



Instagram

It's time to check out Instagram. It is not just about selfie-obsessed teenagers. It's an established platform that your Learn Local can use to connect and build awareness. And like many social media platforms – it's free.

What is Instagram?

Instagram is a social app where you can share photos and videos from a Smartphone. Millions of photos are shared on Instagram every day. Many Australian not for profit organisations have an active Instagram presence.

Why should I use Instagram?

Instagram is a great way to reach young people and to share visual stories about your organisation. It's also a way to promote the many and varied activities going on at your Learn Local.

How does it work?

Even though Instagram can be viewed from a computer desktop, it is primarily a mobile platform. When you post an image or video to Instagram, it's displayed on your profile. Other users who follow you will see your posts in their own feed. Likewise, you'll see posts from other users who you choose to follow.

It's worth thinking of Instagram as a 'simplified version of Facebook' where you can connect with other users by following them or by them following you. Similar to Facebook, Instagram users can comment, like, tag and message.

How do I register?

You do need to download the Instagram app to your mobile. The Instagram app is available to download from the Apple Store and the Google Play Store.

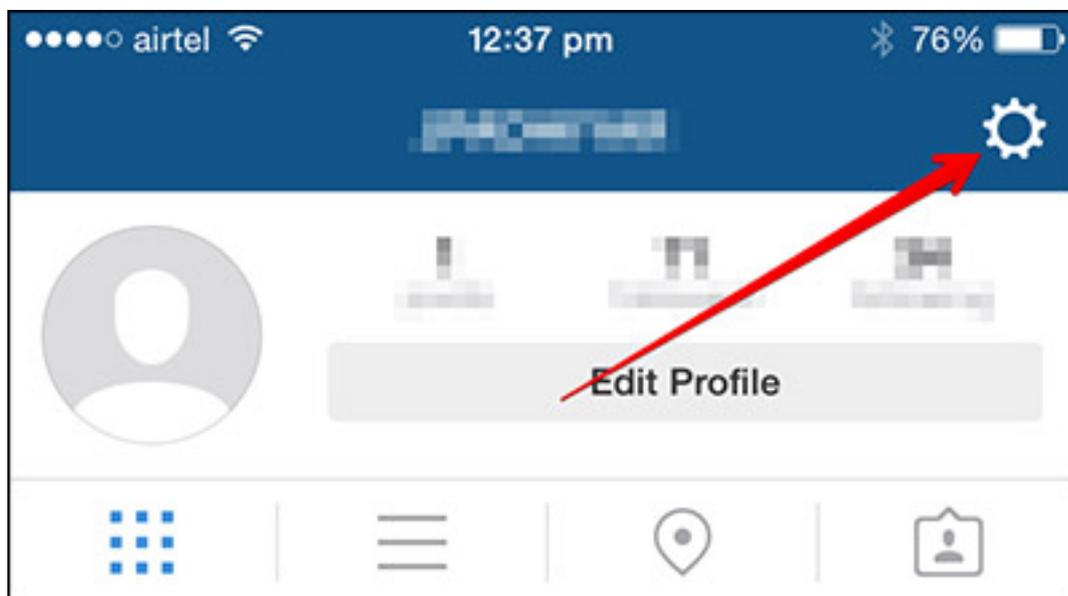
To register, you just need to connect your Instagram account to Facebook or enter your email. Signing up with Facebook fills information in for you, including your name and profile picture, but you'll still be prompted to create a username and password.

Instagram accounts are public by default, but you can create a private account where only the users you approve can follow and view your photos. To change the privacy settings go to the **Profile** tab then **Privacy**.

After you have registered, you can change your profile image, and you've got 150 characters in which to describe your organisations, its activities and to link to your website. Make use of this by giving a concise description of who you are or what you do. You can use this space to feature a call to action and branded #hashtags as well.

If you are running a conference or a competition, you can change this link to direct people straight to it as well and in a post you can always say "Link in bio".

To change settings, you need to tap the gear button located in the top-right corner.



Make sure your Instagram account has been converted to a "business account" to receive analytics and insights. To do this, you'll need to connect the account with your business's Facebook page by following the in-app prompts from the "Switch to Business Profile" option (in Settings).

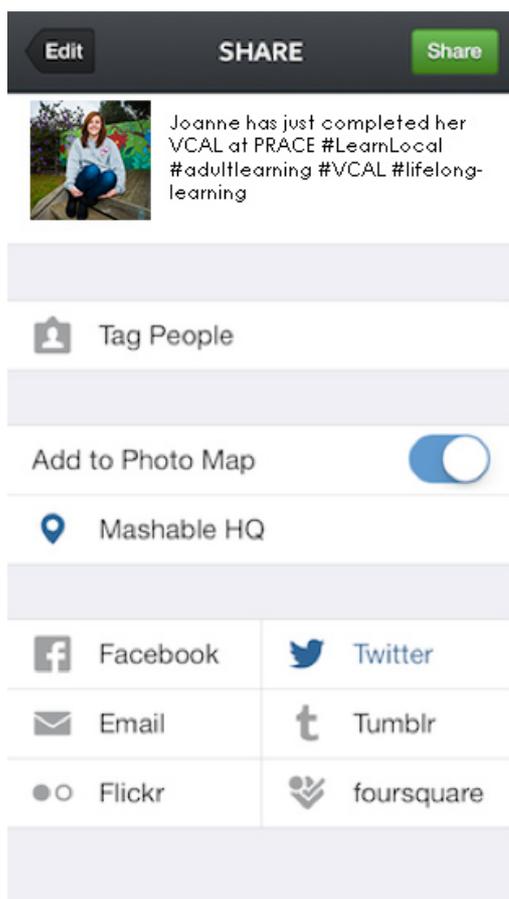
How to follow and get followers

After you've set up your profile, start 'following' some people or organisations. Use the magnifying glass on the bottom left to search for names or #hashtags you like. Once you start following people or organisations, they will get a notification and they may follow you.

A good way to get more followers is to use relevant #hashtags in your posts, because some people/groups just search for #hashtags they find interesting, and yours might be one of them.

When you've followed some users, you will see their photos appear in your news feed, which is accessed by tapping the house icon on the left side of the navigation panel. Alongside user photos, you'll see people who have liked or commented on the photo.

Adding photos



To upload a photo/video to post, click the rounded edge square in the centre of your Instagram navigation panel. You then get the option of: Library, Photo or Video. If you choose a photo from your camera roll, you can make it a square or keep it as is. There are also 24 Instagram filters that add different layers to your photos.

Using #hashtags

If you use Twitter, you will already be familiar with hashtags, which is a great to get followers and reach specific audiences. Remember to make sure your tags describe your photo. Avoid very general hashtags like #photo because it won't make your photos stand out from the crowd. Keep your #hashtags to a minimum, 1–5 is a good number.



A hashtag can really be anything, but it should be short, relevant and a bit conversational. Here are some examples: #LearnLocal #lifelonglearning #adulted, #community, #LovetoLearn.

Engaging with your audience.

A good way to get more likes on your Instagram photos is to use the photo caption to ask a question that encourages likes and comments. Remember to reply to people's comments and try to add a extra touch of personality to your account – this encourages people to comment more.

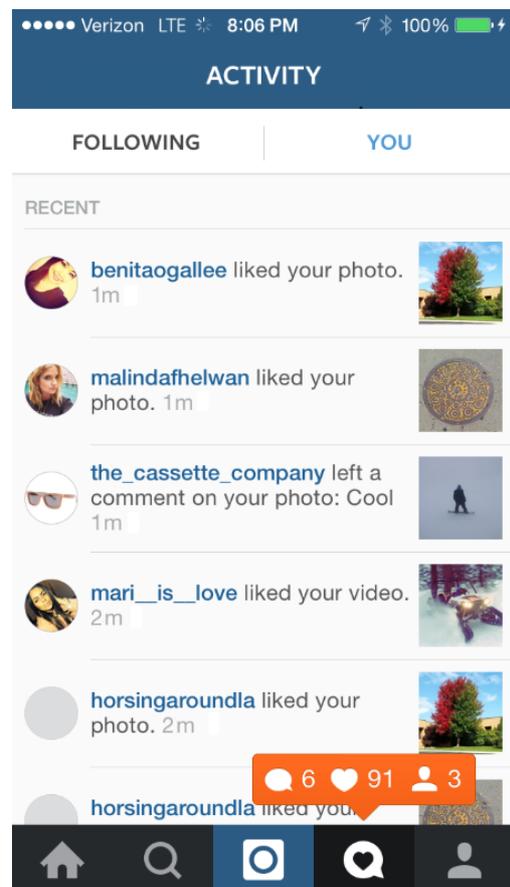
To 'tag' someone in a post, use the @ symbol and their Instagram name. This will then notify them that you have mentioned them in a post. This also applies to comments, you can tag anyone or a group in a comment as well.

Notifications

You can control which notifications you will receive. For example, you can choose to be notified when:

- someone likes or comments on one of your photos
- someone @mentions you in a comment
- your photo is posted to the Popular page
- you are tagged in a photo.

To control your notifications, click **Settings** and then select **Push Notification Settings**.





Connecting to other social media

You may choose to link Instagram to your Twitter and Facebook accounts. To do this, go to the **Profile Tab > Edit Sharing Settings**, then choose the network you wish to connect.

Each time you upload a photo to Instagram, you'll have the option to share to the enabled social networks or not. If you choose to not to share to social networks, the photo will post only to Instagram.

Instagram for desktop

There is no official Instagram for desktop; however, there are a few third party apps that allow you to log into your account and use all features. This is handy when more than one person is managing an Instagram account. Here are a few suggestions:

Gramblr (Free, Windows & Mac)

Flume for Mac (Free, \$9.99 for Pro)

Need help?

Instagram has a help centre that is available on desktop or mobile.

<https://help.instagram.com>.