

# Instagram



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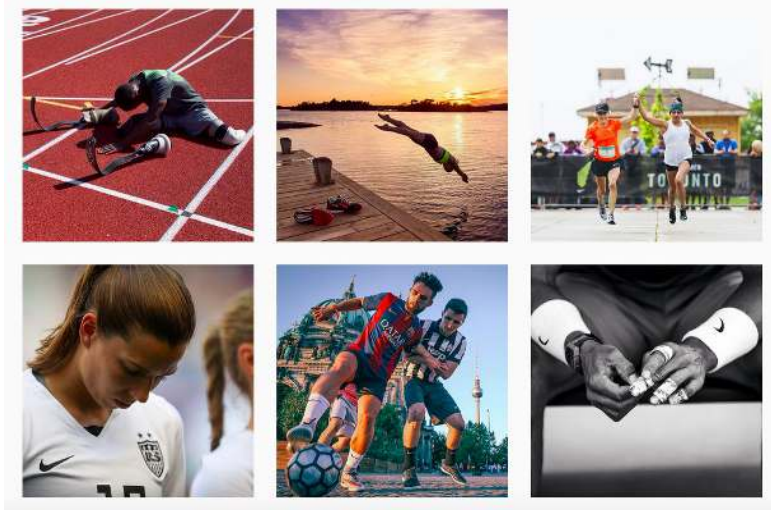
Let's get started - in just 6 simple steps, you'll be on your way to growing your followers.

Unlike Facebook or Twitter, Instagram users are a lot, lot more free-handed with liking and commenting. This is where your advantage lies with Instagram - but to make things interesting, you are limited to expressing whatever you have to with just an image!

## **Step 1: Identify the theme(s) for your posts**

This is the most important step, and the most research intensive. To connect with your audience on Instagram, you will have to post images that appeal to their lifestyle. This is why Instagram is a lot easier for apparel, accessories, and home decor businesses - but that doesn't mean other businesses can't use it.

If you've got apparel, accessories, or home decor, your posts could simply be any kind of apparel, situation, or event that appeals to your target audience. Have a look at some of these photos from the Nike Instagram account(@Nike):



Can you see how each photo focuses on people more than products? They are showing images that appeal to athletes - these posts highlight athleticism, dedication, and having fun.

Think about what “ideas” your brand represents. What is the “message” that your products put across? How does it make your customers “feel”?

These are the types of images you should share. You can take them yourself, or even a quick Google Image search will yield some neat images. Just remember to give credit where it is due in the comments if you are using someone else’s picture!

## **Step 2: Identify hashtags**

Now that you have an idea of what kind of posts your target audience will like, it’s time to find some relevant #hashtags.

Instagram is really great because a lot of users search for images and content based on #hashtags, so it is very, very easy to get discovered by lots of people so long as you are using a popular #hashtag.

To find some #hashtags, head over to a website like [Webstagram](#) and simply do a search for a word or phrase(without any spaces) and the service will spit out some suggestions.

Webstagram will also show you how many posts there have been(to date) for a particular hashtag, so the more posts, the more popular it is.

The screenshot shows the Webstagram search interface for the keyword 'mensfashion'. At the top, it displays 'Search Results for " mensfashion "' and a search bar containing 'mensfashion'. Below the search bar, it shows 'User Keywords : mensfashion'. The main content is divided into two columns: 'Tag Search Results for " mensfashion "' and 'User Search Results for " mensfashion "'.

Tag Search Results for " mensfashion "	User Search Results for " mensfashion "
#mensfashion 5,032,376	M.F. mensfashion Men's Fashion
#mensfashionreview 279,687	MFP mensfashionposts mensfashion@instapartners.com
#mensfashionpost 213,123	M.F.P. mensfashionpost Men's Fashion Post
#mensfashionblog 44,548	mensfashionc MensFashion
#mensfashions 31,271	MENS mensfashions MEN'S FASHIONS
#mensfashionblogger 30,923	MFT mensfashionteam
#mensfashionweek 29,927	mensfashion_blog mensfashion
#mensfashiontips 20,472	
#mensfashionfix 13,972	
#mensfashionstyle 8,000	
#mensfashionweekchicago 5,901	
#mensfashioner 5,414	
#mensfashionadvice 4,846	
#mensfashionscout 3,682	

A quick search for “mensfashion” yielded all of these results, and clicking on each tag will show you the latest images that have those tags. If those images seem like familiar territory, add the tag to your list. Repeat.

You can also browse some of the top accounts in your niche(seen on the right in the image) and see what tags they are using for more inspiration.

Richard Lazazzera from ABetterLemonadeStand suggests a neat trick where you break up your tags into categories, where you can easily copy and paste only the relevant tags for every time you post.

### Step 3: Fix up your profile!

Before you have a flood of people visiting your profile, you’ll want to add a nice profile picture, a nice description, the link to your website, and put up

some preliminary posts - so when people do come visit, they don't see a blank page.

Remember to post relevant images and use proper #hashtags!

#### **Step 4: Identify influencers in your niche**

Next up, you want to identify the big players in your niche - you may have already come across these people while doing your #hashtag research. These are the people you will reach out to for sponsored posts.

Influencers that readily accept sponsored posts will usually have some method of contacting them in their profile, such as a Kik messenger account or their email address.

Good influencers are those that have followers in the tens of thousands(preferably), and each of their posts should receive a proportionate amount of likes and comments. If someone has 50,000 followers but their posts only get 30 likes on average, that's a red flag.

Get in touch with your influencers, and start preparing some good posts to share on these accounts. Remember, the goal of these posts can be manifold - they may lead to direct sales, or they may also lead to new followers - either is good.

#### **Step 5: Craft an awesome image post**

What constitutes an "awesome" image for your audience is really going to be subjective. For inspiration, you can see some previous sponsored posts on the influencers' profiles - see which posts got the most likes and comments, and try to emulate those.

In these posts, you don't want to have a general image - *put your product in the post*, but when possible, show it in use, not just as a normal image you'd find on a product page.

Add a short description to go with the post(product name, why it's cool, and a link to the product), as well as any hashtags you want it to show for.

It's also beneficial to *ask for following you* in the description.

Shoot off this post to your influencer after you've paid them, and watch the likes and hopefully sales and followers come in.

Repeat.

### **Step 6: Grow your followers organically**

To grow your followers organically, you will have to follow other people and like/comment on your images. Of the images you like and comment on, and the people you follow, some will follow you back.

Filter who you follow by removing those that didn't follow back, and repeat.

You can also grow your following by linking to your Instagram account from everywhere: your website, your other social profiles, and your emails.

So there it is - Instagram in 6 easy steps! So get cracking, start building a following, and watch your business grow!