

Social Media tips

Instagram.

Instagram is all about pictures, the more breath-taking the better. Most Scouts use it as a place to show off what we're doing to our volunteers, parents or members of our community. People don't need to join Instagram to see what we post.



Instagram is a popular platform with young people at the moment with many using it more than Facebook these days.

Content

Pictures

We cannot stress this enough – on Instagram pictures are everything! When people look at a profile they don't even see the text unless they click on the pictures so our picture has to be good. Use pictures of scouts learning skills, or having fun or an adventure. There are great examples on the Scout brand centre which you can use.

If your picture isn't very Scout-y then try adding a small fleur-de-lis logo in a corner. You can do this in the Brand Centre or using photo editing programmes.

Instagram pictures are different in they are square shaped so keep that in mind when you're snapping away. You can combine pictures into galleries, where you move left and right between pictures, or into a collage.



What is Instagram good for?

Similar to Facebook pages or Twitter, these are good uses of Instagram:

- Sharing highlights of the activities our young people take part in such as adventurous activities, community impact projects, nights away or examples of personal growth. Parental permission should be sought or should be anonymised.
- Recruitment of new youth members or adult volunteers. Showing pictures of happy volunteers and members can work wonders here.
- Eye catching fundraising events or initiatives such as easyfundraising.
- Sharing posts, events or relevant messages posted by others within Scouting such as from HQ or Hampshire Scouts.

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What are Instagram stories good for?




Stories help to share events and to interact with your followers. Some of the functions are:

- Interactive Stickers, such as question and polls, can be used to communicate with your followers and to get insight in what they think.
- You can share posts on your story that are relevant to your followers.
- Stories are only viewable for 24 hours.

Characteristics

Like, Comment and Share

Under each post you will find the following three icons. It is a sign of an impactful post when we have people using these on the post (hopefully positively!)

	Like a post to show agreement or appreciation. On phones, this can be done quickly by double tapping the picture.
	Comments allow people to write under your tweet.
	The Share button gives you other options, such as sharing in a message, to other social networks or through a link.

Hashtags and handles.

Just like Twitter, Instagram uses hashtags and handles to connect your post to a wider conversation and help it be found.

A hashtag connects your message to a wider conversation and makes it easier to find. Examples that Scouts often use is **#SkillsForLife**, **#volunteer** or **#YouShape**. On Instagram it is common to write tags of what is in the post so it appears in other searches as well. For example you post a picture of a young person and their cat because they've just done the Animal Carer badge; the post could have hashtags such as **#cat**, **#youngperson** **#pet** **#badge** **#catsofindstagram** to name a few. Anyone now looking at these topics would see that picture.

A handle is your username on Instagram. You can include handles and other people in your posts by using the **@** symbol followed by their name on Instagram. Hampshire Scouts for example can be included by adding **@HampshireScouts_** into your message.

Mobile first.

Something to note with Instagram is that it is built and designed for use on smart phones. While you can see profiles and pictures on the internet through any web browser you can only add pictures to your profile from the Instagram app on a smartphone.

It is mostly because they want people to be posting in the moment – whip out your phone, take a cracking picture and post it quickly online. When managing this it is useful to have a small team of people who are trusted to have the app on their phone and to post from there.

Share to other platforms.

When you post to Instagram you have the option to link your Facebook and Twitter so that you can post to those platforms at the same time. A useful time saving tip for sure.

Standing out from the crowd.

Pick a good handle

This is your name on Instagram, the URL of your page ([Instagram.com/yourhandle](https://www.instagram.com/yourhandle)) and it is quite important. First, we need to make it easy to find your page so choose a unique name that won't be confused – 6th Scout Group is no good. Using the name of your group is often the best approach.

Because your handle is also your URL there are a couple of things that can't be in your handle: capital letters or spaces. Lots of people on Instagram tend to use the underscore _ instead of a space to get around this.

Profile picture top tips.

This goes at the top of your page and on every post. Keep this simple and with a clear Scouts flavour – the Scouts logo or the fleur-de-lis is perfect for this. It has to work at small sizes (the examples on the right are real size from the web version, the smaller one the size on each post).



It will be shown in a circle so keep the edge or corners of the photo clear.

Boil it down in your Bio.

Your Bio appears at the top of your profile but you've got to keep it brief as you only get 150 characters. Give a short summary of what we do (**We help young people make a difference by giving them #SkillsForLife**) or who you are. You can use hashtags and handles in your bio, so some for example identify themselves as **part of @HampshireScouts_**.

Where can I find more?

- Contact the Media and Communications (Perception) team at Hampshire Scouts if you want more specific advice. communications@hampshirescouts.org.uk
- Check out our other guides which cover issues such as jargon and talking about our roles to others. There are other guides covering different social media platforms.
- The Scout Brand centres (scoutsbrand.org.uk) has an image and video library full of social media post, profile and header images you can use.
- The Tone of Voice document on the Scout Brand centre gives some specific guidance for writing social media descriptions and posts.

Keeping in touch with Hampshire Scouts:

- Online at hampshirescouts.org.uk
- On Facebook at facebook.com/HampshireScouts
- On Instagram [@hampshirescouts_](https://www.instagram.com/hampshirescouts_)
- On Twitter at [@hampshirescouts](https://twitter.com/hampshirescouts)