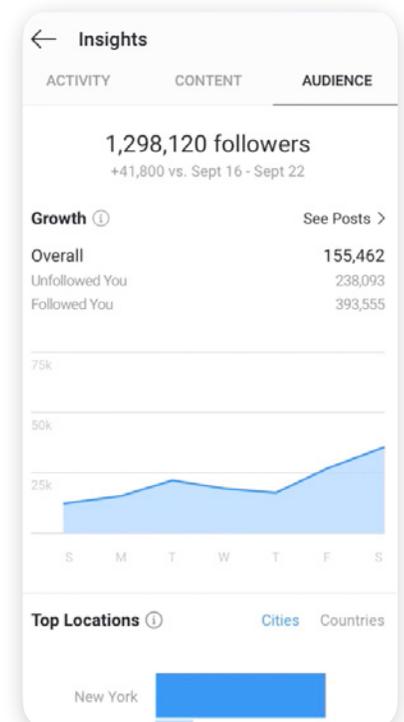
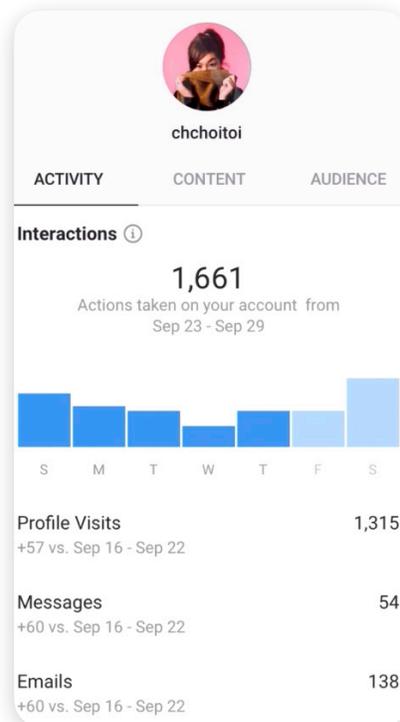
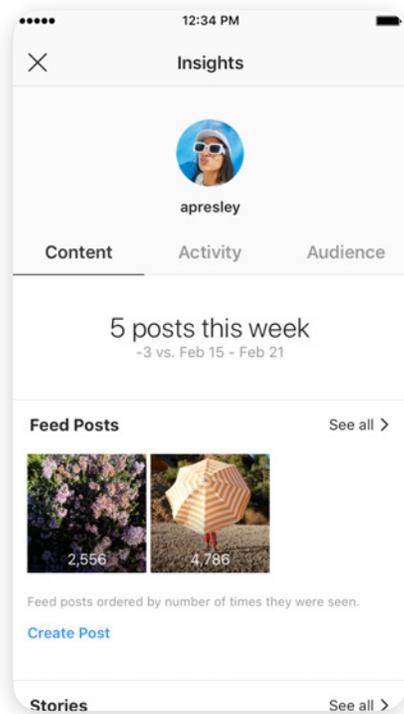
INSIGHTS

"How did that post do?"

Instagram's Insights tool helps you quickly and easily understand how your posts are performing. Get an overview on your audience's basic demographics, or dive deep into advanced Stories insights. Using these features helps you get the best sense of how your message, policies and posts are resonating with your constituents and followers.



Tapping the icon brings up your insights information in 3 sections:



Content:

How did each of your posts do? See how your audience is interacting with you on both Stories and Feed.

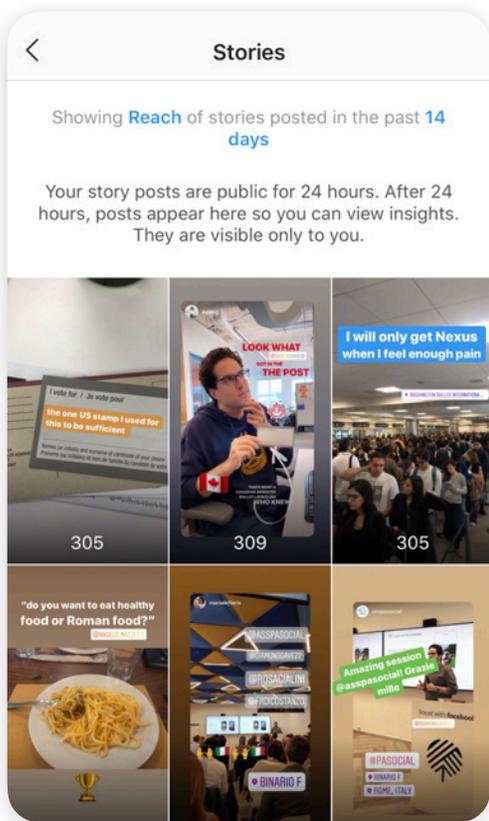
Activity:

See how often people are visiting your profile, and how many people are discovering it through the hashtags you've used.

Audience:

Who are your followers? How old are they, and where are they from? Find out here, and track your audience growth day-by-day too.

INSIGHTS



A deep dive into Stories insights

Take a closer look at exactly how your audience is engaging with the Stories you post. Are they tapping through them all, or exiting early? Are people swiping up to visit your website? What kind of content and stickers get the most interaction? Find out here, up to 14 days after your Stories are posted.

Track your day-by-day progress

Creator account insights include a detailed look at how your account has grown each day in a given week. Track daily follows and unfollows to get an easy look at which posts are bringing new people to your account.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How often should I post?

A: Every account and audience is different. We encourage you to find a posting tempo that suits you, whether it be a post a day or several a week. Our data does show a correlation between how often you post and follower growth.

Q: What's the best time of day to post?

A: There's no right time to post. In some markets, engagement is highest during the morning and afternoon commute hours. In others, engagement soars on Sunday or late at night. Get to know your audience and test different post times. Ask yourself when your fans are mostly likely to have a moment to peek at their phones and try posting at that time.

Q: Can I get verified?

A: Verified accounts have been given badges because they have a high likelihood of being impersonated, and we want to make sure that people in the Instagram community can easily find the authentic people and brands they want to follow. Not all Facebook Pages with verified badges have verified badges on their Instagram accounts.

Q: Can I stream live through Instagram's API?

A: Right now there is no ability to stream live through the API, meaning Instagram Live broadcasts can only be streamed through your mobile device.

Q: How do I switch to or get a specific username?

A: If you are looking to secure a particular username for your current or new Instagram account, please get in touch with your Facebook or Instagram contact to request a name change.

Q: How can I subtitle my videos?

A: We recommend subtitling videos for accessibility reasons and to better serve audiences who watch video without sound. We suggest using third-party apps to add captions to your video posts.

Q: How can I drive people to external websites from my Instagram account?

A: You can put a hyperlinked URL in your profile bio, or link to websites using Instagram Stories. Right now, links are not supported in Feed post captions.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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