

A comper's guide to

Instagram

**How to find, enter and win
Instagram competitions**

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Compers News

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Introduction

Launched in 2010, Instagram now has 500 million daily active users, 90% of which are under 25 - but it's quickly gaining fans across all age groups! Once you've got to grips with it, the app is a fun way to connect with family and friends and of course, to follow brands and find low entry and creative competitions. Designed initially as a simple app for sharing square photos, Instagram is constantly adding new functions like live videos, Instagram stories and even IGTV (vertical videos, up to an hour long), with lots more in the pipeline. There's no wonder it's quickly gaining popularity, particularly amongst fashion, beauty and food brands.

The Instagram app is available for free on iOS and Android devices - it can be accessed at www.instagram.com from a computer, but you can't upload photos and videos to the website.

When you share a post (photo or video) on Instagram, it will be displayed on your profile. Users who follow you will see your posts on their feed - and you can see content from users you follow on your own feed (home page).

This PDF guide will introduce you to Instagram, and help you navigate the signup process. It will show how to upload photos, videos and stories, find and enter competitions and find out if you've won. You'll also find tips on how to maximise your chances of winning prizes on the app!

Video guides

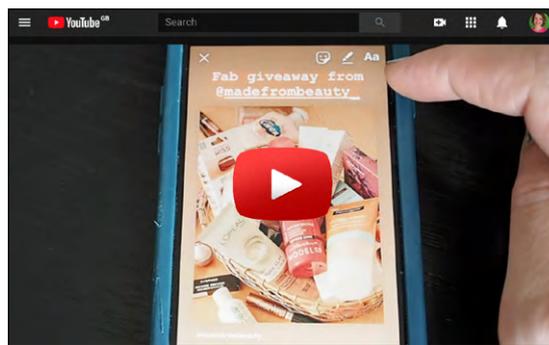
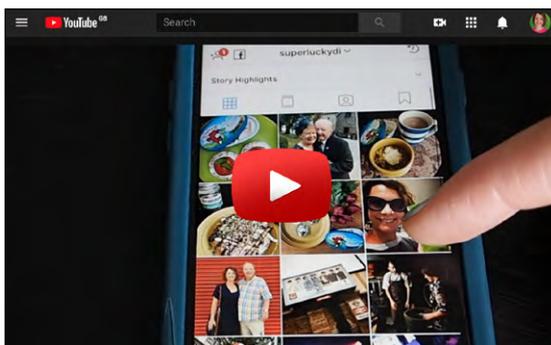
To accompany this PDF, it's recommended you also watch these two YouTube guides:

Instagram Guide for Beginners:

<https://superlucky.me/InstagramYT1>

How to find, enter and win competitions on Instagram:

<https://superlucky.me/InstagramYT2>



Joining Instagram

First, download the free app to your mobile device - Instagram works best on a phone. Although you can like and comment on photos/videos, and follow accounts at www.instagram.com, you can't access messages, or upload new content - photos and videos must be added using the app.

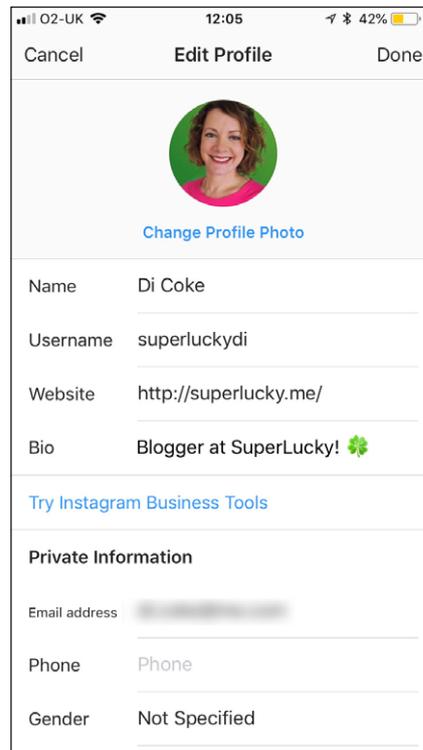
Open the app, and sign up using an email address, phone number or a personal Facebook account. Next, add your name and a password. Instagram will assign you a username, and you can change this to whatever you like (up to 30 characters). Confirm you're over 18, connect to Facebook (optional) and add a profile photo.

You can choose to have a private Instagram account, similar to Twitter. With a private account your posts will only be seen by followers that you have approved. This isn't recommended if you like entering photo (or regram) competitions, as most promoters will specify that your entry is public, so they can check the content. A private account is fine if you're only entering Like and Comment competitions. To switch to a private account, go to your Settings (tap the cog on your profile page) and tap **Account Privacy**.

Your profile

This is where you can add photos and a short bio(graphy) about yourself. To view your profile, tap the person icon at the bottom right of the screen.

Unlike Twitter, on Instagram your **username** appears on the feed above your photos and videos - your **display name** is only visible to those who visit your profile.



Adding photos and information to your profile is optional, but without a profile photo, your account may look fake. Tap on **Edit Profile**, and you can:

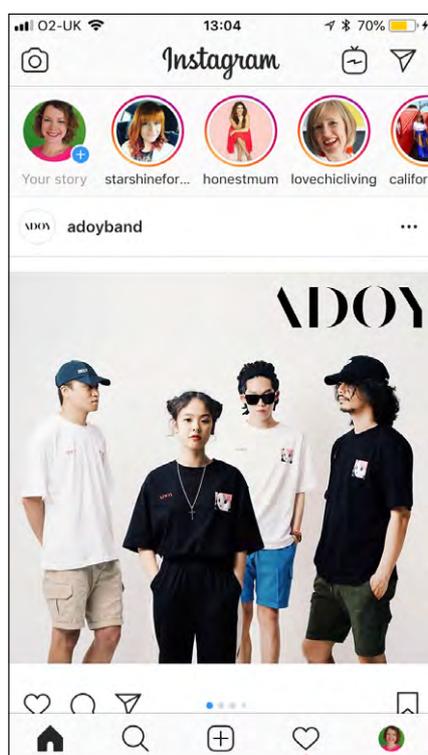
- add a profile photo (select from your computer/mobile device, or take a photo with a built-in camera) - this photo will appear alongside the content you share to Instagram.
- change your display name - you can do this as often as you like
- change your username (unlike Twitter, you can include a full stop in your Instagram username)
- add a 'bio' - this can include emojis and hashtags, and is up to 150 characters
- add an optional link - for example, to your website or YouTube channel
- add an optional location

At the top of your profile you can see how many people you follow and are following you.

Under the bio and web link, there may be **story highlights** on a profile. Underneath that there's a row of options above the photo content. By default, photos are shown as a grid - tap the second icon to view them at full screen width. The third icon shows photos you've been tagged in, and finally the bookmark icon shows your saved posts (this is private and only you can see what you've saved).

Home

Similar to Facebook and Twitter news feed, and also known as your **home** page, your Instagram feed shows you updates from the accounts that you follow, plus promoted posts. Across the top of the screen you'll see a row of circles which are 'stories' from accounts you follow, plus sponsored stories (see page 13 for more about Instagram Stories).



Tap  to go back to your Home Feed. To refresh and see the latest posts, tap the top of your screen. Instagram doesn't show posts in chronological order - they show what they think you're most interested in. There's no way to change settings to see recent posts first.

Across the top of your Home feed are  (add to your story),  (IGTV - portrait videos) and  (Instagram Direct/Messages) - the number on the paper plane icon shows how many unread messages you have.

Types of Instagram content

On your main Home page and feed you may see:

- a single photo (any size - it doesn't have to be square)
- a group of photos (ten maximum) which you can see by swiping to the left - look for dots under the photo to show how many are included on that post
- a video (minimum 3 seconds, maximum 60 seconds)
- a group of videos
- a gif or **Boomerang** (a set of still photos made into a short film)
- a **story** (combination of photo, video, live video, graphics and more) - these display as circular profile icons across the top of your screen
- a live video (displays as a story with a Play button on it)
- a video in vertical format (**IGTV**)

You'll also see promoted/sponsored content (advertising) on your feed, within stories and on IGTV.

In the corner of some brand posts you might see a shopping bag - tap this and you'll get a link to buy products that are featured in the photo(s).

In the corner of a post, if you see a head and shoulders icon it means that one or more accounts have been tagged in the photo - tap the icon to see who. Tap the name to visit their profile. Tap in the corner again to hide the name tags.

Interacting with a post on your home feed

Under each individual post there is a row of icons:

-  **Heart** - tap the heart - or double tap the photo - to like a post. The user that posted it will get a notification. You can view all your likes in **Settings > Account**. You can also tap a heart next to a comment under a post.
-  **Speech bubble** - tap this to leave a comment. If you want to reply to someone else's comment, tap 'Reply' under it. To tag a friend's name in a comment, type @ then their username. If you tag, the user you tagged gets a notification.
-  **Paper plane** - send a post via Direct Message OR share the post to your Instagram story, if the user allows it.
-  **Bookmark** - save the post (access your saved posts, and create collections, on your profile page by tapping the bookmark icon).

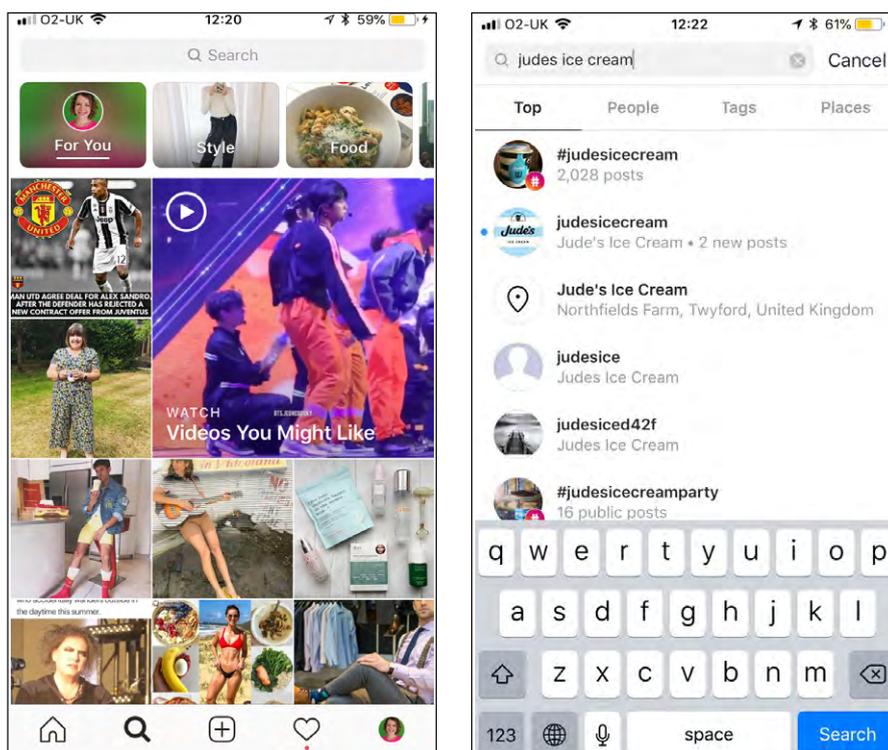
Above a post you see three dots to the right of the user name. Here you can share the link,

copy link, turn on post notifications (so you get notified if someone comments on the post), and more.

Scroll down and tap to view all the comments under a post.

Search and Explore

Tap  to go to the Search & Explore page - this shows content from accounts you don't follow that Instagram thinks you might like. Scroll through this to discover new content and accounts to follow. To do a search, simply type in your terms at the top of the screen. When you get results, choose one of four options - **Top results**, **People**, **Tags** and **Places**.



Hashtags

You'll come across a lot of hashtags in Instagram captions and Stories. A hashtag is a word (or series of words with no spaces) that begins with #. It's a way of tracking themes (or competition entries!) - tap the hashtag to see photos and videos that use it. eg. #MondayMotivation is a commonly used hashtag for motivational quotes and photos on a Monday morning. Using upper and lower case makes no difference to a hashtag - #UKGIVEAWAY is the same as #UKgiveaway.

Instagram users love hashtags - it's the best way to get new followers, and to find content that you're interested in. You might see dozens of hashtags on a single Instagram post! There are also unique hashtags that are created just for a campaign or competition.

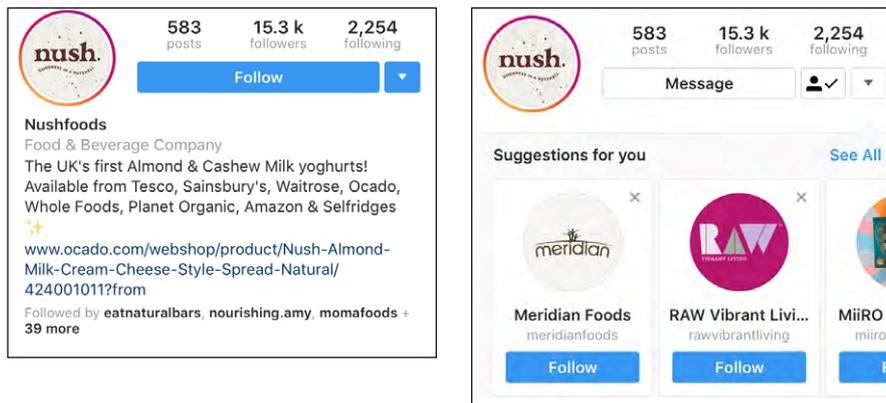
- Tap a hashtag to see the posts that use it - Instagram will show **Top** posts by default, but you can tap to see the most **Recent** instead.
- You may see related hashtags at the top of the screen and can swipe through these.
- You can tap to **follow** a hashtag - meaning that top posts using that hashtag will feature

in your regular Home feed.

- Search for a hashtag by tapping the magnifier, then typing your word(s) in and tapping **Tags**. Choose the tag from the list of results.

Following accounts

Follow an account by searching for a name or username, visiting their profile (eg. www.instagram.com/superluckydi) and tapping **Follow** at the top. You'll see a little person with a tick icon (this is what you tap to unfollow) next to a **Message** button.



When you follow a new account, Instagram shows you related accounts underneath - swipe through and easily tap to follow. Tap the down arrow besides the Follow/Message button on any profile to view more related accounts.

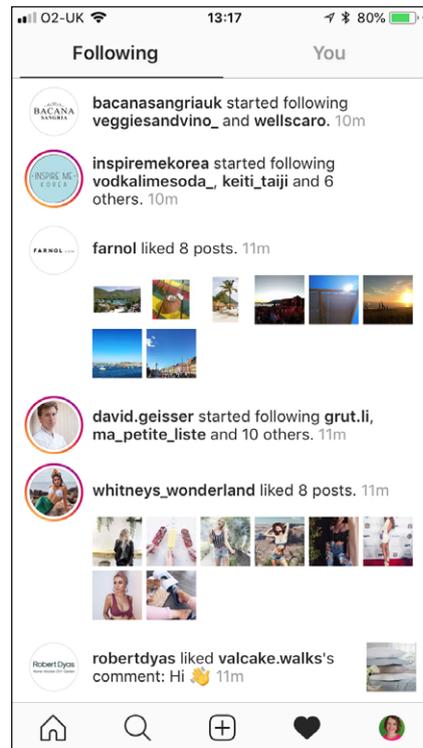
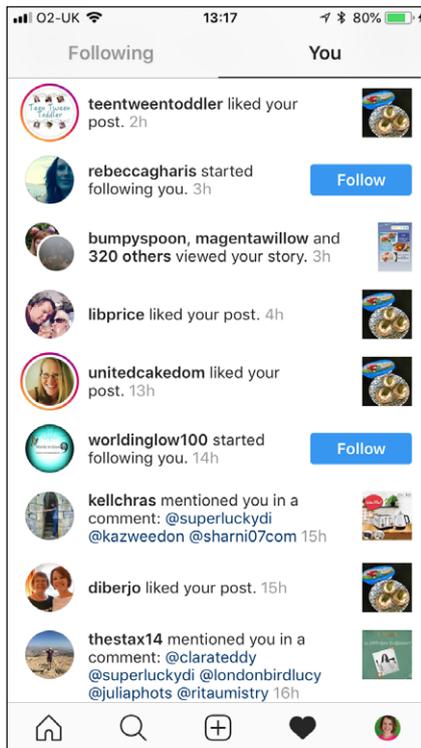
Instagram has a verification system similar to Facebook and Twitter that shows an account is genuine - look out for the blue tick next to a username to confirm an account is verified. You'll only usually see the tick on the accounts of larger brands and popular influencers.

If you're a member of an online comping forum or group, there is likely to be a thread where you can find links to fellow compers' Instagram profiles and you can follow them.

Instagram doesn't allow anyone to follow more than 7,500 accounts, regardless of how many followers you have.

Activity

Tap  to see your list of notifications - follows, likes and comments. Switch the tab from **You** to **Following** at the top, and you can see a similar activity feed from the accounts that you follow. Hide notifications by swiping them to the left and tapping the trash can.



Upload content to Instagram

You can share photos, videos or live videos on Instagram - and also create a mini video called a 'Boomerang' from a series of still photos. After uploading, you can edit your caption- or delete your photo/video - by tapping ... at the top of the screen.

To upload a photo, tap **(+)** on the Home screen. Across the bottom, choose **Photo** (to take a photo directly in Instagram), **Library** (to upload from your device) or **Video**. If you choose Library, you can tap to change the folder at the top of the screen - for example, you can change to look in your **Favourites** folder instead of **Camera Roll** on an iPhone.

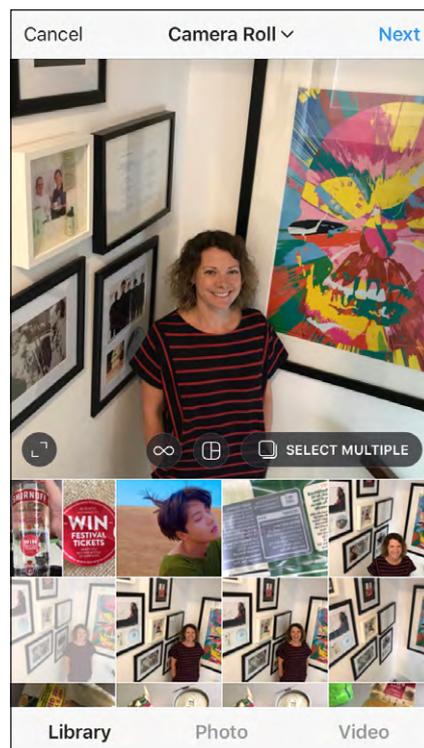
To share more than one photo or video in the same post (you can share up to ten photos or videos together) - tap the **multiple photo** icon and then tap to select from your photo library in the order you want them to appear. The first photo you choose will be the one that shows on your followers' home feed and on your profile.

To create a single photo from multiple photos, tap the layout icon to open the **Instagram Layout** app. You can select multiple photos and choose a format to display them.

Once your content is in the main frame, use your fingers to zoom in and crop - if your photo isn't square, reset to its original proportions by tapping the double arrows in the corner.

Tap **Next** to start editing and adding filters (this is optional!)

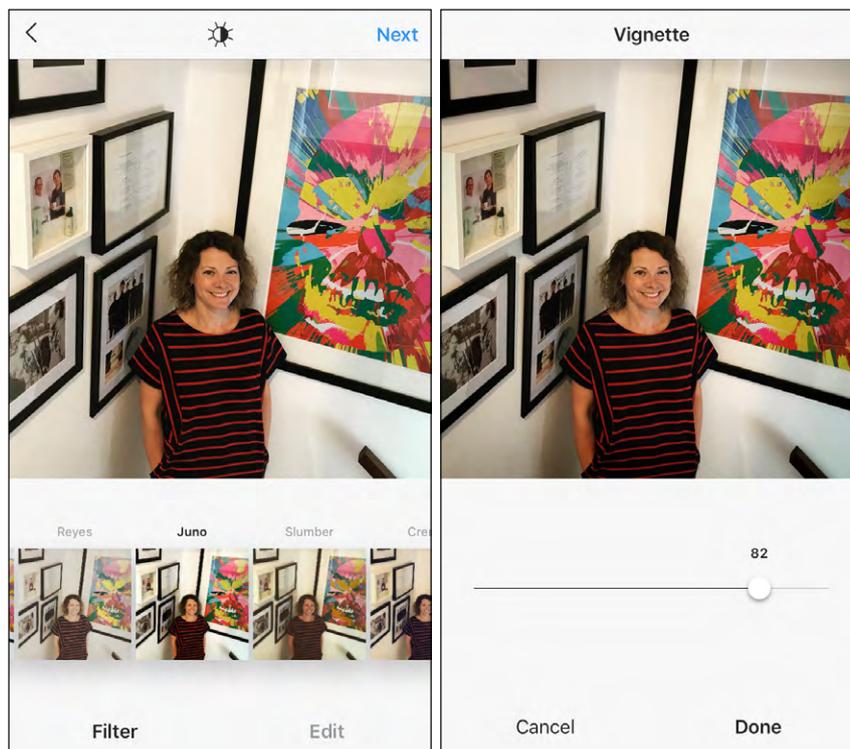
At the top of the screen you can tap the **Lux** button which adjusts exposure - this is a quick way to improve your photo.



Filters

Filters can enhance your photo enormously, and are really popular. Some accounts choose to apply the same filter to every photo. At the bottom of the screen, you can swipe through various **Filter** effects. Tap once to apply, tap twice to adjust the strength of the effect on a slider (at the end of the slider you can also add a white border. If you want to see the effect of the filter before applying, tap and hold on your original photo.

Swipe right to the end of the row of filters and tap to **Manage** them - here you can turn off filters or add new ones to your selection.



Edit

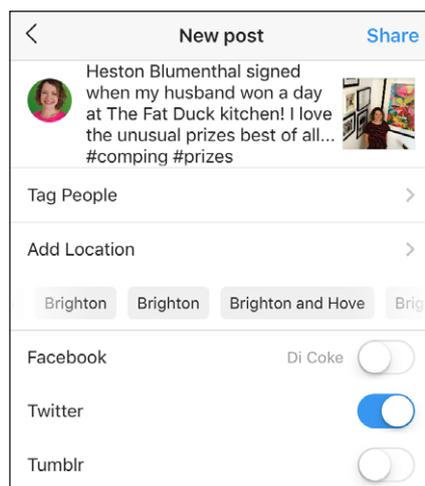
Tap on **Edit** and you see several options: **Adjust, brightness, contrast, structure, warmth, saturation, colour, fade, highlights, shadows, vignette, tilt shift, and sharpen.**

- Use **Adjust** to rotate your photo, or adjust its horizontal perspective. Tap the rotate icon at the top right of the screen to rotate by 90 degrees. For smaller angles, move your finger along the slider.
- **Vignette** adds soft dark corners to your photo.
- **Tilt shift** applies an effect where part of your photo is blurred.

Caption & tagging

When you're happy, tap **Next** and add an optional caption. This can be up to 2,200 characters long and you can use hashtags and tag friends in the text using @. You might want to stick to two lines for your caption - Instagram hides it if it's longer. Note that you can't include a clickable web link in an Instagram caption or comment.

If you like, tag a location and people in the photo (the people tags will appear as links if someone taps on your photo). Tap **Share** to send to your feed - you can also share to your other social media accounts by linking them.



If you're tagged in a photo, it's added to your profile. To change this setting so you manually add photos - or they're all hidden - go to your **Settings > Privacy & Security > Photos of You**.

Videos

Uploading a video is the same process as a photo. A video can be up to 60 seconds long. Upload or record your video, then tap **Next**.

On the screen you have three options:

- Add a **filter** (same process as for a photo)
- **Trim** the video. Tap this, then tap and hold to drag the ends of the video in until you're happy with the crop.
- Select the **Cover** for your video (the still image that will show on your profile) by tapping and moving across the timeline.

At the top of the screen you can mute sound by tapping the speaker icon - it will change from black to white.

Tap **Next**, add your caption and **Share**!

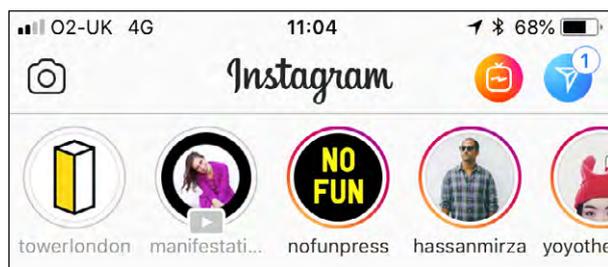
Save a draft

Create your post as normal, but rather than tapping to **Share**, tap the back button twice - a pop-up menu will appear, select **Save Draft**. When you're ready to share your post, tap the ⊕ icon, then select **Library** - a new **Drafts** section will now appear above the camera roll. Select a post, edit, and share as usual

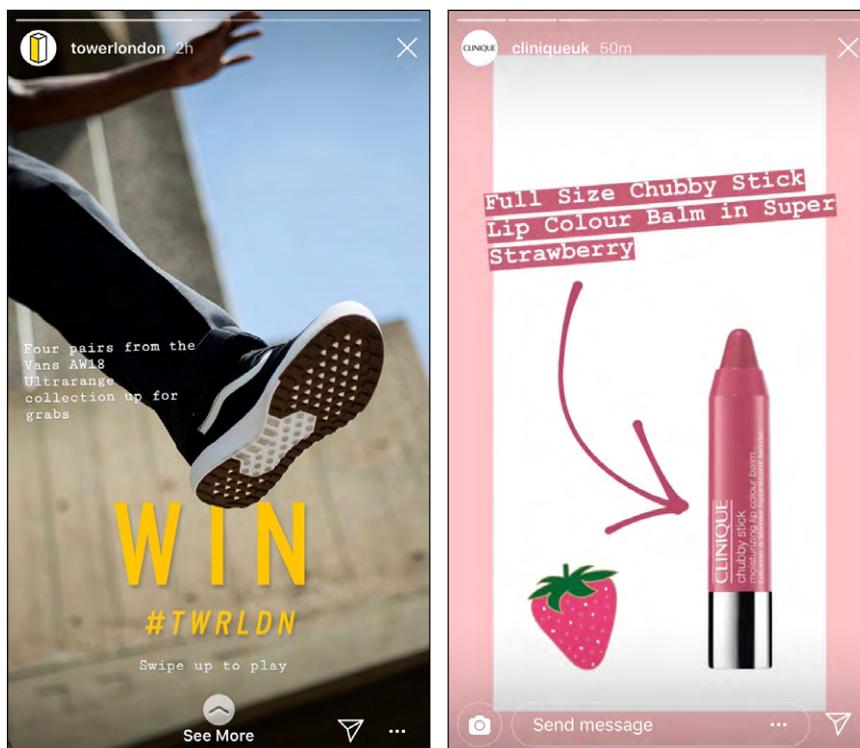
Instagram stories

An Instagram story can combine photos, videos, live video, graphics, music, stickers and text. Each element lasts 5 seconds. After an element has been on a story for 24 hours, it is deleted. You do have the option to add a story as a **Highlight** to the top of your profile page, if you don't want it to disappear. If someone has created a story, their profile page photo will have a ring around it - tap the photo to watch the story.

Stories from accounts you follow will appear near the top of your Home page, as profile photos surrounded by a coloured circle. When you've watched a story, the circle will change to a grey outline. When a story has a new element since you last viewed it, it will appear coloured again. A story with a play button is a live broadcast.



Tap to view a story, and it will play automatically moving from one element to the next each 5 seconds - tap to move to the next part quickly. The white lines across the top of the screen show how many elements are in the story (although a story only needs to have one). Navigate forwards and backwards through a story by tapping the left and right of the screen. Tap and hold to pause on a story element. The next story on your feed will play automatically when the current one has ended, or you can swipe to move to it sooner.



Send a message to a user during a story by typing in the box at the bottom - this will appear in the user's inbox.

If a user has more than 10,000 followers they can include a link to their website in a story - you'll see an arrow at the bottom, or may see a message to swipe up for more info. Tapping the arrow will take you to their website.

While swiping through your Home feed, if you spot a profile photo with a coloured circle round it you can tap on it to view that user's story.

Create a story

To create your own Instagram story, tap the camera icon or swipe to the right on your home page. Across the bottom of the screen you'll see several options.

Tap the white circle to take a photo (switch to selfie cam by tapping the double arrow icon), or tap and hold to film a video. Tap on the left hand thumbnail to upload existing content from your camera roll.

Swipe across the screen to add filters, and try out the fun face effects by tapping the smiley face and following instructions (these work better if you record a video!)

After choosing your content, there are three options at the top of the screen:

- **sticker** - add a fun 'sticker', moving gif, hashtag, @ mention, location, date, poll, temperature and much more to your story.
- **pencil** - draw on your story (select the tool at the top and the colour at the bottom)
- **text** - type to add text, then tap A++ to add a background box behind the text, tap to choose a modern, classic, neon or typewriter format, and select a colour at the bottom of the screen.

To delete an element, tap and hold, then drag to the trashcan at the bottom of the screen.

When you're done, tap the plus sign to add your creation to your story. View your story by going to your profile and tapping your profile photo.

My YouTube guide at www.superlucky.me/InstagramYT1 has more story tips!

If you don't want your posts shared on Instagram Stories by other people, you can opt out in settings.

You can share a segment of your story as a regular post too - tap the three dots icon in the bottom right corner of the photo or video you'd like to share, then tap **Share as Post**. To delete an element, view your story, tap on the bottom right - then **Delete**.

IGTV

IGTV is a new way for users to upload longer videos in a vertical format - designed to be watched on a phone. If you're interested in sharing videos on IGTV, you'll need to create a channel. Tap the IGTV icon, then tap the cog and **Create Channel**. You can upload videos up to ten minutes long - users with a large following can upload videos that are up to an hour long.

Notifications

In the **Settings** menu (tap the cog on your profile) you can adjust the **Notifications** you receive about activity on Instagram. If you want banners or your phone to vibrate you can activate **Push Notifications** on your phone. You can also receive email and SMS notifications.

You can arrange to receive notifications every time a certain user posts by going to their profile, tapping the three dots at the top and choosing **Turn on Post Notifications** or **Turn on Story Notifications**. You can also do this for individual posts.

Instagram Direct (Messages/DMs)

Instagram Direct is your messages and chats on Instagram - private conversations between you and other users. Tap  at the top of your home page to see your inbox - you may see a **Requests** banner at the top if you have messages from people you don't follow. Send a message by tapping the + sign and searching for a name, or tap **Message** on their profile. You can add up to 14 friends to a group message (chat) on Instagram, and give it a name. You can also add up to three friends to a video chat on Instagram. Even while chatting, you can minimise the chat window and use Instagram as usual!

Blocking & Muting

- You can **block** people on Instagram, meaning you can't see their content and they can't see yours.
- You can also **mute** people rather than unfollow if you don't want to see their content on your home feed. They won't know you've done this.

If you want to block or mute, go to the three dots at the top of their profile, then choose from the menu. If you need to **Report** an account, this is also where you do it.

Log out/switch accounts

It's fine to have multiple Instagram accounts and you can log out of your account by going to your settings and scrolling right to the end. You can add a different account here too - so when you log out, you can switch accounts.

Entering Instagram competitions

Let's look at the different kind of prize promotions that might feature on Instagram - a lot of brands will ask you to do several tasks at once, so check you've done everything required, and spelt all hashtags or usernames correctly.

Like a post

Click the heart or double tap a photo/video to enter this simple type of prize draw.

Follow an account

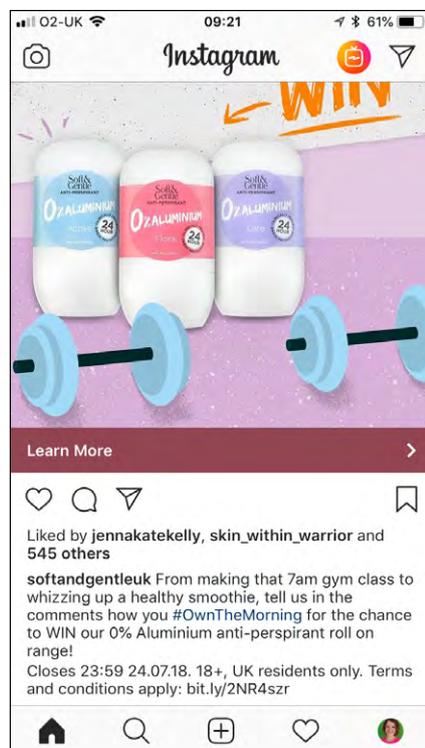
Click on the **Follow** button at the top of a profile to follow an Instagram account.

Comment on a post

Click the speech bubble to leave a comment on a post. You may need to answer a question, use a hashtag, or tag (@ mention) one or more friends.

Tag a friend

A brand might ask you to tag one or more friends in your comment. Tag them by typing the @ key and then their username(s) - or just their display name. As you type, matching names will appear as a list and you can tap the correct one. They will be notified that you tagged them. Some promoters might give you an entry for every comment you leave, asking you to tag a different Instagram friend each time. Make sure you follow instructions - is the promoter asking you to tag three friends in one comment, or in three different comments?



Share an existing post on your feed

Instagram wasn't designed for people to share content from other accounts - it was designed for us to upload our own original content. But occasionally you might want to share an amazing photograph - or you might want to enter a competition that requires a share (usually referred to as a **Regram** or **Repost**). If you're asked to share a post on your feed, you can do it manually or using an app.

How to regram using a screenshot

- With the promoter's competition photo on your screen, take a screenshot. On an iPhone or iPad hold down the **Home** button and then press the **Power** button (the screen will flash). On an Android it's usually the **Power** and **Volume Down** buttons together - for other devices, you might need to Google to find out what method to use.
- A photo of the screen will now be saved on your camera roll or gallery.
- Click the  on Instagram, and select your screenshot from your camera roll.
- Move the image with your finger to crop it, removing the surrounding white and text so it looks like the original shot.
- Tap **Next** twice, skipping the filters.
- Add a caption with the competition hashtag (if there is one) and tag the promoter - the tag might not be compulsory but it lets them know you've entered, so I prefer to include it.
- Finally, tap the competition hashtag (if there is one) to check that your photo appears on the Recent search results page.

How to Regram using an app

There are several regramming apps available - Repost is the most widely used, and adds the name of the original account to the corner of your post. You can download it for free at <http://repostapp.com>

- On the Instagram competition photo, tap the ... button and tap **Copy Link**
- Open the **Repost** app - your copied link will appear at the top of the screen
- Tap the photo then choose where to put the overlay bar - this displays the original user's name, and can be light or dark
- Tap **Repost**, and then **Copy Caption & Open Instagram**
- Tap **Next**, then double tap and Paste the caption - you can then edit out what you don't need, leaving behind the hashtag and any usernames that are required!

Share a post in your story

Promoters can enable the ability to share one of their posts in your own Instagram story. If you're asked to do this to enter a comp, tap  under the post and choose **Add Post To Story**. Even if not requested, you might want to tag the promoter's name when you do this - see my example below.



Links to external websites

Your Instagram feed may include paid advertising - look out for 'Learn More' and 'Sign up' bands across the bottom of these posts, which will also say **Sponsored** under the username on your feed. You might be able to enter on Instagram with a comment (in which case the coloured band usually links to a set of T&Cs for the giveaway) - or you might need to tap **Learn More** or **Sign up** to enter the prize draw on an external website.

In addition, you might see competitions advertised in an Instagram story - tap at the bottom of the screen to visit the linked website!

Share a new photo or video

A promoter might ask you to share your own original photo or video on Instagram - they will ask you to use a specific hashtag, tag their account - or usually both. In fact, even if you're only asked to use a hashtag, always tag their account too, just to ensure they get a notification of the tag! When a promoter asks to be tagged, it usually means in the caption, but if you've been asked to include their product in the photo, you might want to tag the promoter in the photo too!



Loop giveaways

Loop giveaways are very popular in the US, but you'll find a few in the UK. It's where small businesses, bloggers and 'makers' (craft accounts) team up to give away a bundle of prizes, reaching a larger audience. To enter, you'll need to follow every account and comment on the competition photo on each of their profile pages, usually tagging a friend when you do so. It's called a 'loop' giveaway because one user will direct you to enter on the next user, then they will send you to the next user, continuing until you return to the original user - but you can start entering at any point in this 'loop' of posts.



Find Instagram competitions

There are a number of techniques you can use to find Instagram giveaways and comps – combine them to get the best results, looking for both creative ‘upload’ competitions and ‘regram’, like or comment prize draws.

Hashtag search

You can only search for one hashtag at a time on Instagram! Here’s some to try:

#FreebieFriday, #FridayFreebie, #WinItWednesday, #Giveaway, #Competition, #UKCompetition

Don’t give up when you see how many irrelevant results show up. You’ll soon get the hang of scrolling quickly through these, looking for photos of prizes, or the words WIN or GIVEAWAY featured on the photos – most will require a simple regram or comment. Open the photo to find out more information – look for the T&Cs, and scan for £ signs in the prize details, which are a clue it’s a UK promotion (\$ signs could mean US, Canada or Australian promotions!). If you find a hashtag that gives good results, tap to **follow** it on the search page.

Search Twitter & Google

You can search Twitter without being a member, and it’s an excellent resource. At www.twitter.com/search, look for ‘win Instagram competition’, ‘upload photo Instagram win’, or similar search strings. You can do several things with the results – tap **Latest** at the top to see recent tweets. Lots of promoters tweet about their comps, but forget to link to their Instagram profile, so you may need to put in a bit of work to find the giveaway.

Use the same type of search words at www.google.com - but restrict the results to UK only!

Follow other compers

A great way to find Instagram comps is to befriend and follow other compers - or just check out their profiles. To find compers, click on any competition hashtag to see all the entries, then tap individual photos to visit profile pages. You can then check the posts on their profile, and click on hashtags or tags to track down the original competition post or details. If you can’t find comp details on a hashtag search, try Googling it to try and find competition details! If you follow compers, your home feed will usually have a good selection of comps - you can also add comping friends to a small chat group in Instagram Direct (message inbox) to share comps with each other.

Did you know you can see the activity of the accounts you follow too? Tap  to view your activity - then tap the **Following** tab. Scroll down and if you see any comping friends following accounts, or liking posts you can tap to see the posts - no doubt a few of them will be competitions!

Turn on notifications

From a profile page, you can turn on post notifications using the ‘More’ (...) menu at the top of a user’s profile page – you’ll get a mobile notification when they post a new photo. Use this sparingly to track busy compers, local businesses and your favourite brands, and you’ll be the first to know if they share a competition or entry.

Terms & Conditions

Be warned – there are usually no T&Cs for Instagram comps, so you'll have to work out if the comps are actually valid in the UK, or even if they're still open to entries! A promoter can't add a clickable link to an Instagram caption or comment - so you'll sometimes see a link to T&Cs but will have to copy and paste the address rather than tap it, in order to view the web page. Alternatively, you might see a note that says 'see T&Cs in bio', as that's where they can leave a live web link.

If there's still no sign of T&Cs in comments or the bio, add a comment or message to ask the promoter about closing dates or eligibility – it's a pain to win a product from the US, as you sometimes have to pay import tax on it!

Choosing winners

The promoter should state in the competition post (or linked T&Cs) whether they are judging the winner, or choosing at random.

A lot of Instagram comps are run by small businesses and bloggers, who aren't aware that there are tools to help you choose a random winner fairly. Many of them will be manually collating entries, or simply choosing their favourite comments or @ mention. Bigger brands should be using software to choose randomly, or a free website such as www.getcombat.com can select a random winner.

Finding out if you've won

There are several ways a winner might be contacted on Instagram.

Direct Message

Check your message inbox regularly - some promoters message their winners. If you don't follow the account, it will appear as a 'Message Request' at the top of your inbox.

Mention in a story

You may be mentioned in a user's Instagram story. This will appear as a message in your inbox and you can tap to view the story. Be warned, a story disappears after 24 hours, with the link being unclickable after that, so you do need to be checking your inbox regularly!

@ Mention

Another common way of announcing a winner is simply to tag them. You might be @ mentioned in a comment on the original post, or in a caption on a new post - you're usually asked either to send a message or an email to the promoter.

If you've not seen a winner announced for an Instagram comp, don't be afraid to leave a comment or send a polite message to the promoter to enquire.

Instagram comping tips

Share comps in a group chat

Choose a handful of comping friends and create a group chat in Instagram Direct, where you can share competitions. Tag each other in the comps - try to like each other's posts and reply to them if possible. If you're in a comping forum or Facebook group, there should be a post where you can comment and find Instagram friends. If possible, add a few local friends to your group chat - local comps give you the best chance of a win, and if a friend wins a night out you might even be invited as their guest!

Make your profile look good

This applies to all social media, but on Instagram it's especially important to make your profile look good, as the app is all about photography. Make sure you share some original content, so it appears at the top of your profile - don't fill your profile with ugly regram competitions! If you want to remove old competition entries without deleting them altogether, tap ... at the top of the post, and select **Archive**. You can find archived posts by tapping the clock at the top of your profile page (choose from **Stories** or **Posts** at the top). If you want to restore an Archived post to your profile, simply tap **Show on Profile** at any time and it will reappear.

Add an entertaining bio to your profile too - you can use emojis and links to liven it up!

Reply to promoters

Get involved with your favourite brands and places by liking and commenting on their posts and stories - even if they're not comps. When they do run a comp, they'll be keen for their prizes to go to a fan.

Use Keyboard shortcuts

Keyboard shortcuts will enable you to enter more comps in less time! Most mobile devices should have a 'Text Replacement' or 'Keyboard Shortcuts' option in the Settings menu. On an iPhone it's under **General > Keyboard > Text Replacement**.

Here you can type in a long piece of text, and specify a 'shortcut' which you can type. The shortcut will automatically expand into the longer text. This is a real timesaver for compers, and can be used in many ways. For example, you could type 'Check out this great giveaway @MichelleJones34 @xNatalieSmithx' and shorten it to 'igtag'. Watch the tutorial at www.superlucky.me/InstagramYT2 to see more examples of shortcuts.

Follow your favourite brands

Search for and follow all your favourite brands - especially local businesses. Remember to tap the arrow beside the **Follow** button to find similar accounts to follow! Turn on post notifications for your favourites.

Use bookmarks

Found a great low entry photo comp? Add it to your Instagram bookmarks. Nobody will know except you, and you can come back and enter it nearer to the closing date, so there's

less chance of your followers spotting it and entering too!

Save lots of photos on your phone

Create a gallery of possible competition entries on your smartphone (this is also handy for Twitter comps!) You can re-upload the same photo or video on Instagram multiple times with new hashtags for comps - change the filter or crop to alter the look. If you don't win, you can always go back and archive the post – then use the photo again for another competition.

Make your entry stand out

In a judged competition, or sometimes even a 'random' draw, a photo that stands out amongst the rest should have a better chance of winning. Try tapping on a competition hashtag to see the results you get - scroll through and see which photos catch your eye. Think about what makes them stand out from the rest. Can you put your photo or selfie into an Instagram story to add text, effects or gifs, then upload as a new post? The extra graphics should make your entry stand out!

And finally...

Don't be put off Instagram if you don't consider yourself to be 'creative' - it's a really fun app to learn. Start with simple activity like comments and tags - then move onto selfies or product shots, and have a go at videos or stories when you're feeling braver!

You can find lots of advice on the official Instagram website at <http://help.instagram.com/>

Got any questions about Instagram comping?

Pop over to the [Chatterbox message board social media forum!](#)