INSTAGRAM UNCOVERED

Everything you need to know for Instagram success!

The BEGINNERS' Lens

Better photo skills for Beginners & Beyond

Guy Yang · Audrey Taylor
Foreword by Jack Hollingsworth

www.thebeginnerslens.com

Instagram Uncovered

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Note: This book is in no way affiliated or endorsed by Instagram or its developers. This book was researched, written, and created for you by The Beginners Lens, who are also not affiliated with Instagram.

Instagram. What's not to like about it? Especially if you're a photographer. From young to old, newbie to veteran, budding enthusiast to working pro, Instagram is for you.

Instagram is the largest community of snap shooting iPhone photographers in the world. It's now 15 million strong and growing every day. Built around a very simple capture, processing and sharing photo application. It is a key tool helping photographers at all levels turn digital photos from the vernacular to the spectacular. From the ordinary to the extraordinary. From commonplace to special. From boring to memorable.

This Instagram eBook, authored by iPhoneography evangelists Guy Yang and Audrey Taylor, is the perfect quick starter guide to help you better understand and appreciate the magic and mystique of Instagram. It will empower you, from the first page to the last, to raise your game in iPhone photography. If you want to take your iPhoneography training even further, I heartily recommend you check out iPhone Camera Essentials. I wish I had a resource like this when I was starting out! www.iphonecameraessentials.com

The new breed of mobile shooters think in terms of 'stories', not just 'images'. They think in terms of concepts and not subjects. This Instagram guide will help your work and brand stand up and stand out. Even the simplest story, when wrapped in the visual richness of photography, can be a powerful influencer.

For those of us following and participating in this smartphone photography revolution, this simple eBook is a welcome addition and will surely play a key role in helping you embrace the enchantment of iPhone photography. Happy reading!

Jack Hollingsworth
Professional Photographer
iPhoneographer

Guy Yang

Guy Yang is a Parisian photography enthusiast and passionate iPhoneographer. He has studied and worked both in the US and in France in the digital marketing space. His passion for photography began about 6 years ago and he quickly immersed himself into learning the art and technique. In 2008, he began to sense the potential of the iPhone as a camera after stitching together his first panorama on an iPhone 3G. Amazed by the result, he was a man on a mission to learn all there is to know about iPhoneography. A few years later he launched The Beginner Lens, as well as www.iphonecameraessentials.com the first and most comprehensive online iPhoneography video course available.

Because he climbed the iPhoneography and digital photography learning curve quickly, Guy has a great understanding of the issues and obstacles facing beginner and intermediate iPhoneographers and photographers. His experiences learning have helped him strive to always give crisp, clear, multimedia content that accelerates the iPhoneography learning process and brings what is really important into focus. He also created The Beginners Lens with easy-to-understand and quick-to-ingest photography tips, tricks & tutorials. Today, the Beginners' Lens partners with prominent photographers and iPhoneographers from all over the world.

Guy has an affinity for taking photos of his beloved city of Paris, in particular of the monumental Eiffel Tower. His photos can be seen on The Beginners Lens Instagram account (@thebeginnerslens). He and his wife continue to live and work in Paris. They have a cherished 5-year old daughter who often shows up as a subject in Guy's iPhoneography video tutorials.

Audrey Taylor

Audrey Taylor is an American ex-pat living in London. Originally from the great state of Michigan, she has been living in the UK for over 10 years now! She is a keen photographer and recent iPhoneography convert, but her working background is in writing and creative media.

After running her own record label for 8 years, she moved into web writing, content creation and graphic design. Despite landing in this career rather unexpectedly, she does love it and could think of nothing else she would prefer to do on a daily basis.

She's also a real foodie and takes photos of practically everything she eats...of course, she does take photos of other things too (but admittedly, it's mostly food).

As she is relatively new to both digital and iPhoneography, she too has climbed the steep learning curve and can sympathize with the experiences of other beginner and intermediate photographers giving her a unique perspective when writing content for The Beginners Lens. Her recent upgrade to the iPhone 4S has really opened her eyes to what can be achieved with iPhoneography! Although she feels there is still a lot to learn, she is quite sure the best is yet to come!

Audrey lives and works with her English husband, Jamie. One day they hope to move to America...perhaps somewhere with less rain! You can check out her Instagram feed (@noteaafter12).

What's So Great About Instagram?
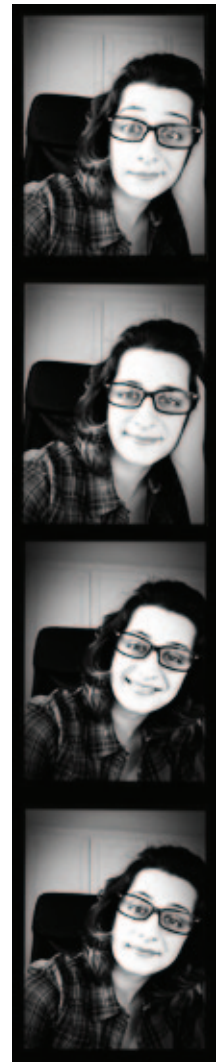
Instagram Uncovered
What's So Great About Instagram?

There's absolutely no doubt that using Instagram is now an integral part of the full iPhoneography experience. There's also no doubt that Instagram is a whole lot of fun, not to mention totally addictive and rather time consuming! So if you've been asking yourself whether or not you should get more involved in this fabulous mobile community we say emphatically, yes you should! There are 3 main reasons why you should consider becoming a full-on Instagramer!

First, it's really fun!

Instagram is a super fun mobile photo community! It very quickly becomes addictive as given the nature of the app you get immediate feedback on the photos you publish, right from your iPhone! The community is very supportive and kind in spirit, which makes Instagram feel like a safe haven in this wild digital world. It's also fun because it truly compresses the photography experience: shoot, edit and share in a matter of seconds! Remember the days of shooting with film when we had to wait for weeks to share a photo after shooting it? Even with digital cameras, there are several steps to downloading photos to your PC and uploading them online. Now, all that is just a matter of a few taps, and done in seconds, literally! That feeling of immediacy is definitely one of the best aspects of Instagram.

An Online Place to Show and Share

Photos are memories... as well as art. They represent shared experiences and evoke many feelings when we view them. The photo sharing culture on Instagram is more focused on sharing artistically pleasing photos, rather than family photos. However, there are times when these 2 aspects successfully come together. For example, photographer (and Instagramer) Jack Hollingsworth shares amazing photos of his daughters on Instagram. Jack is a professional photographer so has a natural affinity for editing and creating compelling images. But more often than not, family and personal travel photos are not artistic, they are generally quick snapshots taken with very little editing.

This does not mean you should not share any family photos, certainly many Instagramers share their own family photos, but the difference here is that rather than posting a very quick snap with no editing, they share photos that have been beautifully composed and edited.

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With that said, we recommend that family photos represent less than 20% of your uploads. That may not seem like very much, but the reasoning is simple: memory photos are fun when the viewer knows the story behind them, when they can relate to them in a personal way. Aesthetically pleasing photos are different in that respect, as viewers can relate to them for their beauty, simply because they are pleasing to the eye, no matter the subject.
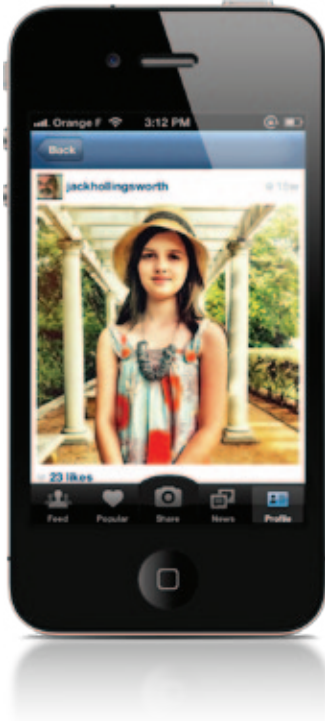
So those who really get the most out of Instagram are users who consider photography a serious hobby and aim to share images with aesthetical value.

This doesn't mean you need to be an advanced photographer to get the most from Instagram, it simply means that spending a little extra time and effort shooting and editing goes a long way! Don't be intimidated, Instagram is a great place to learn about photography…

Use Instagram as a Place to Learn

Instagram is as much a place to share photos, as it is a place to learn the craft of photography and iPhoneography. Obviously, you won't get a formal photography course on Instagram, but you can certainly learn a lot by becoming part of the community and studying the photos. When you try to replicate or improve upon the photos you like, you will be learning as you go. You'll notice that many Instagramers do not simply use the Instagram filters alone to edit their photos. They often use a mix of apps to achieve the results they get, and often they will name the apps used in the comments. Don't be shy about asking questions about the shots you find appealing; many Instagramers are happy to share their method. We'll talk more about how to use other photos as inspiration later, so stay tuned!

Even if you're a photographer that has a bit of experience under your belt, Instagram can change the way you see photography. Consider this: Instagram is with you all the time, you can quickly edit and add cool filters to your photos and you can share the result with the world right away. Those simple quick and easy steps might make you more inclined to photograph the mundane details of life and turn your photos into something spectacular!

Now that you have a better grasp of what being an Instagramer means, let's move on to the practical stuff.
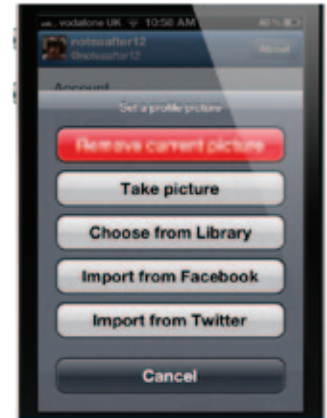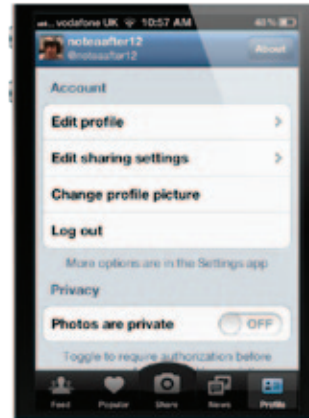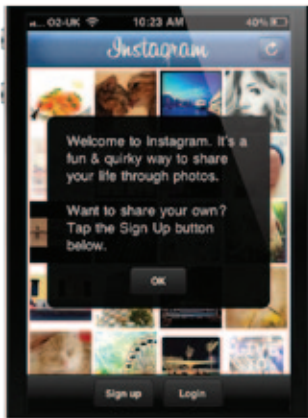
You like the book?
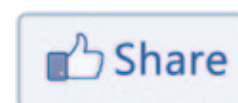
Share

Click to share it!

Getting Started

Start As You Mean To Go On

Let's start from the beginning. Before you can access the app you'll need to choose a username. Start with your favourite username or your actual name and go from there. If you're creating a new name from scratch try to choose something short and memorable. Avoid numbers and symbols if you can as they're just a pain to type every time you log in.

Your username is not set in stone, you can amend it at a later date in your Profile. Be sure to add your real name to your profile so friends can find you!

Create A Memorable Profile Photo

Your profile photo is highly visible in several places on Instagram. It's not only on your profile page, but also on the suggested users tab and where your name is listed as a follower on other users profiles.

Take the time to make sure your profile photo is a good one. Try to shoot in square format so it fits perfectly without cropping. Your photo should represent you and your style. Try not to change your profile photo too often as it will become something your followers can easily recognize.

Profile Basics: Find Your Friends

After you set up your account, Instagram will ask you if you want to find some friends – you can do this several ways including:
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Your iPhone contact list

You can also search for your friends using their name or their username.

Another great way to find people on Instagram is by using the Suggested Users tab or the Popular tab.

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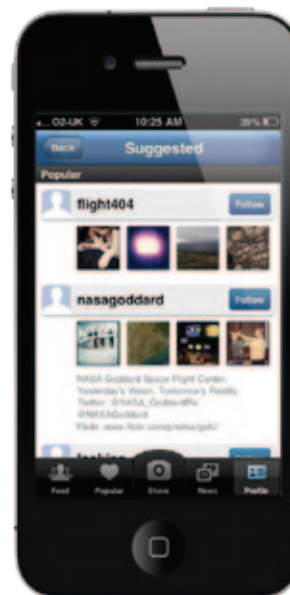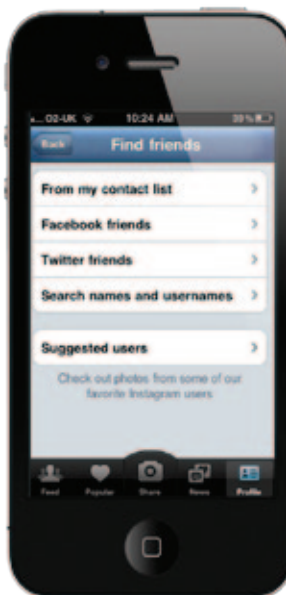
Feed Tab
Popular Tab
Share Tab
News Feed Tab
Profile Tab

Introducing The Instagram Feed

If you're not following anyone yet your Feed will be blank like this one. Let's take a quick tour. From left to right you've got the Feed tab, the Popular tab, the Share tab, the News tab and the Profile tab. You can also see the refresh button in the top right corner of the screen.

Username and Time Uploaded

Number of Likes

Like This Photo

Comment On This Photo

Caption and Hashtags

Photo Options

The Feed With Photos

Once you start uploading your own photos those and photos from the people you are following will appear in your Feed. Each photo that appears in your Feed will have the photographer's profile thumbnail and username, the photo caption, the time the photo was taken, the number of likes and favorites the photo has received, as well as any comments other users have left about thephoto.

The Rest of The Tabs…Popular

The Popular Tab is a great place to find inspiration and look for people to follow. If you want to see what the rest of Instagram is looking at right now, head for the Popular tab!

Getting your photo on the Popular tab has become somewhat of a fierce competition. The more likes and comments that your photo has, the more likely it is to appear on the coveted Popular page!

The Share Tab

In the bottom center of the interface you'll find the Share tab, this is where you take photos and edit them. If you have a front-facing camera, you can also use it to take photos in the app. Something to note here is that Instagram is set up to share square photos, just like the forever-popular vintage polaroid! The Instagram camera viewfinder is square and many of the in-app filters add a square border to your photos. If you choose to use an image from your camera roll you will have the option to move and scale your photo by pinching and zooming so that you can create a square photo to upload to your Feed.
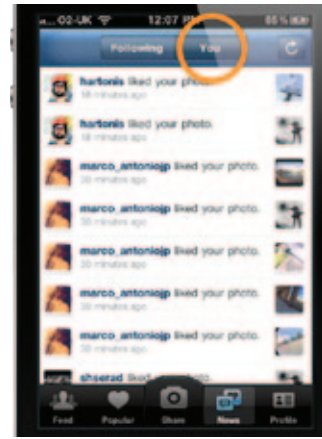
The News Feed

The next tab to the right is the News feed. Once you're actively using Instagram, all social activites in relation to your photos will appear in the News feed. That includes comments, tags, likes and follow notifications. You can also set up push notifications in your Profile so you receive a message each time something happens in your News feed. At the top of the News Feed you can toggle between who you are following and your own news feed. Be sure to check the News feed often so you don't miss what's happening socially with your Instagram account!
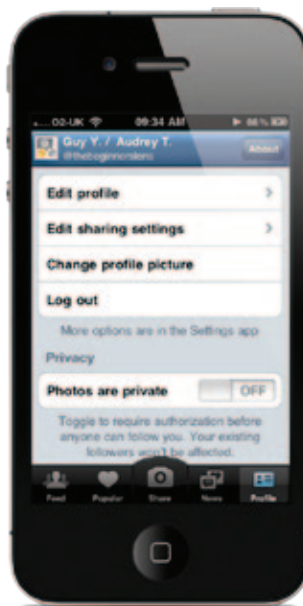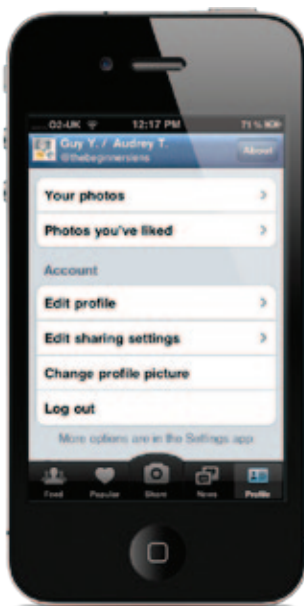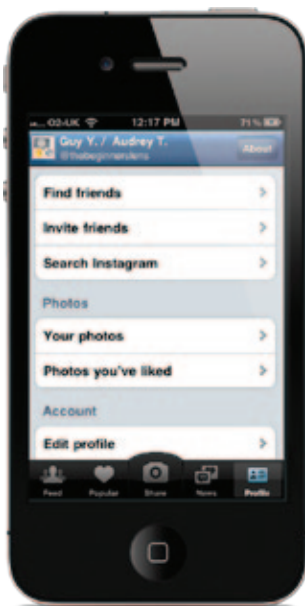
Your Profile

Finally, the last tab on the interface is your Profile. In your Profile tab you can find friends, view your photos (this also happens to be the tab where you view your profile as others see it), view the photos you've liked, edit your profile including your public information, edit your sharing settings, turn on/offpush notifications, change your profile picture, and turn on the photo privacy (not recommended for gaining followers).

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The Back Button

As we have learned, Instagram is essentially a mobile photo browser, and one of the most important buttons on any browser is the back button. The back button is particularly important to the user interface of Instagram because it allows you to get carried away looking at photos and profiles with the ability to retrace your steps along the way.

The main navigation points, or the places you'll tap as you're browsing are:
- On photo thumbnails
- User profile thumbnails, and user names
- User profile and number of photos, followers, & following
- Hashtags
- Number of likes on a photo
- Photo comments

Each time you tap on one of the items listed above you are taken to a new page, and from there you can go deeper and deeper into Instagram. As you surf Instagram you may find yourself in a bit of a virtual rabbit hole, this is where the back button will come in very useful!

For example, let's say you want to reply to a comment on one of your photos, but before doing so you want to check the profile of the person who left the comment. So you tap the user name of that commenter to go to their profile. From there, you may see a photo you like, so you tap on that to check it out. And then maybe there's a hashtag that grabs

your attention so you tap it and end up on the tag page. From there you see another photo you like, and so on!. This kind of browsing could go on forever. At some point you remember you still hadn't replied to that first comment…so all you have to do is to tap the back button as necessary to get back to the page you want to enter the comment on.
Do note that the name of the back button may actually change as you browse, depending on what type of page you are looking at. Rest assured the back button is always in the top left of the screen you are viewing. Also note that you can switch between tabs moving from the feed, to popular, profile, etc and your place will be saved on each tab.

Start Making Friends

Instagram is a pretty boring place if you don't have any friends to follow, and indeed if no one is following you. You need to find some friends! We mentioned briefly how to do this earlier, but as a refresher you can find friends in a few ways. Open up the app and tap on your Profile. Now tap the Find Friends tab, and choose from my contact list, Facebook friends, or Twitter friends. You can also search for your friend's names and usernames here. If your friends aren't using Instagram yet, you can invite them to join here!
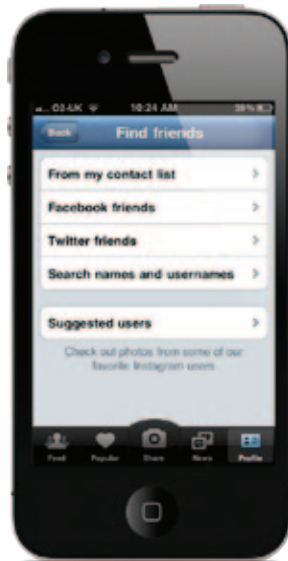
But Instagram isn't just about connecting with the people you already know – it's about making new friends! The best way to do this is to get involved in the Instagram social network. Browse the suggested users tab, and the popular tab. Follow the photographers you are inspired by!

To see who you are following, and who is following you tap on your Profile tab and then tap on Your Photos. At the top of the page you can see the number of people who are following you. To view those people in a list tap Followers. Likewise, tap the Following button to see who you are following and from there you can unfollow, if you wish. You can also view who other photographers are following, and their followers by viewing their profile page and tapping the relevant buttons as described above.

Liking And Leaving Comments

At the heart of photo sharing is letting people know how much you like their photos! So be sure to show some photo love by "liking" the photos you truly like. It's a great compliment to "like" another photographer's photo, and a little bit of encouragement goes a long way. To like a photo, simply scroll to below the photo and tap the Like button; the small heart will turn red and the button will say "Liked".

If you've got something constructive or fun to add to the conversation then be sure to reach out to your new friends through the comments button. Simply tap the button and type in your comment. If you want to leave a reply to a comment that has already been left then be sure to add @ + username and then type your comment. You can also reply to several people at once by adding the Instagram handle with @ username to your comment. You can scroll through the comments as you write your comment, but as of the latest up update there's no way to copy and paste usernames into your comment boxes.

To delete a comment simply open up the Comments tab underneath the photograph and swipe from right to left to bring up the delete button.

Shooting and Editing

Shooting in Square Format

All photos on Instagram are uploaded in the square format. However, not all photos are shot in square format, especially if you are not shooting in the Instagram app itself, so you have two options:

1. You can shoot in the native photographic format (either landscape or portrait) and crop your photos, or you can leave space at the sides when uploading your photo to the app. It does really depend on the type of photo and the way you use the dead space, but we have seen traditional format photos used very effectively with space at the top or sides. Likewise we have seen it used ineffectively, so do edit carefully if you plan to leave space.
2. Or you can shoot in square format, either with the Instagram app or with another square format camera app such as 6x6.

Either format works fine depending on the effect you want to get from your photograph, however it's worth mentioning that shooting directly in square format will allow you to adjust your composition as you shoot. This method can sometimes help you arrange the elements of your photograph and get a better idea of where the subject will fit best within the square frame.
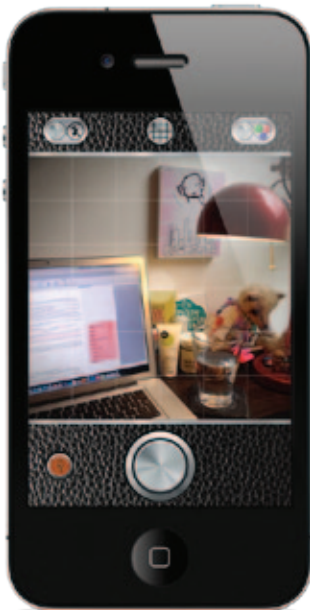
The 6x6 App

The 6x6 app is a really useful app for shooting in square format. It includes several great functions including a rule of thirds grid, manual exposure, manual focus as well as focus lock.
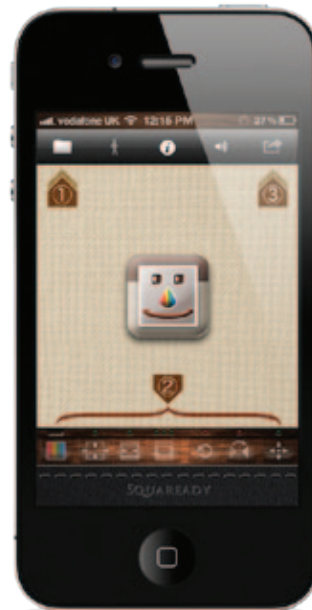
The Squaready App

Squaready is another fantastic app you might want to consider using for editing your photos before uploading to Instagram. Not only does it do a fantastic job of cropping, but the app also has other editing controls you may find easier to use including rotate, mirror, add background, etc.

Start Sharing

Sharing is very easy, you may have tried it already…just tap on the Share tab and either take a photo with your iPhone camera, or tap the photo chooser to select a photo from the Camera Roll. Once your photo appears in the viewfinder, you can post it as is, or add a filter to the photo by scrolling through the filters at the bottom of the viewfinder. Before you start adding filters, you'll want to make sure you're Saving your original photo. By default Instagram saves a copy of the filtered photo to your Camera Roll, so to ensure you save a copy of both the filtered photo and the original photo; exit Instagram and go to the Settings app. Select Instagram, switch Save Original Photo to the On position. Done!
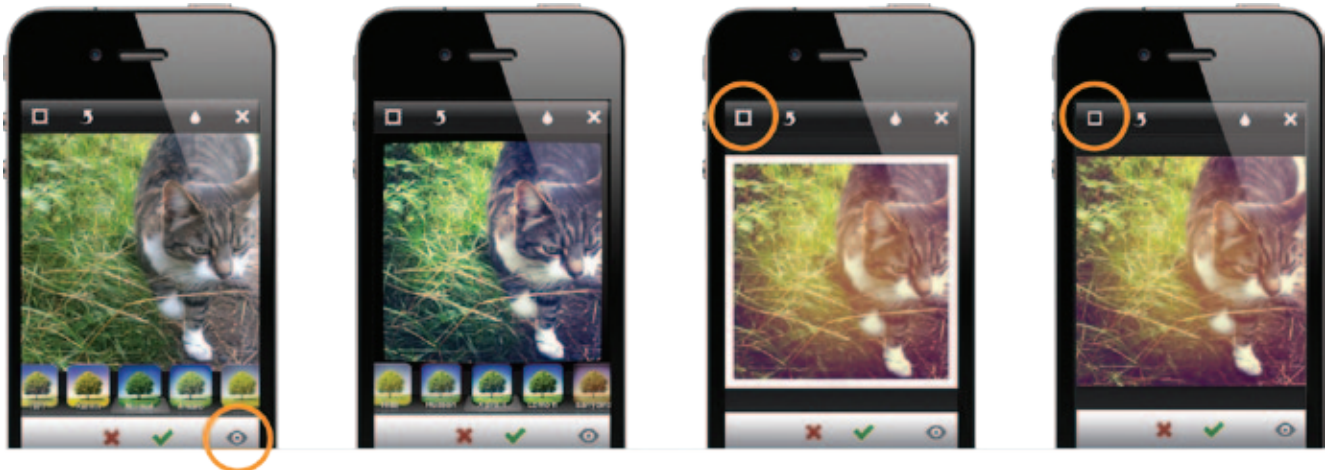
Using Filters

There's a great selection of filters to use for your Instagram photos, and a few different ways you can use them. You can either add filters to the photos that you've already shot, or you can add filters live while you are shooting. To add a filter while you shoot simply open the Share tab to open the camera, now tap on the eye icon in the bottom right to see the filters. You can scroll through the filters as you look through the viewfinder and when you've found a filter you like simply hit the shutter button. (Not shown above) You can also add filters to photos from your camera roll by tapping the multiple photo icon in the bottom left, when your photo appears scroll through the filters to find one you like. Several filters have frames, to turn the fram on and off tap the frame button in the top left hand corner of the screen (as above).

Using Tilt-Shift

As you probably know, it's quite difficult to show depth of field on your iPhone. Instagram have actually included a Tilt-Shift option in the editor, and you can use the Tilt-Shift to create an illusion of depth of field. Tilt-Shift works by leaving a selected part of your image in focus, and blurring the rest of the photo. To use the Tilt-Shift tap the small teardrop-shaped button in the top right. From here you've got two options for adding the blur – you can add a straight blur, or a radial blur. Tap the shape of the blur to choose, move the starting point around by dragging it, and adjust the strength of the blur by pinching and zooming. Tap the cross to delete the tilt-shift and start again. Try adding a filter for the final touch!
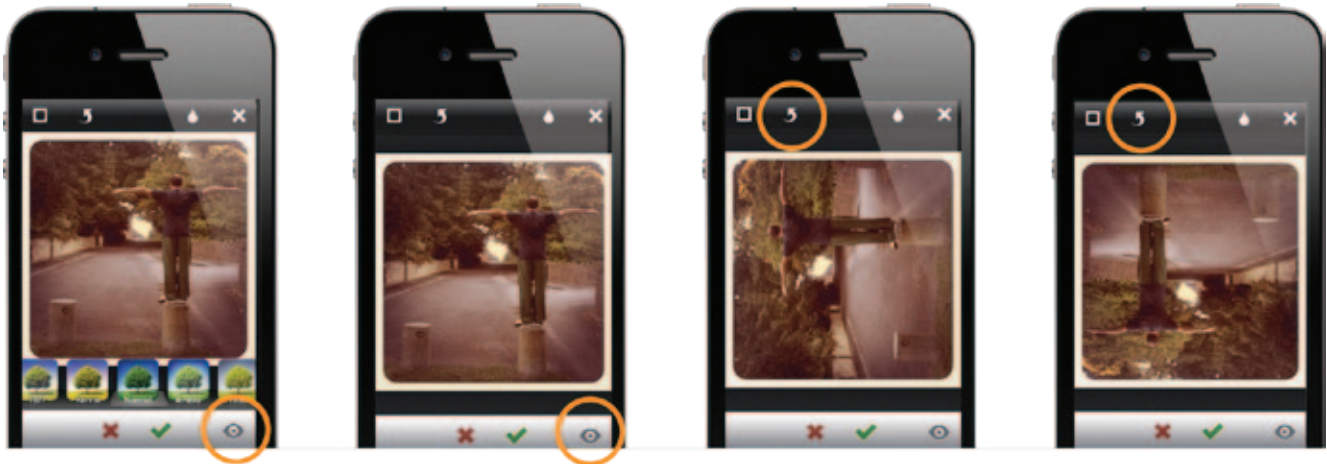
A Few Final Editing Tips

- To view your image in full (without the filter icons at the bottom) simply tap the eye icon in the bottom right of the screen as you edit
- To rotate your image 90° counterclockwise, tap the arrow icon in the top left. Tap the arrow again to rotate another 90°, or until you have the orientation you want.
- Finally, when you're ready to share...tap the green check mark!

Sharing Your Photos

Adding A Caption

Once you've finished editing your photo and tapped the green check mark, you'll find yourself at the final page before upload. Type a title or describe your photo in the Caption space. Remember that your caption or title will appear wherever you upload your photo, including other social networks.

Hashtags

A hashtag is an easy identifier for your photo – a bit like a keyword. Each hashtag has it's own page, and it's own RSS feed where the photos with that tag are displayed. To add a hashtag, type it in the Caption field by adding # + your keyword, you can include multiple hashtags in your Caption. You can also leave hashtags in the comments on your own photos and they will be read by the Instagram filter. But don't bother leaving hashtags in the comments of other people's photos as they will not be filtered, it only works for your own photos. It's also quite common practice for Instagramers to include a hashtag that matches their username, so other users have a quick way to find their photos with the hashtag search.

To search or browse hashtags, tap the Profile tab, and then tap Search Instagram. Tap the Search Tags button. Type the hashtag you are looking for and hit search. You can then view all of the photos that have been tagged with your search term. This is another great way to find new friends and share photos of a common thread!

Adding A Location

To add a geotag or a location to your photo, tap the Geotag tab underneath the Caption. Choose the location closest to you, or tap the Relocate button in the top right to refresh the locations. Tap back and the location you've chosen will appear underneath the Caption.

How To Get Likes And Followers

Once you've got your profile set up on Instagram, the first thing most people are interested in is to start getting "Likes" for your photos, and getting users to follow your profile. Like many other social networks, the developers saw "Likes" and "Follows" as integral to the Instagram experience.

Why? Certainly sharing and interacting with other users is fun, but it's also really useful to get feedback on your photos to improve your photography skills. If you consistently upload to Instagram, some of your photos will get more likes and comments than others. That information can help you adjust and improve your photography skills. To get likes and followers you need to attract viewers to your photos and your profile.

There are 7 ways to attract people to your photos and your profile:
1. Upload photos with hashtags
2. Give likes and write comments on other users photos
3. Follow other users
4. Ask for shout outs
5. Upload photos (to large group of active followers)
6. Get on the popular page
7. Help new Instagramers

As a beginner Instagramer (with less than 1,000 followers) the first four ways are certainly the most effective (and easiest) to up your likes and followers.

As you may have expected, likes and followers will generally come from 7 places:
1. Users reviewing hashtags
2. Users that you have "liked" photos from, who in turn take a look at your profile. These users are also potential followers.
3. Users who have heard about your photos from another Instagramer (in the form of a shout out)
4. Your existing followers - more likely when you have over 500 followers
5. Users reviewing the popular page - when your photos reach the popular page
6. The most common ways of getting likes and followers comes from the first three methods listed above.
7. New users you help out.

As the number of people following your feed increases so does your odds of being featured on the popular page, thus maximizing your chances of getting new followers even further. We'll discuss techniques for reaching the popular page, but to do so you must first have a sizeable number of followers. Don't worry…you'll get there.

So now that you know where the likes and followers will come from, what techniques can you employ to get more of both? We have listed our top 7 techniques in this book, in order of what we have found to work best.

Technique 1: Use Popular Hashtags to get Likes and Followers

Adding a hashtag to your photos is a great way for users to quickly identify the subject of your photo. You can add hashtags in the photo caption and / or the comments of your own photos, and there is no limit to the number of hashtags you add to a photo. Adding hashtags (especially popular or commonly used hashtags) ensures your photo will be seen by users who review hashtags as albums. A hashtag is considered "popular" when it has anywhere from fifty to one hundred thousand photos in the search results for that term.

There are some hashtags that remain popular all the time and they include:
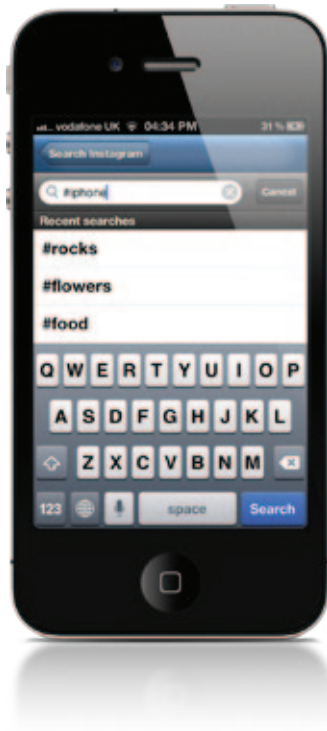
#iphoneography

#iphonesia

#iphone

#bw (black and white)

#sunsets

#cats and #dogs

#sky and #clouds

#sea

#sunset

There are a few other ways you can find popular hashtags. You can use the search function of web-based Instagram viewers such as inKstagram.com or Statigr.am (among others) to find out which hashtags are the most popular at any given time.

If you want to search hashtags from your iPhone there are several apps you can use, but Instagallery is a good starting place. If you've already downloaded the Instagallery app simply tap the 3 silhouettes icon at the top right, then tap "Search tags". Enter a search term into the space provided and you'll be shown the results with numbers of photos.

Look for hashtags in the comments left on photos of other users and check their popularity on Instagram itself, inKstagram, Statigr.am or Instagallery.
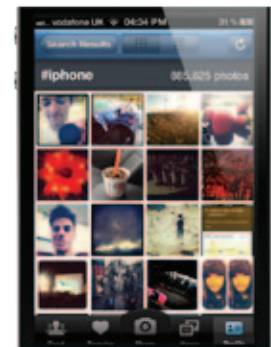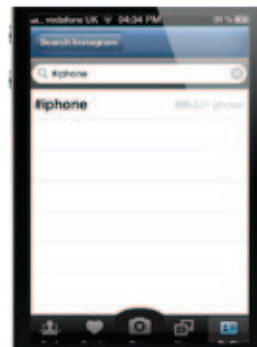
"Try to use tags that have a steady or growing number of photos attached to the term or subject."

For example, you may get a few likes from a photo that is connected to a hot news topic, but after a few days that tag will not be as effective. Be sure to continuously check the popularity of a hashtag to ensure you're using the most effective tags for getting likes and followers.

If you want to quantify popularity in numbers, if the number of photos in a particular search grows quickly (at a rate of 20 to 30 photos every hour), then use it. Otherwise you can ditch it in terms of boosting your likes and followers, but that's not to say you may still find it useful for inspiration...we'll take a closer look at this idea later in the book.

Technique 2: Like and Comment on Other Users Photos to get Likes and Followers in Return

For a user with less than 1000 followers, liking and commenting on other users photos is definitely one of the fastest and easiest ways to get reciprocal likes, comments, and followers.

The basic process is very simple:

1. Take a new photo or choose a photo to share from your camera roll.
2. Add relevant and popular hashtags, and upload your photo. For the purposes of this example, let's choose #flower.
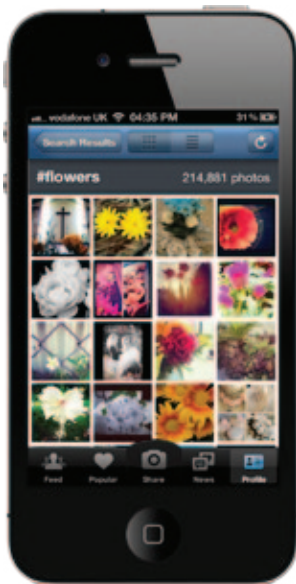
3. Tap one of the popular hashtags to view the photos for that hashtag.
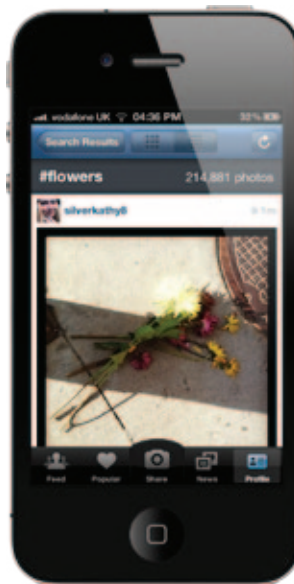
4. Switch to list view (at the top of the page). The grid view will slow you down when you come to the next step as it increases the number of taps necessary to get the job done.

5. Double tap on the photos in the list, to like as many photos as you can. You should aim to like at least 3 pages of photos. To do that you'll need to hit the "load more..." button at the bottom of the page at least 3 times and "like" every photo on those pages.

6. Repeat the process until you reach the last hashtag you have included on your own photo. If you've got the time or inclination, you can start all over again with the first hashtag and like all of the new photos that have been uploaded to that hashtag since you began!

## As you employ Technique 2 consider these points:

The upload time of the photo (visible in the top right of the photo in the feed - circled right) is important because the more recent the photo, the more likely the owner of that photo will be to look at your feed immediately or shortly after they receive the alert that you have liked their photo. Essentially the idea is to hit them with a like when they are in the Instagram groove, so the more recent the photo, the better. If you like a photo within a few minutes of it being uploaded you'll be in with a good start!

For your like to be effective, it needs to be visible to the person who uploaded the photo. Once a photo receives over 10 likes, the usernames of the people who have liked the photo are no longer shown in full, and the owner of the photo is less likely to see or click on your user name. Therefore it's most effective to like photos that have less than 10 likes so you have a better chance of the people whose photos you like checking out your feed via your username (highlighted right).

In terms of getting reciprocal likes and follows, it's not worth the time spent liking photos on the popular page. The photos that are on the popular page are always from users with a large number of followers, and they rarely follow beginner or intermediate level users. The popular page is a great source of inspiration, but won't really get you anywhere in terms of likes and followers.
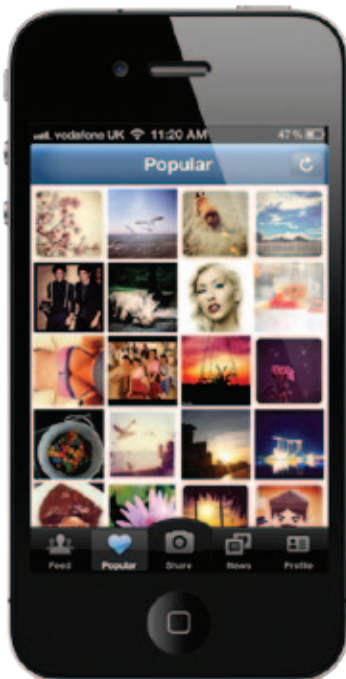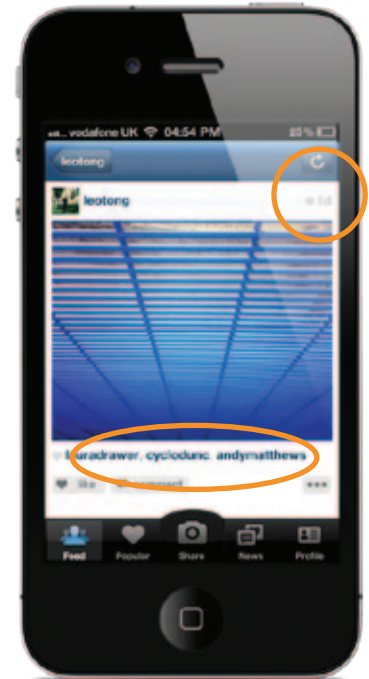
You can like photos of the people you follow or your existing followers, but there is no guarantee that the user is online to like your photo or follow back.

If you've got a bit of time to spend tapping around on Instagram, you should try to like photos of users that have less than 100 followers. We'll discuss this further in Technique 7, but you are more likely to get a reciprocal follow from someone who has less followers, as opposed to more established users with thousands of followers. Ideally, you want users who actively use their feed, and who only follow a select number of people and therefore don't have that many photos in their feed at any one time. Ideally if those people follow you, they are likely to see your photo as soon as you publish it and in turn they will be more inclined to like your photo.

"The popular page is a great source of inspiration, but won't really get you anywhere in terms of likes and followers."

About Commenting

Commenting on another users photo is another very helpful approach to get likes and followers, however it is much more time intensive than liking. So in order to be time effective, you should be a bit picky about how and when you leave comments. A good rule of thumb is to choose users with under 100 followers, avoiding users with lots of followers (generally, if a user has above 1000 followers your comment will most likely go unnoticed).

Do try to answer every comment that is left on your own photos. Not only is it courteous to give a quick reply, but it's also very important that other visitors can see that you are actively involved in the Instagram community. If you take all comments on board and take the time to answer the comments left on your photos, you encourage a greater sense of community, and ultimately encourage people to follow your feed.

Celebrate your profile milestones (ie 50,100, 1000 followers, or 50, 100, 500 likes on a photo) and be sure to thank your followers!!! You can do this several ways, either get really creative with some photo editing or create a message especially for your followers! Check out the widely used Tweegram app to create and share quick photo messages. If you want something more personal and a little bit different, you can use an app like Phoster. There are tons of creative ways to thank your followers, just be sure to do so!

Finally be sure to congratulate your followers too! Not just for the quality of their photos, but also for their achievements including numbers of likes and followers. Don't forget that Instagram is a community, when you become part of the community you will have much wider success!!

When to Like and Comment

The time of day that you post, like, and comment is important. To get likes, you need to consider the countries where Instagram is used the most; that is the US, the UK and Japan. If you post when users in those time zones are more likely to be using Instagram, you'll get better results! Also consider what time of day most Instagramers will be using the app; in the morning around breakfast, at lunchtime, and in the evening usually just after dinner.

Additionally, certain days of the week can be better for posting, they are: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and on the weekends. You may see slightly less action on a Monday as this is when people gear up to start the work week. Fridays may be slow too, as people tend to be running around in an effort to wrap things up at work before the weekend. Finally, in the evening people are either out with friends or relaxing with the family, therefore less likely to be on Instagram.

Everyone needs a little break during the week and Instagram is a great way to take a few moments to unwind from work. The weekend is, of course, when people have the most time on their hands and therefore it is the most active on Instagram. Follow the activity patterns to get the best results!

Technique 3: Follow Other Users

As with Twitter, following Instagram users and hoping to get a follower back is a commonly used technique and it does work…BUT…there are 2 major drawbacks to employing this method. First, your feed will be cluttered and many of the photos in your feed will not be of high quality or will not appeal to your tastes. Ultimately this can take some of the fun out of using Instagram, certainly if you're having to wade through tons of photos in your feed just to get to the good stuff.

Second, the ratio of followers to people you are following does speak to the quality of your photos. If you are following many more people than are following you the natural interpretation of that is that you have employed the technique purely to get more followers which has nothing to do with the quality of your photos.

So regarding followers, there are 3 scenarios that you could aim for:

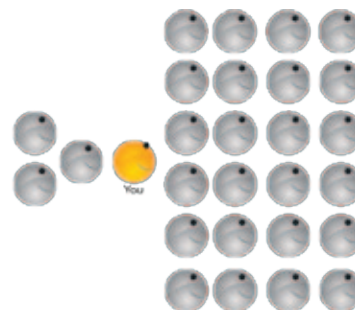*1. Many more followers than people you are following.*
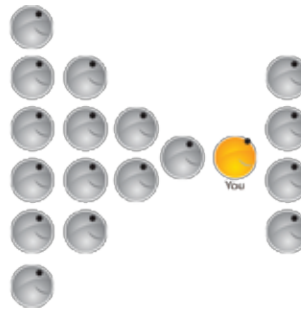
2. Equal number of followers to people you are following.
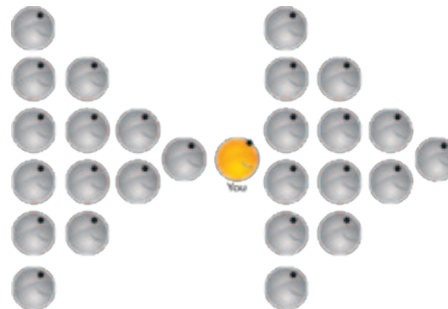
3. Following many more people than there are following you.

If you are a good photographer, you should ideally be in the first scenario, or possibly the second, but try to avoid the third at all costs. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for very good photographers, who are new to Instagram, to end up

in the third scenario because they don't understand the implications of following other users just to get a follow back. This is in no way a tribute to the quality of their work and makes it more difficult for the numbers to even out over time.

Growing your number of followers by maintaining an even ratio (position 2) takes time. It requires making a conscious decision regarding who to follow and it's important to take the time to make a good decision, so the process can be quite time-consuming.

The first scenario is the most desirable position, and surprisingly…it can be the easiest…as long as you use the Like and Comment campaign technique! It's very simple, but requires a bit of discipline, at least at the beginning. When you start out on Instagram, you must resist the urge to follow users when they follow you, or if they ask you to follow them. You might even get a few harsh comments when people realize you rarely follow back, but do not fall into the trap, simply remain steady applying the method. Once you have a few hundred followers, you'll have more leeway to follow other users.

If after all that you still want to try this technique, we have a few tips for you:

- Do not leave comments with the promise to follow back, it looks cheap and only attracts followers that are not likely to appreciate your photos (so you won't get that many likes from them anyway).
- Refrain from following a bunch of people and then unfollowing them shortly after. It feels rude and won't do anything for your Instagram reputation.
- Follow users that are active (look at the date of their latest photos).
- Select users that have photos you like. Even though it's more time intensive, you'll have a better quality feed.
- Leave comments on photos of users you truly admire and appreciate, but do not ask them to follow you. Many users will naturally check your profile, and if they like what they see, they'll follow you.

Remember: avoid following people purely in the hopes that you'll get a follow back. Your feed will end up cluttered and the overall Instagram experience will not be as enjoyable.

"It will be very difficult to get onto the popular page if you follow more people than are following you. Don't be tempted to use this method to gain followers."
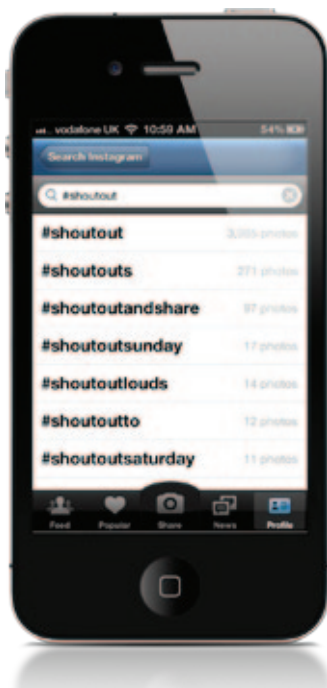
You like the book?
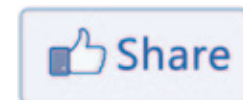
👍 Share

Click to share it!

Technique 4: Ask for Shoutouts.

Asking for shoutouts might seem a little bit presumptuous at first, but there are many popular Instagramers that are willing to give shoutouts, so it can be an effective way to get more likes and follows.

There's two different ways to go about it:

You can search for the #shoutout hashtag using a web app or the Instagram native search. Select users that have given shoutouts already and who have a sizeable number of followers (above 200), politely ask them to check your photos and ask if they would be willing to do a shoutout for you.

Another way to get shoutouts is to visit http://populagram. appspot.com/ and enter shoutout in the search box and select users that have been on the popular page with their shoutout. This is a more effective technique as these users usually have over 1000 users. For best results try the first technique then move onto the second when you have a little bit of practice asking under your belt!

"Instagram is definitely not the place to be shy...join the community. Be nice and ask for help. You never know what might happen!!"

Technique 5: Upload Photos

Uploading photos works to get likes and followers if you already have a fairly high number of followers (more than 1000). Once you reach a fairly large number of followers, you will gain more likes and followers by simply uploading a photo to your feed. Admittedly, this is not the most effective route to grow an Instagram presence for beginners, but if you work slowly and steadily to reach this number you will see the benefit in uploading photos with a good following.

There are still a few important things to consider about uploading photos. The images that get the strongest response are almost always visually appealing, attractive, interesting, and well-composed. Of course, the catch here is that users with lots of followers still get likes on just average photos simply because of the number of connections they have. Certainly across the Instagram app the photos with the most appreciative comments are aesthetically pleasing shots. We have already mentioned that Instagram is a place to share your photographic art, and while that means you may have to find ways to make the mundane details of life a little bit more interesting, it doesn't necessarily mean to share a photo of every little thing you eat, or every time your dog fetches a stick. It is truly the most unique and incredible photos that get the best response.

In addition to the quality of the photo, the caption is also incredibly important to the reception and success of the photo. The caption you write gives viewers your take on the scene, not only does it give the photo context and meaning but it's a little bit of insight into how you feel about the photo yourself. A good photo most certainly tells a story, but it is accompanied by the caption which helps the story take shape.

Source: http://captionwit.com/peekaboo-squirrel/

Write compelling captions – whether funny, poignant, sad, true, or completely made-up; a good caption sets the scene.

Here are some caption examples for the photo to the left:

- No way! I'm not having my photo taken today!
- Looking for me?
- Hey dude, check your shutter speed!
- Gimme that camera!
- Oi you, under the hoodie...I'm back here!

There's also a bit of methodology to consider when uploading photos. There is little point in uploading all of your photos at one time, in one big batch. It's much more effective to upload one at a time, using the drip-feed approach.

The reasons are very simple:

1. If you publish all of your best photos in one burst, you run the risk of your followers missing all of your photos – since they will appear consecutively in the feed.
2. People are less likely to like all of your photos at once, so they'll choose one or two that they like and leave the rest.
3. Everyone likes a bit of fresh and juicy content! If you upload all of your best stuff at once your profile will remain stagnant and it won't take long for the photos to feel a bit stale.

So, the best way to go about it is to upload a nice photo, do a like and comment campaign (as mentioned above). Then repeat the process every day until you've reached a hefty number of followers. Keeping a nice back stock of photos will help you maintain a good momentum.

> *"Shoot frequently, and edit your photos as you go along. Share your best stuff once a day, or every other day, with a like and comment campaign immediately following your upload."*

Technique 6: Getting on the "Popular" Page.

Getting on the popular page is very gratifying and confirms your status as a true Instagramer! It also massively increases your odds to get likes and followers!

What it really takes to get to the popular page of Instagram is one of the world's best-kept secrets (only the developers really know what it takes)…but there are a few things all of the popular photos have in common:

- most popular photos get at least 60 to 100 likes, within 30 minutes of uploading (depending on the time of the day and the day of the week)
- most users who reach the popular page have well over 1000 followers

In short, getting to the popular page depends on the number of likes you get in a short period of time.

✓ 60 LIKES in 30 minutes…

"To reach the popular page, you need to get a lot of likes, in a very short amount of time. As a rule of thumb, aim for at least 60 likes in 30 minutes or less."

As you already know, there's 2 ways to get likes quickly:
1. From your active followers
2. Carrying out like and comment campaigns

The first way is certainly the easiest and the least time consuming; it also stands to reason that the people who reach the popular page consistently are the ones with the most followers. As a beginner Instagramer, there's very little chance you will reach the popular page until you have at least 500 followers - they must also be active followers who are liking and commenting on all of your photos. Even with that level of followers, you'll still need to supplement your uploads with like and comment campaigns to ensure you get the required number of likes, within the appropriate timeframe. To do this be sure you are uploading photos at a time when the majority of your active users are likely to be on Instagram – see above for our time recommendations.

Note: The above recommendation is an estimate. We do not have access to the algorithm that Instagram uses to calculate the exact number of likes you need to reach the popular page. We also expect that the algorithm may change over time as the app itself changes...however, the general principles on this page do work. Essentially, if you aim to get a lot of likes in a short period of time, rest easy that you're doing all you can to reach the popular page.

Technique 7: Helping New Instagramers Get To Grips With The Process

Helping out new Instagramers is a fantastic, and relatively easy way to get more likes and followers to your own page, as long as you can provide real help to people who may need it.

There are two things you need to know to apply this technique:

1. How to find the new users.
2. What help to give.

You may remember when you first signed up to Instagram that the app very kindly suggested some users you may want to follow. The users Instagram suggests generally have great photos and a lot of followers, so it's fair to assume that they are most likely handpicked by Instagram. That said, since the suggested users are seen by so many new users, many of their followers will be new to the app. So with that in mind you can seek out the new users and offer them your help.

The only small issue here is that the way the suggested users info is set up in Instagram, you cannot directly view a suggested users profile without navigating out of the suggested users page and into the search function. So we've come up with a quick process that should help you, but does require the use of your iPhone as well as another computer or somewhere you can easily use an Instagram web app, like an iPad. Here's the process:

1. Open up Instagram on your iPhone, navigate to Profile > Find Friends > Suggested Users
2. Now open up an Instagram web app on your computer or iPad. Statigram is a great place to start…
3. In the search box on the web app you are using, type the name of the suggested user you've selected
4. While looking at the users profile, click on their followers and all of the followers should appear with the most recent followers first. Some of these people may be able to use your help!
5. Click on one of the users, and if they have uploaded a photo leave a nice comment to welcome them, then move on to giving a bit of help (see below).
6. If they have not uploaded any photos yet, mention them in a comment on one of your photos.
7. Repeat the process with other new users.

What help can you offer?

The only way to communicate with other users on Instagram is through comments, so if the user has already uploaded one or more photos, you can leave a comment on one of those photos. If they don't have any photos (many new users do not) the only way you can communicate with them is by mentioning them in a comment on one of your
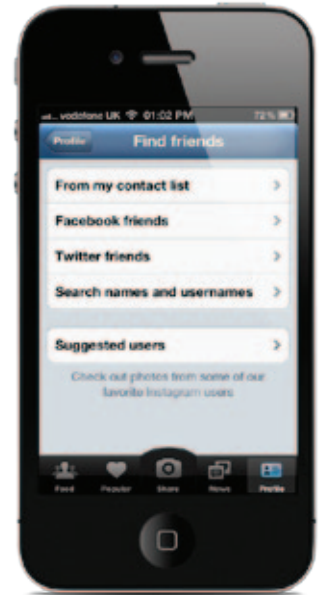
own photos. We suggest you first give them a nice welcome to the community, and then simply offer up a few quick tips such as:

- Did you know that you can double tap any photo to like it? It makes the whole process much quicker and easier!
- Did you know that the quickest way to reply to another users comment is to tap and hold the username? It saves the trouble of re-typing the @username handle!

You could even go as far as to suggest that he or she downloads this ebook Instagram: The Definitive Guide, which is available through our profile @thebeginnerslens. Several other users have given a shoutout for the guide, so you'll be in good company. See what we did there? Ahem…

Using The Techniques: Running the Numbers

If you're anything like us, you'll want to know what the odds of getting likes and followers are using the various techniques we have mentioned. Admittedly, this is quite difficult to evaluate. It is absolutely dependent upon on the quality of your photos, the effectiveness of your captions and your profile description.

Based on our experience with 2 active profiles, here's what we estimate you could achieve:

"For every 100 photos you like, you'll get approximately 20 likes back and 5 followers. Working on the assumption that one like takes about 5 seconds, 100 likes will take about 8 minutes."
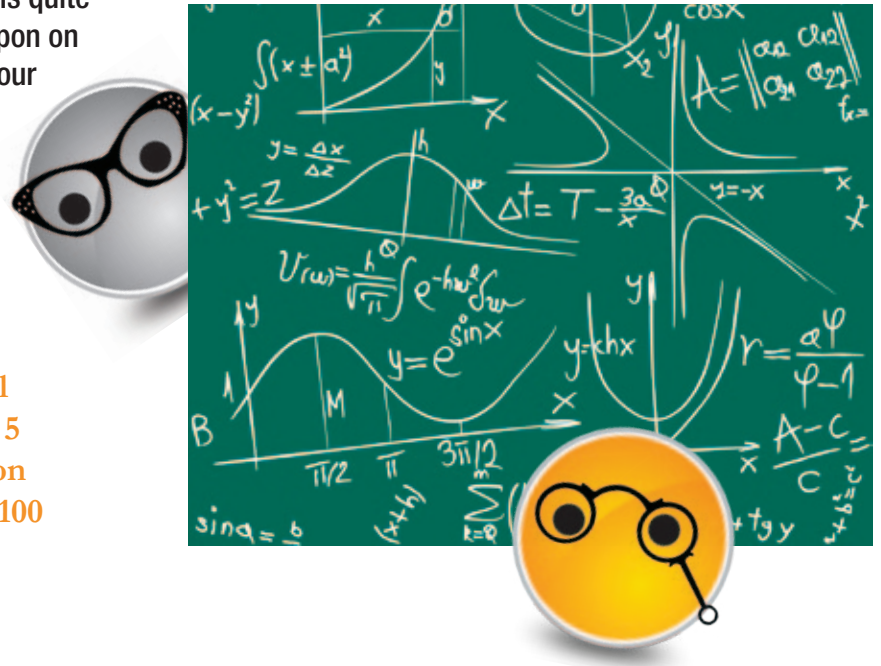
As you can see, this is totally feasible! And if you keep at it regularly, you will garner a nice number of followers within just a couple of months.

You like the book?

Share

Click to share it!

Get The Most Out of Instagram

Optimize Your Sharing With Statigram

We have mentioned Statigram before, in relation to the various web apps that are available for Instagram. However, there are several ways you can use Statigram to learn about your Instagram feed, and ultimately improve it! We have found three of the stats that Statigram provide particularly useful they are:
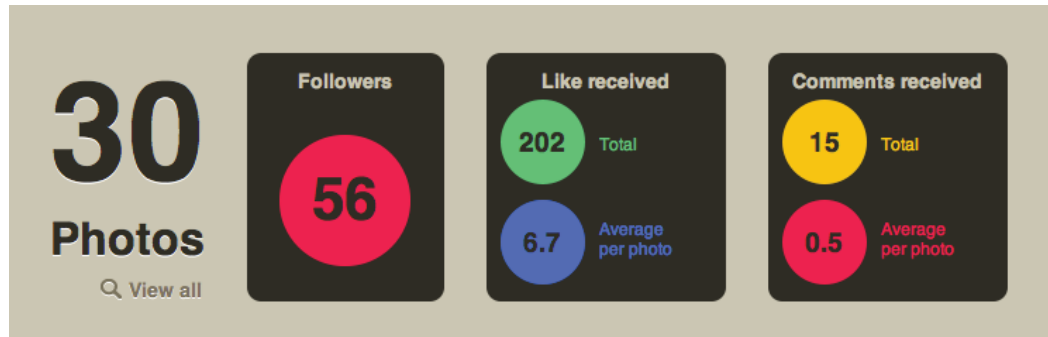

Statigram's basic stats. What's interesting here are the 2 averages; the average number of likes per photo and average number of comments received per photo. This is particularly useful as each time you post a photo; you can gauge how well it is received by your followers. By comparing each photo's number of likes and comments to the averages, you'll get a good sense of what works and what does not!

The next set of stats we want to highlight are related to your Instagram activity. The number of likes you've given is rather important, in particular if you compare it to the number of likes received (which we discussed in Technique X). In a nutshell, the number of likes given relative to the number of likes received should be larger for beginners. As mentioned before, we would expect a beginner Instagramer would be actively viewing lots of photos and liking them to attract users to their profiles, in the hopes of getting more followers. As a user builds their following, the number of likes received will increase with every photo uploaded, up to the point that the number of followers (which will eventually reach the thousands) makes it practically impossible to give more likes than are received.
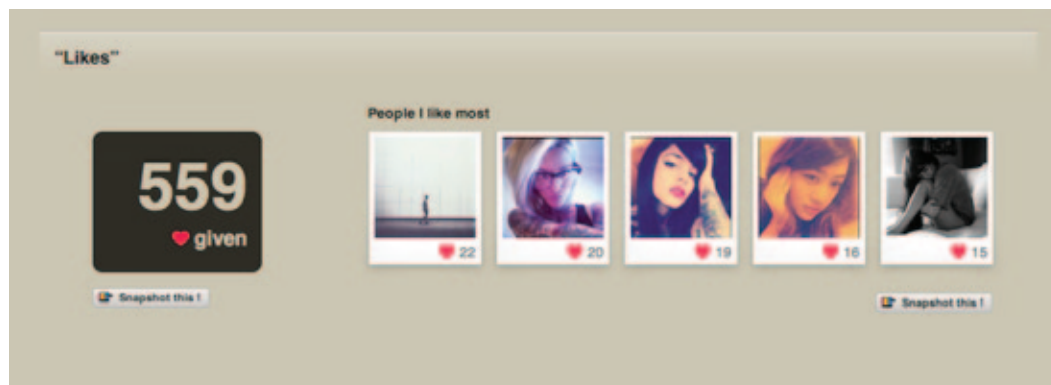
Finally, we'll look at the following chart, which displays your posting habits. This graph is very useful when looking at ways to optimize your sharing.
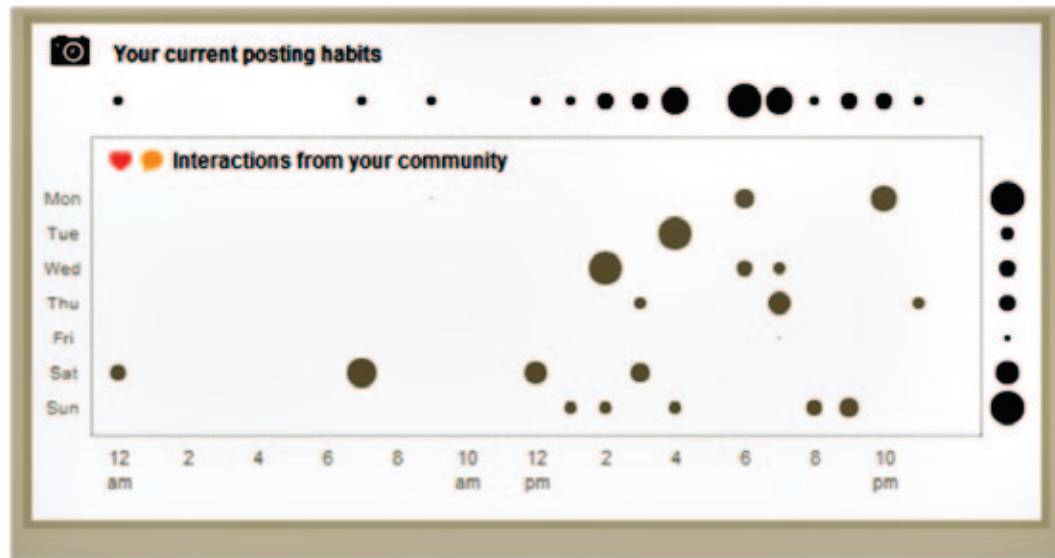
The black dots at the top of the graph show the times of day when you are most actively publishing. The black dots to the right of the graph show the days of the week when you are most actively publishing. The larger the dot, the more photos you share on that day.

The light grey dots in the graph itself show when your followers interacted with the photos you share (i.e. when they posted likes and comments). The bigger the light grey dots, the more likes and comments you received for that day and time.

On this particular chart, you can see that the user tends to have 3 times during the week when their community reacts to their photos: Saturday mornings, Wednesdays early afternoon, and Tuesdays mid-afternoon. This user happens to be posting (large dark dots) on Sundays and Mondays, and therefore may not be getting the best response for the time that his community is online.

If this particular user changed their posting habits to coincide with the time that his followers are more likely to interact, there would likely be a significant rise in comments and likes.

Do note that this chart is based on a limited number of photos, and they will be totally different for you. This description is only for illustration purposes.

You like the book?

👍 Share

Click to share it!

Instagram Uncovered
Get The Most Out of Instagram

Get Inspired!

Instagram is a great source of inspiration for photographers of all levels, but particularly for beginners and intermediate photographers. Not only is it inspirational, but it's also a great place to learn about photography.

"Most importantly follow good photographers, and people you truly admire."

If you like a particular photo, take a screenshot by holding the home button and the power button at the same time. Your screenshot will be saved to your camera roll, where you can organize the screenshots in albums (using iOS5). You can then come back to the photo several times to review it, take a deeper look to understand what you liked about it, and start to think about the techniques the photographer used to achieve the photo.
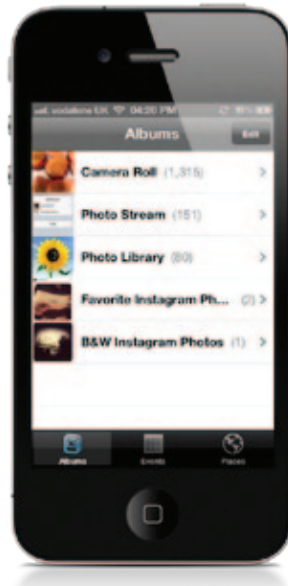
When you see a photo you really like and you don't know how it was created, simply ask the Instagramer how they did it. Ask specifically what apps, accessories, shooting steps and editing steps they went through to get the final shot. It might be tempting to ask everything all at once in the comments, but the least intrusive way to do this is to start a conversation by leaving a compliment and asking a little bit about the process. You can progress to asking the rest of the questions as the user responds.

Review hashtags related to specific photo techniques to see a variety of photos taken using that technique.

Some popular technique hashtags are:

- #hdr (for high dynamic range photos)
- #silhouette
- #fisheye
- #bw (for black & white images)
- #texture
- #abstract

By focusing on a specific technique you'll get a good idea of what's possible, what you like about a particular photo and what to avoid. You'll also be able to ask specific technique questions as the photos are all of one type. Copy your question to the iPhone clipboard and paste it in the comments of several relevant photos to maximize your chances of getting a reply.

Album Hashtags *(This technique does not work with photos other than yours anymore)*

When browsing Instagram for inspiration, you might also consider adding "album hashtags" on photos you really enjoy, to create your own album as a type of bookmark for the photos you like. We are calling them "album hashtags" because they are essentially your own reference point giving you a way to save and review the photos you really like on Instagram in one place.

To explain this method a little bit further, find photos that you like – either using the hashtag search function or as your browse. These photos will be of a certain type, technique, or will have another distinguishable quality, for instance they could all use the earlybird filter.

Let's say you're into learning black and white photography. When you are checking out black and white photos on Instagram through the #bw tag, you are likely to come across a few photos that you like, perhaps a few that you would like to return to. The easiest way to do this is create your own personal album hashtag and enter it at the end of the comment. You could for instance put #bw+yourinitials at the end

of every comment you leave on a favorite black and white photo. When you want to view all of the black and white photos you love in one place simply search for the #bw+yourinitials hashtag and you will see them in the search results! This is a great way to organize the photos you love on Instagram, but just be sure to create hashtags that are memorable to you, as you will need to enter the full hashtag in the search function to retrieve all of the photos.

As a good way of remembering all of your hashtags you could post a photo and add all of your album hashtags in the comments, as a sort of album hashtag directory. Any time you want to review the directory, just navigate to the post and tap on the hashtag you wish to view. You can add hashtags at any time, just add another comment. Also, make sure the photo you upload gives an explanation as to what it is, you could use Tweegram to let your followers know you're creating an album directory for your own use.

You can also view all of the photos you've liked on Instagram via your profile, but if you do like campaigns, you will probably end up with a lot of photos you like but do not love. These will not be particularly helpful for learning purposes and you cannot classify liked photos in different categories as you can do with tags. As we explained above, the only way to group photos together is to create your own album hashtags.

Here are a few other examples for inspiration:
- #bw+yourinitials
- #HDR+yourinitials
- #portrait+yourinitials

Gauge what works by analyzing your own photo statistics. As we mentioned above, Instagram web browsers like Statigr.am can help you to put things into some kind of analytical perspective by giving you useful statstics about your photos and your Instagram account.

You like the book?

👍 Share

Click to share it!

InstaMeet

Another great way of getting further involved in Instagram is by sharing your experience with others. You could organize an Instagram Photo Walk, or set up an Instagram meeting (InstaMeet) in your area. You can use meetup.com to help set up your meeting, and to find local Instagram communities.

http://www.meetup.com/instagram

If there's no local InstaMeet in your area, why not start your own? Here are a few tips for setting up an InstaMeet of your own:

- Join a local InstaMeet or start your own.
- Promote your local meetup on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and anywhere else!
- Local photography groups are another great place to promote.
- Meet at a bar, park, or picturesque spot in your hometown.
- Keep it simple, just get together, talk about Instagram or take photos together.
- It's OK to start small. Two or three people is still a group!

Be sure to use the #instameet hashtag to share photos from your meetup, and don't forget to add the #instameet+yourcity (ie #instameetnewyork) hashtag to quickly view all of the photos from your meetup.
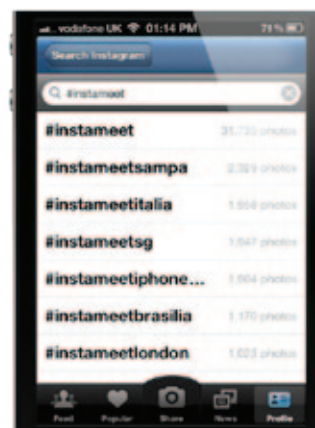
Top Tips For Instagram Success

## 1. Put Your Best Photo Forward…

The best way to get your photos noticed on Instagram is to always upload your best stuff. Although it's easy and tempting to snap everything and share it straight away…uploading too often and uploading photos of no real impact is not very appealing to other Instagramers.

Be sure to consider all of the "traditional" photography rules such as light, composition, contrast, geometry, emotion, and processing. And learn to starting thinking in squares. By that we mean try to get the most impact from the polaroid-type square limitations. Be creative and consistent and you will get noticed!
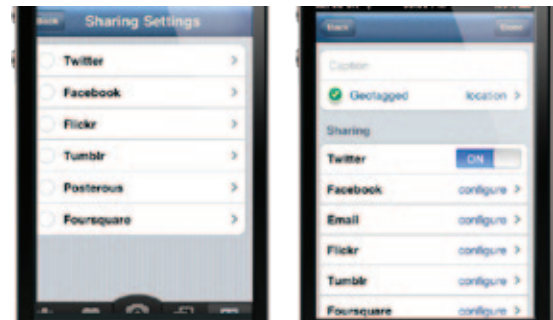
2. Share To All Your Social Networks

You can share your Instagram photos to several other platforms too. To set up your sharing preferences, go to your Profile and tap Edit Sharing Settings. Tap the tab you want to set up and input your details.

When you come to share a photo in the app you will have the opportunity to turn on sharing to this network as well.

3. Geotag Your Photos

Similar to hashtags, geotagging is another way for others to see your photos via the location-based search. Each location also has it's own page showing a map of that location and the photos that were taken there. Pretty neat eh.

Do note that geotagging all of your photos means your followers will know where all of your photos have been taken, that includes your house! So be aware of any photo locations you want to keep private and secure.

4. Use Hashtags For Every Photo

We mentioned before that hashtags are a great way to identify your photo,
but they're also important for getting your photos noticed. Many people
view photos by searching for hashtags, so using popular hashtags and descriptive hashtags (where appropriate) will help your photos to be seen by more people.

Some popular hashtags to consider are #iphoneography #iphone #bw (for black and white) #flashbackfriday #sky #cat #dog ….you get the point eh?

You like the book?

👍 Share

Click to share it!

5. Try HDR

If you haven't already, try shooting in HDR, either with the native camera app or with an HDR camera-replacement app. Shooting in HDR doesn't mean that you will have overly vivid and highly processed looking photos. You can edit your photos that way if you wish, but shooting in HDR gives a larger dynamic range which leaves you with many more editing possibilities!

To shoot in HDR with the native camera app on iPhone 4 and 4S, open up the camera and tap the options button, turn the HDR switch to on and shoot! Also remember when you shoot HDR the camera takes a series of 3 photos and combines them - one underexposed, one properly exposed and one overexposed. If you want to keep the original properly exposed photo in addition to the HDR photo, you will need to set your preferences in the settings app under the photo tab.
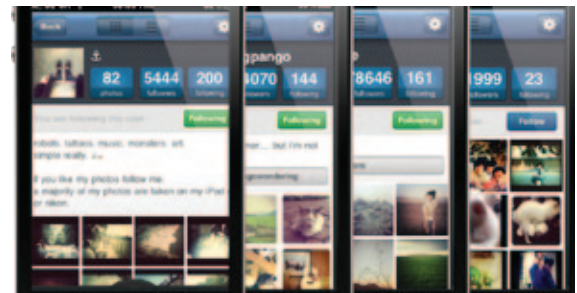
6. Find Your Own Style

Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but it's also important to find your own style. Use other photographers Instagram feeds as inspiration, find what you like about their photos and use that to create your own style.

Try to build your Instagram profile around your style and choose your photos carefully.

7. Be Part of The Instagram Community

The best way to get noticed and to be part of Instagram is to get in there and get involved. Leave constructive comments, start conversations, and be nice. Pushy, rude, or mean comments will not get you anywhere so don't even think about it.

8. Submit Your Photos For Competitions

There are loads of opportunities to submit your photos to Instagram competitions, and this is just another way to join the community and get involved. Plus you could win some pretty cool prizes too. Instadailyapp.com is a great place to start.
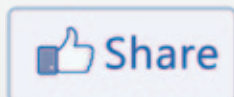
9. Use The Instagram Web Resources

There's absolutely TONS of Instagram viewers, web resources, and other useful tools on the Internet. Take a look at Statigram, Inkstagram, or Gramfeed for starters. These platforms are really useful for seeing your feed online, and for finding new users when you've got a bit of time to browse the Internet.
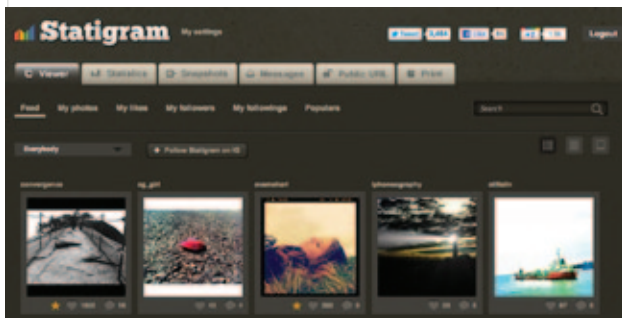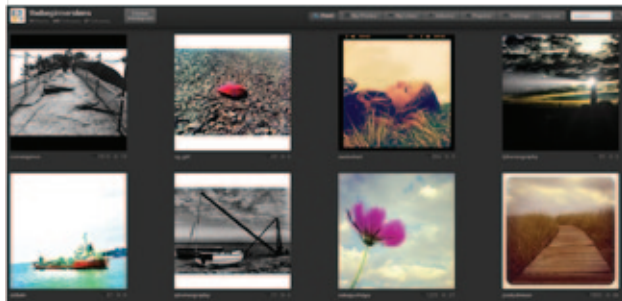
You like the book?

Share

Click to share it!

10. Decorate Your Life With Instagram

There are a bunch of very cool resources you can use to print your Instagram photos, or create other fun keepsakes like posters, stickers, and even actual polaroids!

Check out a few of these sources to see what you can do with your Instagram photos!

- http://instagoodies.com - Stickerbooks!
- http://postagramapp.com - Send actual Instagram postcards to your pals.
- http://instaprint.com - A travelling polaroid photo booth from Instagram photos.
- http://printstagr.am - Mini books, teeny books, and posters, oh my!
- http://teenytile.com - Make a teeny tiny tile from your Instagram photos. So cool.
- http://stickygram.com - Fridge magnets from your Instaphotos! Yes please.
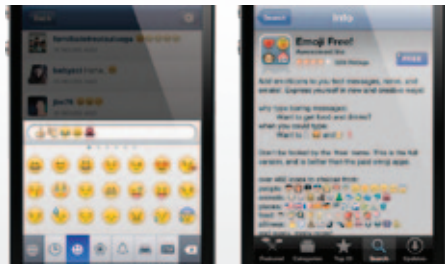
11. Use Emoji In Your Text

Ever wondered how Instagramers use those swish smiley faces and other fun icons in their captions and comments? Well now you can too! iOS5 has Emoji already built in, to activate Emoji for your phone do the following:
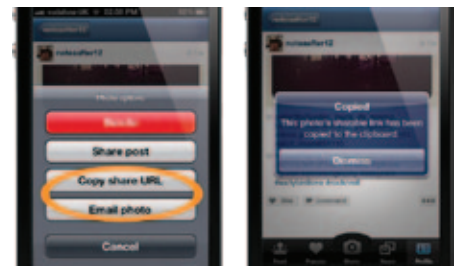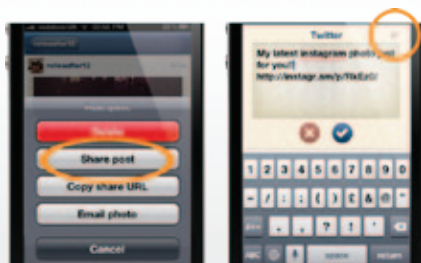
1. Tap Settings > General > Keyboard
2. Tap International Keyboards
3. Tap Add New Keyboard
4. Locate and tap Emoji

If you are on an earlier iOS, simply search for: Emoji Free! in the app store.

12. Share An Instagram Photo By Email

There are two ways to email a photo from Instagram:

1. If you want to insert an Instagram photo into an email that you've already written, tap the ... button underneath your photo. Tap Copy Share URL and the URL of that photo will be copied to your clipboard. Navigate back to your mail program, tap and hold to paste the URL into your email.
2. If you want to insert an Instagram photo into a new email, tap the ...button underneath your photo. Tap the Email Photo button and your photo will be inserted into a new email.
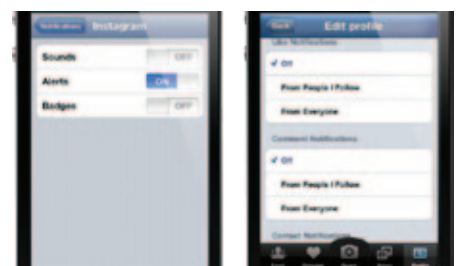
13. Make Sure Your Tweet Isn't Cut Short

Perhaps you want to share a photo on Twitter after you have posted it to Instagram? Or you may find you want to change the caption you used for Instagram to make it more suitable for Twitter. In either case, you do this through the photo options. Navigate to the photo you want to tweet about, tap the ... button underneath the photo and tap Share post. If you have several sharing options set up choose Twitter. Type your Tweet. As you type, check the character count in the top right hand corner of the screen to ensure you don't get cut off. You can use up to 145 characters for one tweet.

14. Set Up / Modify Push Notifications

Instagram sends a notification every time a user likes or comments on one of your photos, mentions you in a comment, and when your photo hits the popular page.

1. To turn notifications on / off globally (left image): exit Instagram and go to the settings app. Tap notifications, scroll to Instagram, and use the switch to turn Alerts on or off. This will effect all of your notifications.
2. Modify your in-app settings (right image) : go to your profile and tap edit settings. Scroll to manage profile, tap notifications and choose settings.

15. Get A Follow Me Button For Your Blog.

If you have your own website, blog, or online presence where you want to add a "Follow Me on Instagram" button, you need to know about Followgram! The Followgram service creates html code for your very own follow button, not only that but they also create vanity URL's. Huh? A vanity URL is a unique Followgram URL so you can direct all of your followers to your
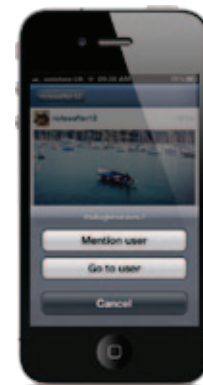
Followgram page. Go to: http://followgram.me

16. Tap & Hold A Username

There are two things you can do when you tap and hold a username:

1. Mention that user in the comment thread of the photo you are viewing - this is a great way to quickly reply to a comment!

2. Go to the users profile.

17. Download All Instagram Photos

Want a quick way to download all of the photos you've uploaded to Instagram? You can also download the last ten photos, or specify dates to download...and even better, you can download all of the photos you've liked! Simply go to http://instaport.me, sign in with your account details and start the export! Easy peasy!
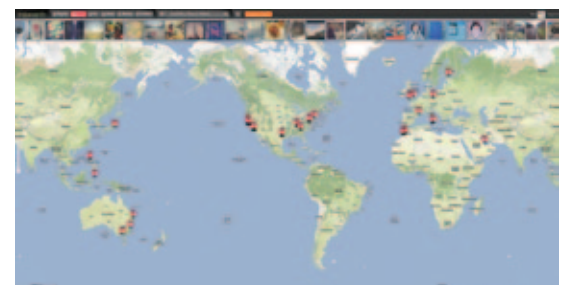
18. Instagram Map View

So you already know about the map view within the actual Instagram app, and now you should also check out InstaEarth...a totally awesome world map view of Instagram. View the popular page by location, your feed, your photos, as well as the photos you've liked. Despite all of those cool features, our favorite thing about InstaEarth is the Nearby and In View options.

Nearby gives you a view of all the photos other users are uploading, so you can see every photographic upload hapenning in your hood.

19. Best Practice Tips

Back To Top of Feed

As you are viewing your Instagram feed, you will likely scroll down quite far to see all of the new images. To quickly return to the top of your feed tap the top of your screen, where the battery level and time are displayed to go back to the top of your feed!
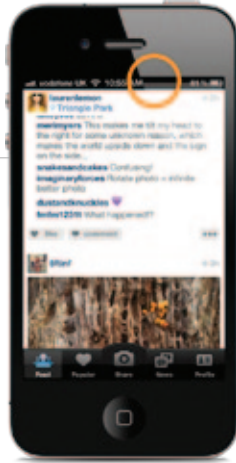
Double Tap To Like

While browsing Instagram, all you need to do to quickly like a photograph is double tap it!!

How To Unlike

If you want to Unlike a photo after you've already liked it, just tap the Like button underneath the photo. It will only unlike if the button is highlighted with a red heart.

List vs. Thumbnails
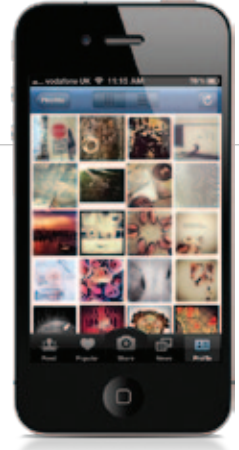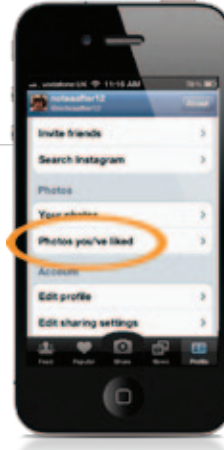
While browsing Instagram, we have found that using the List view is much more convenient than using the Thumnail view... why? As you view thumbnails, if you see something you want to "Like" or comment on, you have to take one extra step to open the photo first. Seems simple, but List view saves a lot of extra tapping!
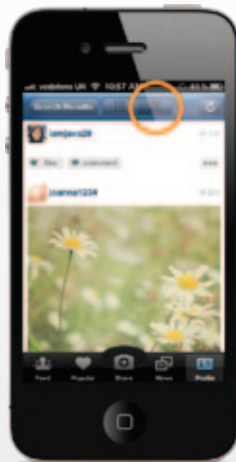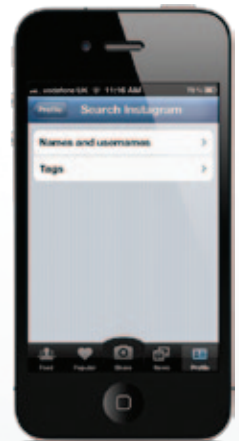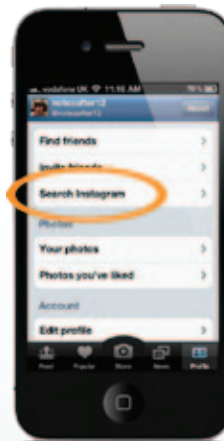
20. Profile Tips

View All The Photos You've Liked

To view all of the photos you've liked as thumbnails or as a list, navigate to your profile and scroll down to Photos You've Liked. Easy. Use the options at the top of the page to switch between thumbnails and list.

Search For Users and Tags

We covered this briefly in the section on hashtags, but we'll go over it again quickly here as a reminder. If you want to search for a user by name or for a specific hashtag, navigate to your profile and tap Search Instagram.

21. The Instagram Pulse

If you want to get a sense of the amount of activity, (ie the Instagram pulse) at any given time, survey the time of a few photos of the popular page. If most photos are in the 1 to 2 hours range, then Instagram is not very active. If they are in the 20 to 40 minutes range, then Instagram is very active.

22. Alternate Shoutouts

If you want to give someone a shoutout but you're not keen on writing something in Tweegram, why not take a screenshot of one of their images and upload it to your feed? Be very careful that you ALWAYS credit the photographer by using their @username handle in the comments and be sure to use the #notmine hashtag so there is no doubt that the photo belongs to someone else.

For the record, we are not endorsing the use of other people's photos to fill your feed (yes, it happens!), we are simply offering this option as an alternate way to give a fellow Instagramer props for their great photo. We absolutely do not approve of using other peoples work as your own.

Give credit where credit is due and be a Insta-do-gooder!

23. Using Several Accounts

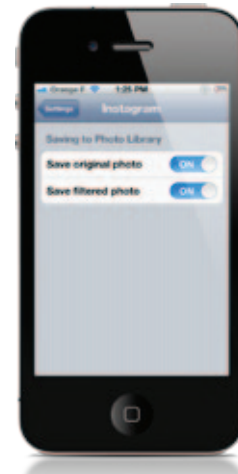If you have several Instagram accounts, try the Fotogramme app to easily manage your multiple profiles.


24. Saving Hi-Res Photos

By default Instagram uploads a 612x612 low-resolution photo to your Instagram feed, this ensures that you are the only person with access to the high-resolution (print-size) images. To ensure that you save a high-resolution copy of your own images to your camera roll exit the Instagram app, open the iPhone Settings app, scroll down to Instagram. Make sure that the Save filtered photo switch is turned ON.

Privacy & Other Community Tools

Anyone using Instagram can see your photos, if you want to show photos to only your followers you can make your photos private (not recommended for getting likes and new followers). To do this tap on your profile page, and scroll down to the Privacy settings. Turn the photos are private switch to on. When this switch is turned on anyone who wants to look at your photos must send a friend request first.
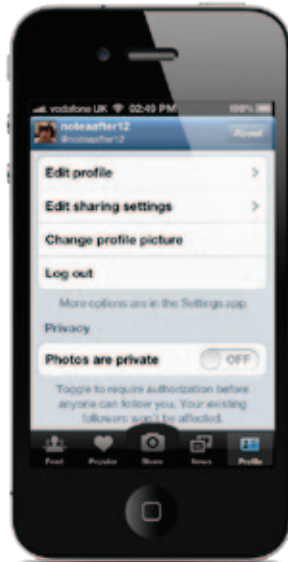
Flag a photo. If you happen to come across a photo that is offensive or that you think may be breaking the Instagram rules, tap the … (Options button) and hit the Flag for Review button. Enter the reason you feel the photo should be reviewed and then hit Submit.

If someone leaves an offensive comment on one of your photos you can delete the comment simply tap comments on the photo and swipe your finger across the comment you want to delete.

If for any reason you want to report or block a user, navigate to their profile via their username and tap the gear icon in the top right corner of their profile page. Tap Report or Block User. To unblock a user, tap the gear icon again and tap Unblock.

Final Words

So we've reached the end of this eBook, and if you've made it this far, you've surely learned a heck of a lot about Instagram! You not only have the skills and know-how to be proficient in one of the most popular social sharing apps around, but you've also probably learned a bit about photography too...at least we're hoping so.

Of course, we couldn't possibly have covered everything about Instagram in this one book, so please do share any of your best tips and tricks with us on www.thebeginnerslens.com. Also, don't forget that our iPhone Camera Essentials video course is the perfect way to learn everything you could ever want to know about iPhoneography, from shooting and editing to sharing, and much much more! Visit www.iphonecameraessentials.com for more details on how you can learn to take incredible photos with your iPhone!

Finally, we hope that you've found this book to be inspirational. We hope that you too have been drawn in by the fun and influential social network on one of the world's most fascinating photo sharing platforms, Instagram. We look forward to connecting with you in the app! You can find us @ thebeginnerlens.

Until next time,
happy iPhoneography
from Guy, Audrey, & The Beginners Lens team.

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