Peacock Arts Trail – Practical Guide To Using Instagram



<u>Setting up Instagram</u>

When setting up an Instagram account, it's best to do download the app on your phone. The app will take you through the process, step by step.

Make sure you have a username that is easy to remember and is consistent with any other social media accounts you have. Your username is what you will share with others so they can tag you, e.g. @peacockartstrail. Instagram will give you a link automatically but might not be very easy to remember or user friendly. Changing your username will also change the URL, e.g. https://www.instagram.com/peacockartstrail/


In your profile, you can also add your full name, a short bio to explain who you are and what you do and your website/email/phone (if you want to share).
You could include a 'call to action' in your bio, e.g. if you don't have a website or a shop you could add "message me for more info". NB. dm = direct message, pm = private message.
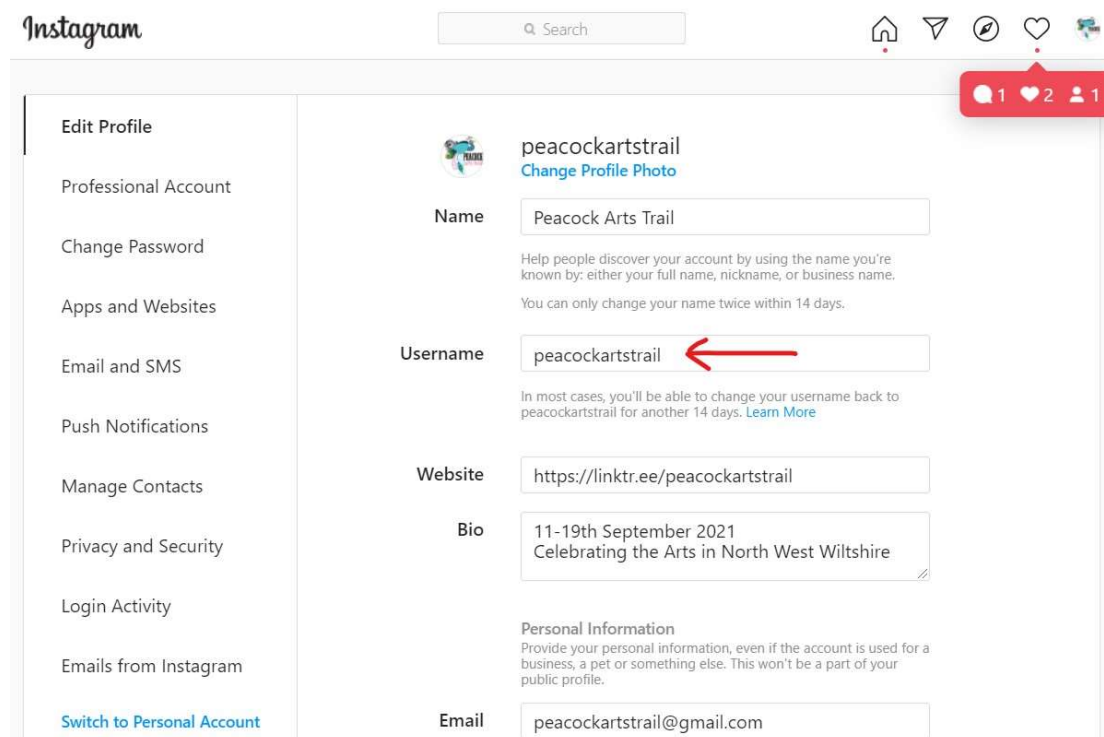
The first thing to do when you set up account is to find people you're interested in following. When you start following, Instagram creates a 'newsfeed' which is made up of all the posts that those accounts are sharing. By actively following an account, you're signing up to see what they have to say.

To **search** for accounts/hashtags, click on the magnifying glass symbol at the bottom of the app and type in the search bar at the top –
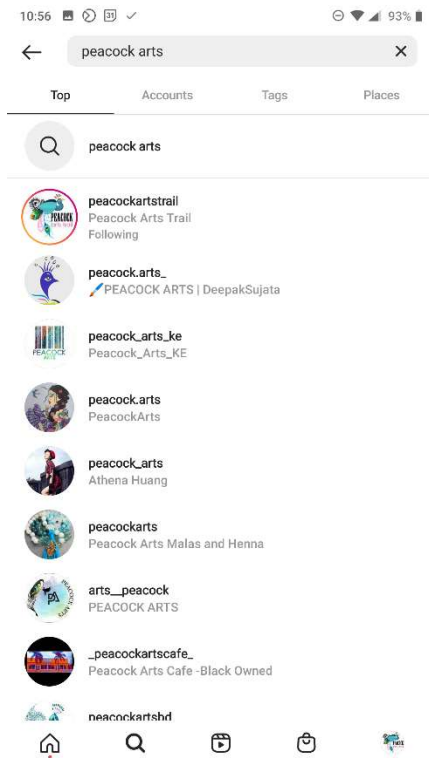
Select an account and click the blue Follow button (or Follow Back, if they're already following you) -
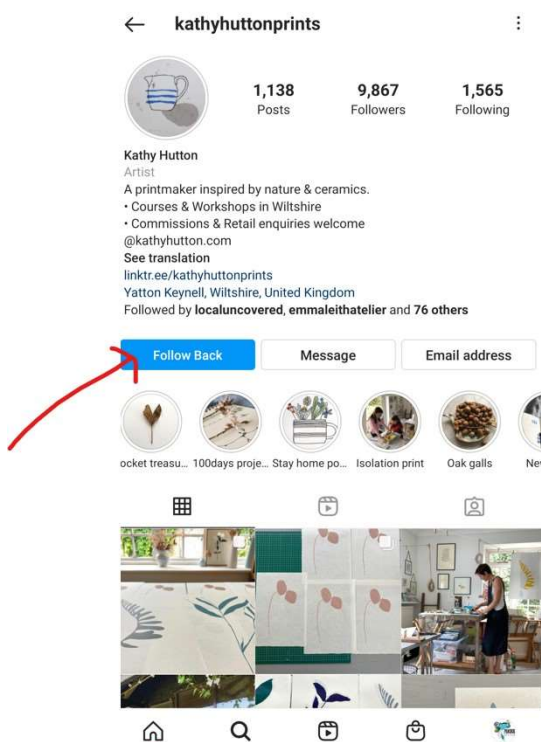
You can unfollow by clicking the same button (or the little person icon on desktop).

To **explore** new accounts/hashtags, click on either the magnifying glass on your mobile device, or the compass symbol on your desktop. Instagram will show you a curated feed of things you might like.

Getting Started

Your 'feed' is where you will see all of the posts from the accounts that you follow. Whenever you want to get back to your feed, click on the home symbol in the bottom left corner of your app.

When you scroll through your feed, for each post you will see:
- Who posted
- Where they are, if they have added a location
- An image which is the main bulk of the post
- A description/explanation of what the picture is about
- Any relevant tags (@), e.g. a business that is relevant to the post
- Hashtags – these may be in the description text, or could be the first 'comment' on the post
- Comments from other users

You can engage with a post by:
- Clicking on the heart symbol to 'like'
- Clicking on the speech bubble symbol to comment
- Clicking on the paper aeroplane arrow to share
- Clicking on the bookmark symbol (under the image on the right) to save a post

NB. Saving posts – this is useful for finding competitors, seeing what other similar accounts do. To view your saved posts, go to your account profile, click on the 3 lines in the top right corner and click on the bookmark symbol in the menu. Only you see what you've saved.

Screenshot of post on Peacock Arts Trail's feed:

If anyone interacts with you – likes/comments/follows – a red dot will appear on the heart symbol in the top right corner of your screen to notify you.

If you have been tagged in a post, it is really important to comment on the post, both because it's good manners but also it gives that post further reach. By generating conversation on your Instagram, it will see your post as more interesting/important and will boost it in the algorithms.

Creating a post

When you create a feed post, it will appear on your 'grid' as shown below. To get to your grid, click on the circular icon in the bottom right corner of the app.

Your grid is where you can create a coherent brand for your business, with a consistent feel or theme that runs through all of your images.
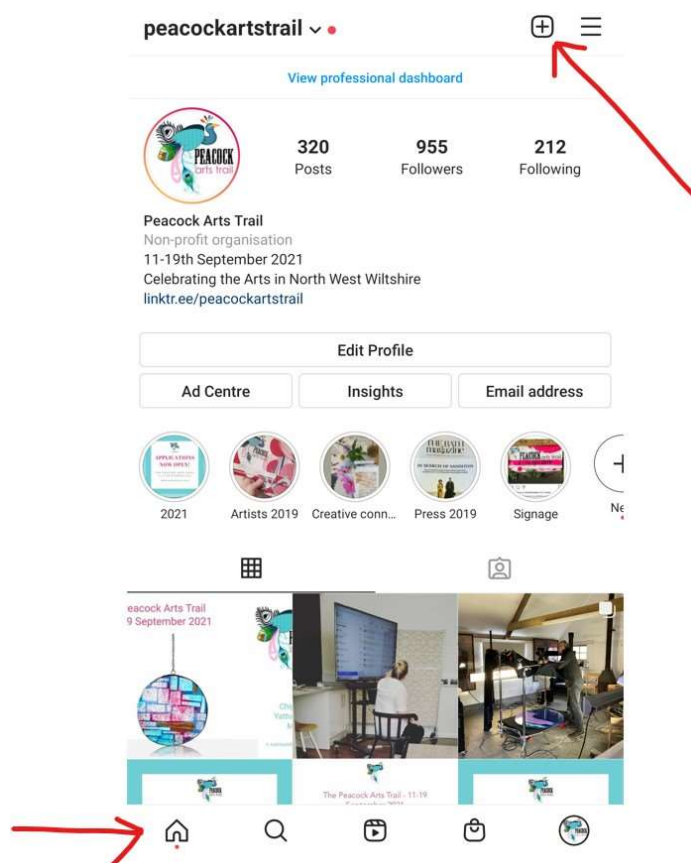
To create a new post, click on the **+** symbol at the top of your app. It will ask you whether you want to create a new feed post, story, reel, etc – select Feed Post.

You can then scroll through the photographs saved on your device, or take a photo/video there and then.

Once you have the photo you want, click the next (arrow, top right) to be taken to a selection of different editing filters. If you click on one, you will see the large central image alter. Click it again

and a percentage bar will show. You can move the tab left to right to have 100% of the filter applied or less. You can cancel or click Done to move on.

If you don't want one of the pre-set filters, you can simply click next (arrow, top right) to move on, or click Edit (bottom right) which allows you to adjust individual aspects yourself, such as angle, brightness, contrast etc.

Once you're happy with your image, click next (arrow, top right).
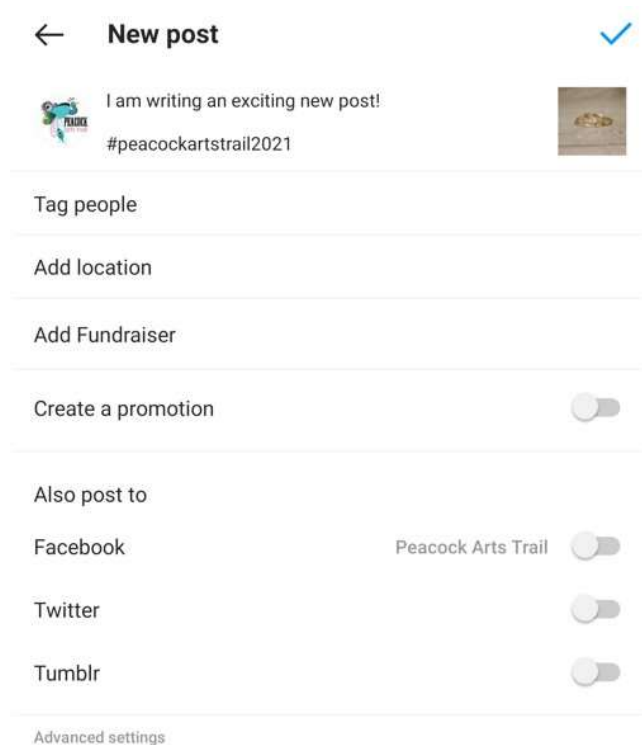
You can now add a caption, tag another account with an @ symbol, add a hashtag, add a location and choose to share this post directly to your other social media sites (though this isn't always recommended – see Intro to Social Media notes)

When you're happy with your post, click 'share' (tick symbol, top right).

And that's it – you've posted! Don't forget to check back and reply to any comments!

Author: Peacock Arts Trail
Last updated: 2 August 2021