

# HOW TO REACH 1,000 INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS

A STEP BY STEP GUIDE

By Dana Nicole

Before we get started I want to give you two tips: set up your Instagram as a business account. Having a business account will allow you to view your stats and analytics, which will help you immensely when you are trying to figure out your account's growth. To do this go to settings > switch to business account.

My next tip: never buy followers. Those followers will hurt your account more than help. Having a bunch of "ghost followers" (followers who never interact with any of your posts) will hurt your interaction ratio, as these followers will never interact with your content. Instagram will stop showing your content in people's feeds due to the algorithm, and your efforts will go to waste.

## 1 DEFINE YOUR NICHE

Before you get started you will want to make sure you have a clear vision of what your Instagram account is all about and who your target market is. Make a list and be very precise.

I once had a friend who wanted to promote his business as something everybody would like. This won't work and let me show you why.

Imagine going into a store where they only sell one size fits all t-shirts. Right beside it there is a store who sells t-shirts (for the same price) but these ones are custom fit. Which store would you go into? I'm guessing the one where you can get a t-shirt that fits you the way you want it to fit.

The same goes for your Instagram - you can't promote your account to everyone and it should never be a one size fits all.

## 2

### FIND SIMILAR INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS

Once you really understand your niche and who you are targeting, you should spend some time researching your competition. Take a look at what they are posting, the types of captions they are using, and how often they are posting.

Make sure to look at Instagrammers who are doing good, as well as ones who aren't doing very well. Compare them to try and determine what makes the popular accounts do well and what makes the others perform poorly.

Keep in mind that having a ton of followers doesn't mean success. Those followers need to be engaging with the content. You may come across an account that has 5,000 followers but is only receiving 20-30 likes per photo.

This is incredibly poor (a less than 1% engagement rate) and is a good example of an account that is not getting good engagement.

On Instagram you should aim for a 3%-6% engagement rate.

## 3

### DETERMINE A POSTING SCHEDULE

For now I try to post roughly 5 or 6 days a week. I've found that at this point in my blog's growth, 5-6 times is not too much and it's not too little. I notice that many bigger bloggers in my niche post a couple times a day, but at the moment I've found once a day to be a good balance. Once my account grows more I will adjust accordingly.

In your Instagram account analytics you will be able to view the times your followers are the most active. Mine are least active between 9am-11am which is why I choose to post around 11am. I've found that when I post during high activity times my content can get lost in the mix. When I post during slower times my content has less to compete with and generally does better.

You will need to do a bit of trial and error to determine when it's best to post for you. Keep a little notebook and jot down times that do well and times that do poorly. Make sure you write down the days of the week too, as Saturday at 11am will do drastically different than Monday at 11am.

## 4

### ONLY POST GOOD PHOTOS

We all know this but it can be hard to critique your own photos to try and determine which is good and which isn't.

I avoid overfiltering my photos and try to only capture things in natural light. I don't post any photos that were taken at night as they can come out a little grainy and don't match the general aesthetic of my Instagram. Save other photos for things like your story or your Facebook page.

Try to get into the mind of your followers and post content that they would like to see. Avoid posting photos that are unrelated to your niche (i.e. if you are promoting custom card designs don't load up your Instagram with photos of your children. It's ok to post little glimpses into your life here and there but try to keep your content consistent with what your followers want to see).

## 5

# USE APPROPRIATE HASHTAGS

I used to stay away from hashtags. I felt they made me look like I was desperate but that's because using the wrong ones can. I now love hashtags and have seen how using the right ones can get your photos in front of your audience.

[Hashtagify.me](https://hashtagify.me) is a great resource to help you look up one hashtag and then find others that are related. You can also look up hashtags on Instagram and view the "related hashtags" at the top of the screen. The maximum amount of hashtags you can use per photo is 30 (keep reading to find out how you can increase that to 60).

Create a list that relate to the content you are posting and write them down. I keep these written down on the notepad in my iPhone so I can quickly copy and paste them in. I have several different sections such as blogging, lifestyle, design, freelance and photography. Each section contains various sets of 30 hashtags.

Another way to research hashtags is to visit your competitors to see what they are using. Again, this is trial and error. Swap hashtags out that you don't feel are benefitting you and change it up every now and again.

Certain hashtags will also help get your photos features on other accounts. [Melyssa Griffen](#) has put together a good list that will help you find what those hashtags are.

## 6

## INTERACT

This has been the biggest and most important step to growing my account. Some businesses will do various tactics that I don't agree with to grow their following which can include buying followers or mass following people and then mass unfollowing them.

These methods are tedious and can hurt the growth of your account. The best method I have found (in conjunction with posting good content) is interacting with people who I think would enjoy following my account.

This step is a lot of work but you will benefit the most from this step if done correctly.

Interacting with other accounts includes following someone, liking their posts, commenting on their posts, tagging people in your posts and replying back to people who have commented on your posts.

I first start by going into hashtags that are relevant to my account. I then go through the photos and like any photos that are nice and catch my eye. If I come across a really good posts, I will write a comment.

I try to like a few hundred photos each day (yes, it's time consuming, but it's shown to be most beneficial in growing my account) and comment on several.

Comments are good because others can see your username and then be led to your account, however, they take time to write out. A lot of people will just write "nice!" or "love this!" and it feels spammy. I will try to write a comment that is genuine and related to the original photo so the user knows I am not spamming them.

This drives users to my page and if they like what they see, they will follow me. They may even click the link in my bio and read some blog posts.

My impressions (found in my analytics) have more than doubled since I started interacting with accounts on a regular basis.

## BONUS: How to use 60 hashtags per photo

Step 1: Add your first 30 hashtags into a comment that is separate from your original caption.

Step 2: Add the next list of 30 hashtags into your caption by clicking "edit".

Note: You cannot add hashtags into the caption section first and then try to add them into the comment section or you will have a limit of 30. You will need to add them into the comment section first and then edit your original caption to add in the other 30.