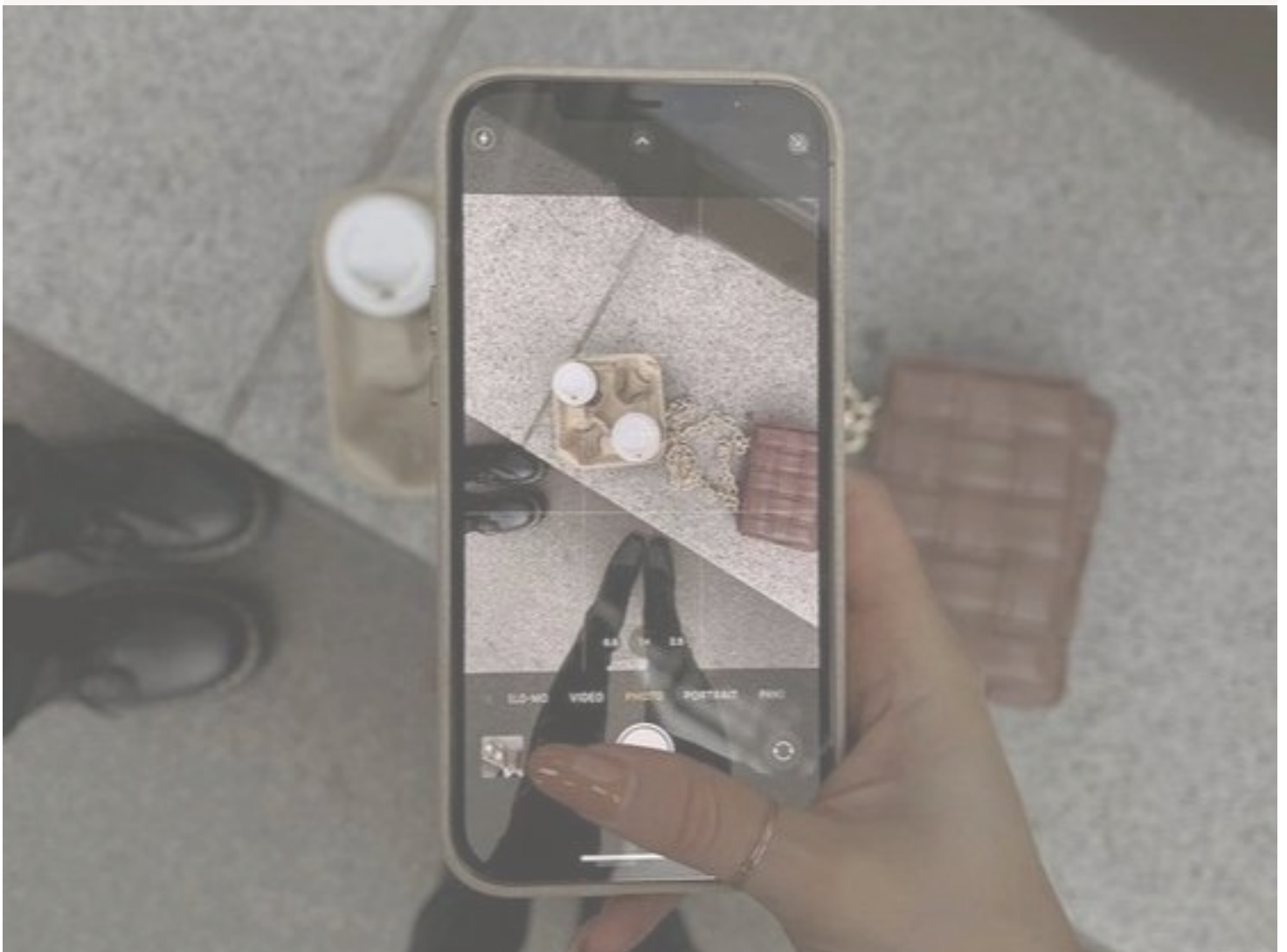


THE

# NO-FLUFF

THE GUIDE THAT ELIMINATES  
THE GUESSWORK TO MASTER  
INSTAGRAM

@YOURROADMAPBESTIE



# Welcome!

You have made the first step into the world of digital marketing! I take it you have googled, YouTube-ed, researched but you feel overwhelmed so you went ahead and invested in this course, well thank YOU for investing into your future, let me say HI first!!



## LET ME RE-INTRODUCE MYSELF

My name is Maraya, I am a burnt OUT corporate Personal Trainer. I got into management at a local gym thinking I wanted to 'climb the corporate ladder', after a few months of success and learning curves, I was blind-sided when they "demoted" me back to personal training.

Safe to say, it was a blessing in disguise because now I'm in a position where I can pursue digital marketing full time.

I have a very direct/no bull shit communication style. I think excuses are just a way to say you're actually lazy. I hold high standards to people around me and tend to focus on the success of others rather than myself, which is what makes me such a good coach.

**My three things are** 1) One Day At A Time" or #oodat - as you'll see in all my captions, 2) What is your WHY? If your 'why' is big enough, you'll make it happen, 3) Proverbs 16;9

Maraya

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## 01. GETTING STARTED WITH INSTAGRAM

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### *Username and Name*

Your Instagram name and username are both searchable. Utilize Search Engine Optimization keywords that your target audience is actively searching for. This will help IG suggest your profile to the right people. If your username isn't your business name, make sure its easily discoverable and relevant to your brand. You can research keywords using Chat GPT, Urban Dictionary, [Google search console](#), or [Wordtracker](#).

### *Profile Photo*

Your profile picture should be used across all platforms you promote your business on so that your followers and clients can recognize your brand. Being cohesive with your branding, including your profile photo, helps give people the idea of familiarity. Make sure your profile photo is clear, bright and recognizable. If you would like to add a background to your photo, you can do so in Canva.

*Make your photo fun!* Show your personality and make eye contact with the camera.



## Bio

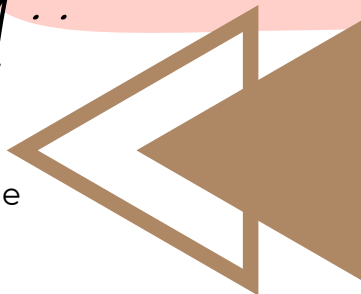
Craft a concise bio that tells profile viewers exactly what they can expect from your content. Keep in mind, Instagram will pick up on keywords in your bio, so when people are searching for someone in your niche, you want them to come across your profile (aka SEO) ! More than likely, the first thing people will read is your bio so make sure your bio clearly communicates the following:

- Who you are
- What you do
- Why people should care
- Clear call-to-action that asks people to follow and why (ex. a beneficial offer)
- The last line should be a hook for what you have to offer in your link.

You get 150 characters for your bio, but Instagram will cut off the fifth line not visible, it'll be hidden. So make sure to make the most of the characters in four lines! & get all the niche relevant keywords in that you can!

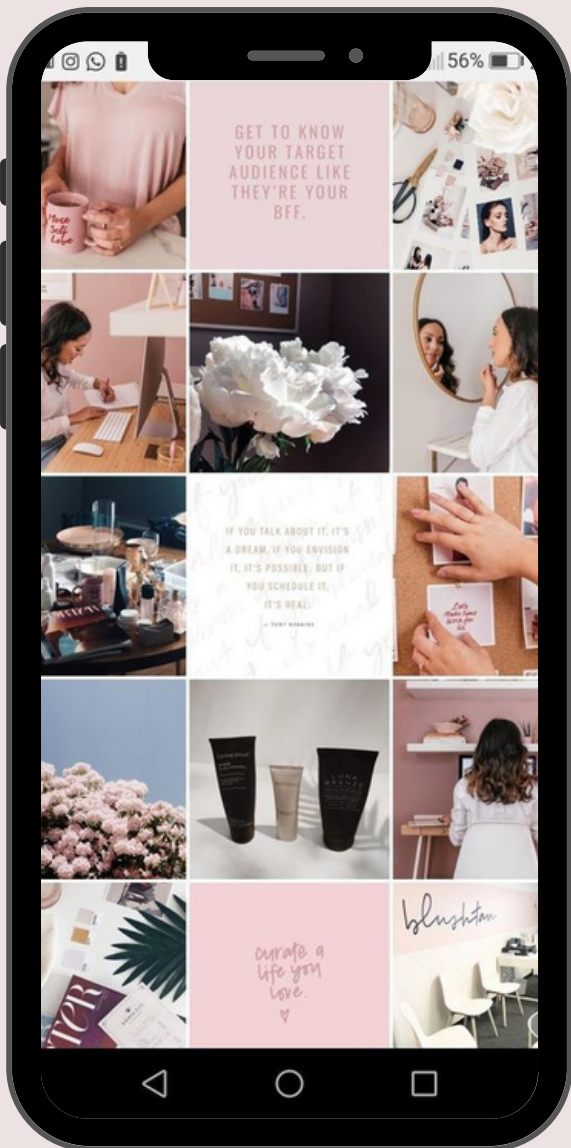
*I recommend...*

Pasting your Stanstore link in your Bio, so it's easy and readily available for any traffic going to your page



# Aesthetics

Does your content have a consistent color palette or style? If you look at some of the larger more successful accounts, you will notice that they all look cohesive. They have a perfect color palette for their branding from their logos, to their icons and fonts. You want to make sure you too are being consistent with yours. This lets your audience know you're professional and consistent. Play around in Canva to find color schemes and fonts combinations that resonate with your personality and your brand.



**Ensure that the following are on brand for you and be consistent!**

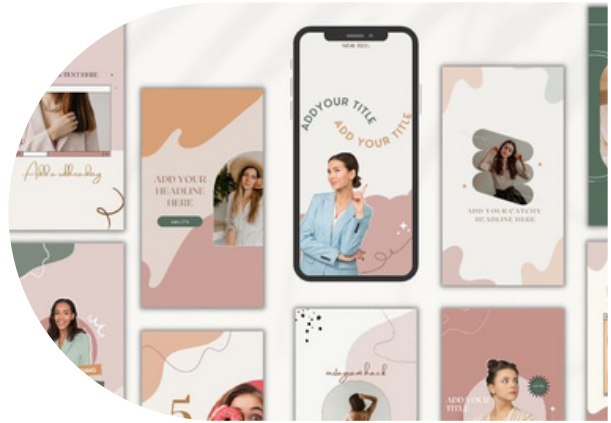
- Color Palette - Choose a color palette that resonates with you and use it all over your profile and content!
- Fonts - Be sure your fonts are consistent as well. Choose 2-3 fonts to use throughout your content. This will keep your overall profile looking clean and cohesive.
- Theme - The content you create should have an overarching theme that matches your brand and voice. This theme should be immediately identifiable to your brand. I should be able to view your last 8 posts and know exactly what your business does and who you are!
- Quality - Ensure your videos & photos are high quality & well-lit. This will not only give you a sense of authority in your niche but it will also make you look more professional and your viewers will want to stay around longer.

*be obsessed with your own page*

IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, OTHER PEOPLE WON'T LIKE IT

## Reel Covers

Reel covers are not an absolute must, but using them does have advantages. In short, reel covers will boost your views, help your followers know what to expect from each reel and create consistent branding that looks great on your feed. You can choose a reel cover directly from your reel or you can upload a pre-made reel cover. If you do decide to make your own reel cover, remember to use the color and font you picked out.



## Highlights

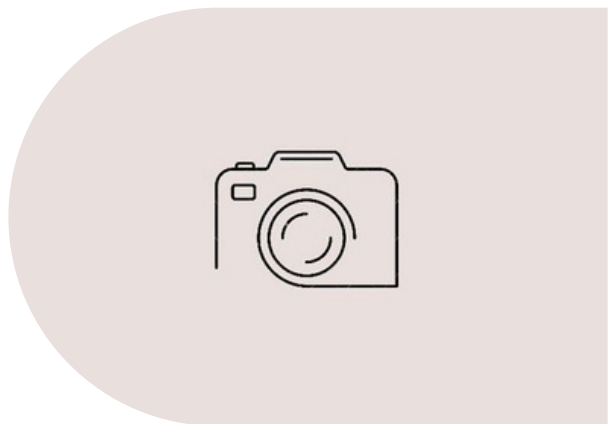
IG Stories Highlights are great promotional tools! Story Highlights are groups of stories that you can create and categorize that live on your profile. Because Highlights are featured right below your bio, followers see this content first - so it's totally worth spending the time planning and strategizing how to use them to your advantage! Keep in mind, your last updated highlight will be first on the line. This changes every time you update a highlight. Again, keep color and font in mind with your theme.



## Pinning Reels

You can choose up to 3 posts/reels to pin at the top of your profile grid. Pinned posts offer a curated intro to your brand and ensures viewers know who you are and what you do.

Remember this if you are trying to create a posting pattern on your page (ex. reel-photo-reel-photo, etc) Pinning something to the top may throw off your pattern.



## Analytics

It's important to keep track of your Instagram analytics. Analytics can tell you when your target audience is most active on the platform and what content is performing best.



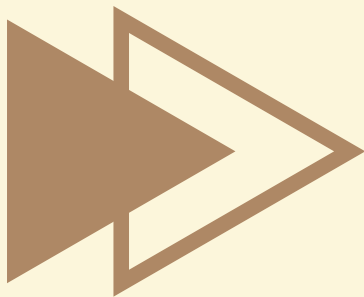
Ensure your account is a creator/professional account so that you are able to access analytics on each post. This will tell you your reach, your post views, audience gender and the average watch time.



Not sure how to read your analytics? Here's a simple tip! If your video is 6 seconds long but your average watch time is 11 seconds, you're doing great! This means that people are re-watching your video for more!



If your video is 7 seconds long and your average watch time is 5 seconds, it's time to make some adjustments. This means that people are scrolling before the end of your video.



*Average Watch Time is Important!*

The longer people spend watching your videos, the more your content will get pushed out to new people

## Size Matters

Profile Pic: 320 x 320  
Single image: 1080 x 566-1350  
Reels: 1080 x 1920  
Carousels: 1080 x 1350  
Stories: 1080 x 1920

**Pro Tip!** Instagram doesn't like when you post your content with black or white space on the top, bottom, or on the sides of your content. Use the correct size!

Also, keep that in mind if you are creating your own reel cover in Canva.

## Daily Limits

If you're a new account, stay well under the limits!

- Likes: 120 per hour
- Comments: 180 per day
- DM's: 50-70 per day
- Following: 200 per day
- Unfollowing: 200 per day
- Captions: 2200 characters
- Account Tags: 20 mentions per post

## High Quality

Ensure your phone is set for high quality video using these steps:

- Go to Settings->Camera
- Go to "Formats" & make sure "Most Compatible" is selected instead of "High Efficiency"
- Go to "Record Video" & select "4k at 60 fps" and make sure "HDR Video" is turned off as well as any cinematic styles
- Go to IG Settings ->Data Usage and Media Quality & turn on "Upload at highest quality"

## 02. CONTENT STRATEGY

You can't hard sell in all of your Reels! Most people can sense when they are being sold to and will quickly scroll away. These people don't know you, so expecting them to immediately buy from you isn't realistic. Creating content for everyone in your funnel is KEY.

### Types of Audience

Audiences are categorized based on their level of interaction with your brand (it's important to have a different marketing approach for each):

- COLD Audience - never interacted with your brand before, complete strangers (a.k.a. top of funnel)
  - This is where you create content to ATTRACT
- WARM Audience - have engaged with your content/profile or have become a follower
  - This is where you create content to NUTURE your relationship with your followers and convert them to customers
- HOT Audience - these are buyers; this is where the magic happens

### Sales Funnel

Steps of funnel include:

- TOP of Funnel - content to ATTRACT
  - Capture attention (strong hooks)
  - Make viewers aware of your product/services
  - Provide FREE value (not asking for a sale)
- MIDDLE of Funnel - content to NURTURE
  - Provide solutions to your followers problem
  - Establish how you set yourself apart from your competitors
  - Focus on educating your viewers without being "salesy"
- BOTTOM of Funnel - content to SELL
  - This is where you ask for the sale, just don't overdo it!



## Content Formats



### Single Image

*(saveable/sharable content)*

- Checklists
- Memes
- Quotes
- Personal milestones
- Mood board
- Promotion
- Work samples



### Reels

*(attract new followers)*

- Trends
- Behind the scenes
- Storytelling
- Transitions
- Talking head style
- Q&A Response
- Product reviews



### Carousels

*(nurturing your audience)*

- Photodump
- Case studies
- Collab post
- Blueprints
- Product showcase
- How to guides
- Toolkit



### Stories

*(building/interacting with community & making sales)*

- Ask me anything
- Q&As
- Polls
- behind the scenes
- customer reviews
- Product Launch
- Countdown
- Hyping up your upcoming products



## Keywords

Instagram is shifting to a search engine platform. With this being said, your discoverability rests on your use of SEO (*search engine optimization*).

The best way to boost your SEO is with keywords. Keywords are kind of like hashtags but without the #. You can use them within the body of your caption and in the on-screen text.

If you use a third-party app to edit your videos (like CapCut) make sure you add the text on screen in Instagram's app.

Instagram will not recognize text on screen that is created in other apps, thus decreasing your SEO.

Also, Instagram has made it known publicly that content that is edited in-app is pushed farther for people to see. So, personally, we recommend Instagram for all editing.

*Example: Be sure to follow @YourName for more make money online tips and how to work from home. Passive income through digital marketing is the way of the future! (Make this adhere to your specific niche)*

### pro tip #1

Add your keywords on screen in app. If you are adding multiple keywords, shrink them down super tiny and slide them off screen. This way, you will still capture the SEO but no one will see the keywords.

### pro tip #2

This is a newer strategy with keywords! Add in a "signature" at the bottom of your caption before your hashtags. This is a great way to get your keywords in without keyword stuffing.

## Hashtags

Although hashtags are helpful, they are no longer the end all be all of Instagram posts. When thinking about using hashtags, we suggest using 3-9 at most. They are not dead, but they don't hold as much weight as they used to. Don't stress too much or spend too much time focusing on them.

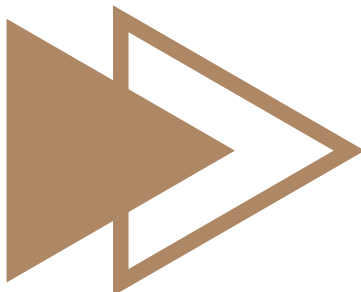
Once you find hashtags that work for you, copy and paste them into your notes on your phone so that you can easily access them each time you are posting. Having 2-3 sets of hashtags is best. That way you can rotate them throughout your content and see through analytics which are performing best.

Be careful not to overuse hashtags. The algorithm will flag you as hashtag spamming if you use too many different variations of the same word with multiple hashtags. Also, don't put your hashtags in the comment section of your reel or in your bio - this doesn't help you at all!



### pro tip

Be sure to check and see if your desired hashtags are banned. You can check your hashtags [here!](#)



# Hooks

Instagram will reward those who keep their viewers on the app longer! What does this mean for your posts? It means you need to keep them hooked on your content and your reels for as long as possible! Want to know how? Don't give them everything in your video. You want to give them just enough to leave them wanting more. Just like dating! You can't give it all the way in the beginning! ;) Direct them to your caption where you can give them the goods!!

## Triple Hook Strategy

This strategy uses 3 hooks in different spots to draw in the viewer

- Hook 1 - The movement/transitions in your reels will make your audience want to rewatch your reel
- Hook 2 - The text on screen will make the viewer want to read the caption, once again, increasing your watch time
- Hook 3 - This is the first line of your caption. Entice your audience to click on the first line of your caption so they will read the whole thing

## Stop-Scrolling Hooks

1. STOP doing \_\_\_ if you want\_
2. Struggling with \_\_\_? Here's a tip
3. Here's the truth..
4. Here's one tip to achieve \_\_\_
5. The biggest secret no one has told you
6. How to go from A to B
7. If I were to start \_\_\_from scratch, I would do these (number) things...
8. How I went from (result) to (Increased result)
9. Steal my strategy
10. If you want \_\_\_, watch this.



## Captions

The secret to increasing your average watch time (boosting your post) is creating an engaging caption. I'm sure you've heard the experts tell you "You need to provide value", well, this is where you add it! Writing a caption with info people actually need or want is KEY.

This information can be teaching, inspiring and/or entertaining for your viewer. The silent sell is everything so keep your viewer engaged, learning something from your content but not everything. This is where you can add your call to action (CTA).

Please do not use chat GPT, you want to sound real, not robotic!

## Call to Action

The Call-to-action (CTA) is the part of the caption or text on screen where you ask your audience to DO something. This is the second most important part of your caption. Examples and how to use them:

### For Boosting LIKES:

- Like this post if \_\_\_
- Double tap if you agree

### For Boosting COMMENTS:

- Let me know what you think
- Do you agree? Comment below

### • For Boosting SAVES:

- Save this post for later
- Save if you found this helpful

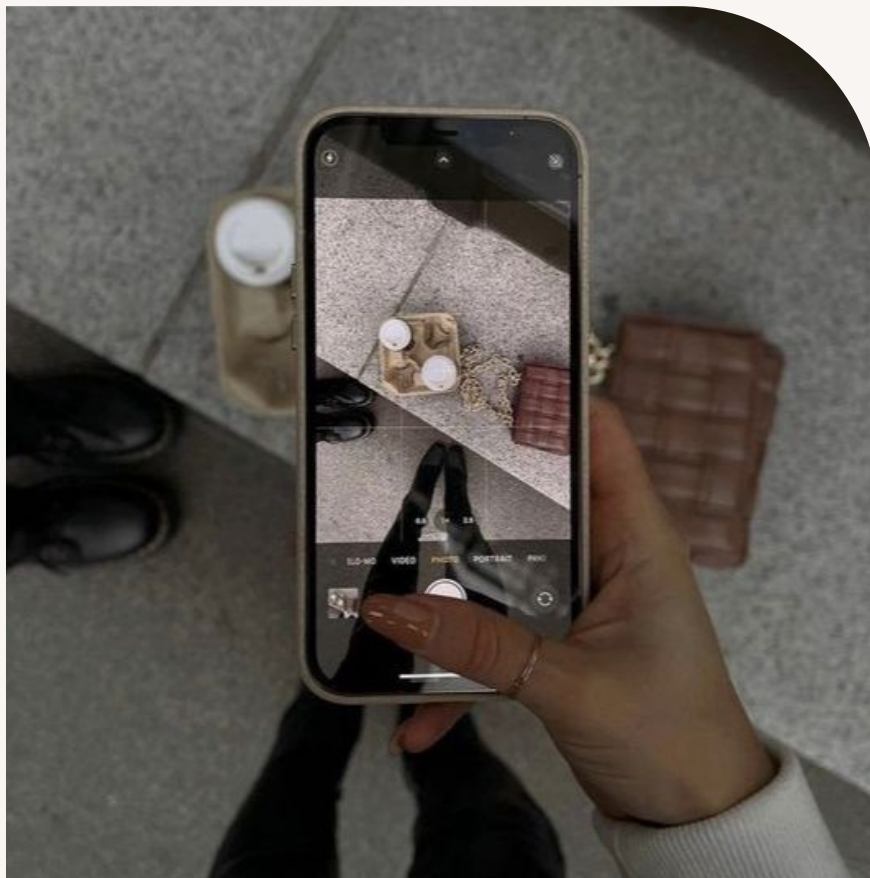
### • For Boosting SALES:

- DM me for more info
- Book your spot by \_\_\_



## 03. POSTING CONTENT

Believe it or not, it's not quite as simple as pressing record button and then clicking the share button. When you're in the growth phase of your Instagram account, there is a process you should be going through every time you post to help increase your reach.



# The Roadmap to Posting Success

## Content Ideas

- How I went from {issue} to {solution} in X time
- How it started vs how it's going
- Get {results} in 2 easy steps
- There are still 3 months til 2023, do this to get results
- Here's how I went from \_\_\_ to \_\_\_ in {X amount of time}
- STOP making these mistakes if you want to [desired outcome of target audience]
- Unpopular Opinion: [Semi-spicy opinion about niche-related pain point]
- Truths about [niche]
- You'll never have [successful niche outcome] if you don't do this first



## Content Ideas

- Post 30 minutes before your audience is most active -  
How to check: Go to your insights -> Your followers -> Most active times
- Content is KING! Content Quality is more important than the time you post. Don't just post to post.
- Your perfect posting time is when you're ready to post. Make sure you have the time to engage and answer comments/DMs when you do post. Don't post and ghost!



## Posting Checklist

Engage with other accounts prior to posting, not just liking and saving. Leave meaningful comments on other accounts within your niche

Search trending sounds to find a sound that would work for your post. Remember, posts under 1000 uses increases the likelihood of your reel going viral (remember to use a personal account for the scrolling so you don't throw off your algorithm)

Edit your content in-app. Instagram favors users who utilize the app for all functions. When you edit your text and sound in app, your content is more likely to get served to its users

Make sure to respond to all comments on your previous posts and DM's prior to making a new post

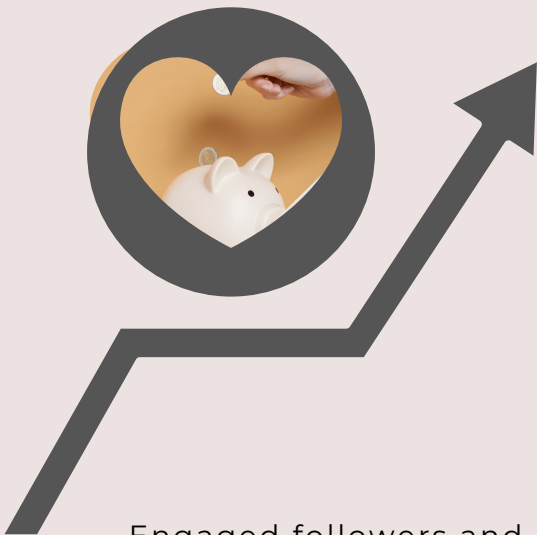
After posting, be sure to add your post/reel to your story. This helps increase your reach

Engage with other accounts for another 5-15 minutes after posting your post or reel

## Posting Content

### Going Viral

People think that going viral is the end all be all for social media. Although this is a great thing and can bring you a lot of views, sometimes this doesn't always mean follows or sales. Having only a couple hundred followers who are actually engaged is better than having 1000's of followers who are not engaging with your content. This is why it's important to clean up your followers list.



Engaged followers and viewers = more opportunity for sales

Every once in a while it's important to go through the people that are following you and delete any bots or dead accounts that do not engage with your content.

We know it sucks to do this because it will decrease your follower count but they just decrease your engagement. If your content does not perform well with your followers it won't get pushed out to non followers.

 *Quality >> Quantity*



## Roadmap to Going Viral



Upload at highest quality



Use trending audio under 1k uses



Videos between 4-7 seconds



Hook in the post and caption



Call to action (CTA) in your post and caption



Good lighting and good audio are VERY important!



Use one of the 3 Pillars of Content - Entertain, Inspire or Educate



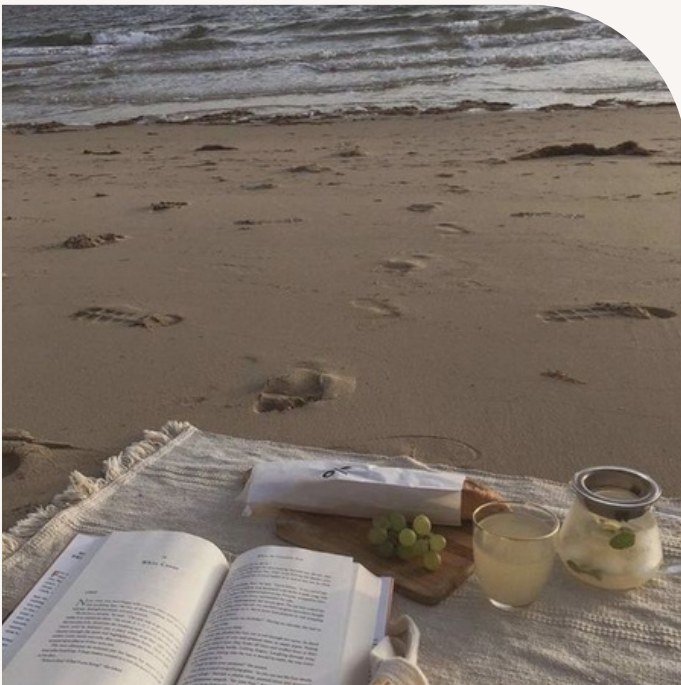
Create an engaging caption



## 04. TIPS AND TRICKS

"Trending Audio" on Instagram refers to popular and widely used audio tracks or sound clips that are currently gaining traction on the platform. These audio clips are often associated with viral challenges, trends, or memes and are frequently used in Instagram Reels, Stories, and sometimes even in regular posts. Leveraging trending audio can help your content reach a larger audience and boost engagement.

When you find a trending audio clip that fits your content or style, incorporating it into your posts or Reels can help you tap into the wider conversation on Instagram and potentially attract more engagement and followers. Just be sure to use trending audio creatively and authentically to make it resonate with your audience.



## How to Find Trending Audio

**Explore Page:** Instagram curates content based on your interests and activity, and it often features Reels and Stories using popular audio tracks.

**Reels:** Instagram Reels often showcase trending audio. When you open the Reels section, you'll see a selection of popular and trending audio tracks that creators are using in their videos.

**Follow Influencers and Larger Accounts In Your Niche:** Influencers and content creators often jump on trends early. By following popular accounts in your niche, you can stay updated on the latest audio trends as they incorporate them into their content.

**Hashtags:** Search for trending hashtags that are associated with particular audio tracks or challenges. You'll often find related content that uses the same audio.

**Trend Analysis Tools:** Some third-party tools and websites track trending audio on Instagram. These tools can provide insights into the most popular tracks and trends at any given time.

**Engage with Your Audience:** If you have an engaged audience, your followers may notify you of trending audio and challenges. Pay attention to comments and messages from your community.

**Trending Audio List:** When you see a trending audio on a reel, click the arrow and audio and it will bring you to the audio page. Once there, click the "Arrow up Trending" next the number of uses and it will bring you to a page of the top 50 trending audios for the moment.

## Training the Algorithm

By being consistent with what you post and what content you consume, you can actually “train” the algorithm. By showing the algorithm who your target audience is, it will know who to push your content to. If you follow nothing but niche-related accounts, that is what IG will show you, and essentially who they will put your content in front of.

### Word of Caution

Be careful not to use your professional/business account to search/consume random content that is not directly related to your niche. This will confuse your algorithm and it will not know what to serve you and who to serve you to. If you want to scroll the explore page to look for new trends or trending audio, use a personal account.

### Training the algorithm for low use trending audio:

This is super helpful when you need to make a reel FAST. Personally we do this process on our personal accounts just because the audio we use may be from someone not within our niche. First, everyday when we get on IG we go straight to the Reels tab at the bottom of the screen, and start scrolling... (now this is the tricky part) we don't actually watch the reels, we go straight to the audio info in the bottom right corner and look to see if that particular audio is trending, and if it is, we look and see how many uses it has. If it's a number that we like we will go through a bunch of the videos on that audio page and ENGAGE with them. This tells the algorithm that we like this kind of content and it will show us more of it. After that - back to scrolling, rinse and repeat.

**Remember, trending audio doesn't stay trending forever.**

## Going Live

Going live is something that we personally have seen for our accounts to be very beneficial. We know that it is nerve racking enough to put yourself out there with posts and reels but going live will give you an algorithm boost. Our best suggestion is to find another person to go live with, that way, it is more of a conversation between two people rather than you just sitting in front of a live feed waiting for people to pop in and ask questions. Keep in mind, it doesn't matter what you talk about or how long a viewer stays in the live. Just by using the "live" feature on the app, Instagram will reward your account and push out your content more.



## Direct Messages

Now this is where the magic happens. This is why we say not to hard sell in your posts. Not only are conversations in your DM's going to give you an algorithm boost, but people want to have a personal connection to you. They want to see that you are a real person and have a vested interest in them and their journey. Be sure to communicate with your viewers in your DM's. Create relationships with them and other creators there as well! This is the reason we are all here in the first place! Okay, maybe not the FIRST place but the community you build is SO IMPORTANT. These people will be your supporters, your viewers, and your customers!

## *How do you get shadow-banned.*

### **Here are some reasons why**

Violating the Community Guidelines (posting sensitive content)

Using banned hashtags.

Using irrelevant hashtags - make sure your tags are genuinely relevant to your published content.

Your account is continually being reported.

Using bots or acting like a bot.

## *How to avoid getting shadow-banned.*

Don't violate the community guidelines!

Make sure to read through Instagram's official Community Guidelines and terms of service, but most importantly be respectful in all interactions on the platform.

Don't act like a bot - basically don't like or comment on too many posts too quickly (see daily instagram limits).

Don't use banned hashtags (use this website to check your hashtags).

DON'T, I repeat, DON'T buy followers or use sketchy apps (unapproved third-party apps to auto-like content).

## *Are you shadow-banned?*

If you are experiencing a dramatic drop in engagement (likes, views, comments, etc.) you could be shadowbanned. What is a shadowban? It's an unofficial ban that restricts an account's visibility (in user's feeds, stories, explore pages, etc.) negatively affecting reach. What makes it different from a regular ban is that users are not notified when their account has been shadowbanned.

SO IMPORTANT. These people will be your supporters, your viewers, and your customers!

## *Pro tip:*

Do not change your biography or profile photo too many times within a 24 hour period. Instagram will disable your account and you will have to go through double verification to appeal your disabled account.

## Engagement with your niche

Engaging is such an important component to Instagram growth. When you hear “engage within your niche” this doesn’t mean only following and engaging with creators selling the same thing as you. We suggest following & engaging with no more than 50 creators selling the same thing that you are.

Also, we suggest following other creators that your ideal customer may also be following. You need to think about what accounts your target audience might be following or engaging with... this is where you need to be! Remember, the algorithm learns from you!



## Batching your content

This might be the easiest way to get your content done so that you know you have it to post. Try to find a few audios or have your ideas ready and spend a few hours recording a few reels that will last you a day or two. However many you can do, the better. Just keep in mind, audios don’t stay trending forever so don’t miss the mark on them by making too many reels at once. If you see an audio you like but don’t know how to relate it yet, no worries. Record the video and try to connect it to your niche later. You can keep all of your unfinished reels in your drafts and go back to them when you are ready to edit and post!

Another way to batch content is by keeping an album of b-roll footage that you can easily add to a trending audio, text on screen and a caption and be ready to post!

Now, you have the tools to start!!!  
No more excuses, stay consistent, one day at a time and lets goooo!  
Hope you learned a lot! Message me and leave me a review, good and the bad. I am a forever learner, you won't hurt my feelings.  
Let's get excited and grow your account with me!!!! Tag me, message me, outgrow me! Your success matters to me.

