



PLANN

**HOW TO REACH 10,000
FOLLOWERS ORGANICALLY
WITHOUT SPENDING A CENT!**

FAST-TRACK YOUR PATH TO 10,000

For many Instagrammers, reaching 10,000 followers is a major milestone. Not only does it mean you've hit that elusive 5-figure follower count, but it also gives you that sweet swipe-up feature FOR your stories! Plus, if you're an influencer, it's often around that number that you can start getting paid to work with brands (although, you certainly can with a lower following, as long as they're super engaged)

But in their haste to hit the coveted 10K, some people resort to shady tactics like buying followers, using follower bots or just throwing loads of dollars at boosting posts. Unfortunately, this ain't a great idea! Not only is there no guarantee it will work, but often the followers you'll gain aren't actually interested in your amazing content. If you're an influencer, brands can also use tools like SocialBlade to look at your growth trajectory and get seriously suss if they see a random spike in your following.

The good news is, it's *totally* possible to reach 10K the right way, without flushing your hard-earned time or dollars down the drain. Read on for 5 tips for reaching 10,000 followers organically without spending a cent! No gimmicks, no naughty stuff — just tried and tested strategies for genuine and super engaged followers.

HERE'S WHAT WE'LL COVER

1. Follow and engage strategically
2. Use targeted hashtags
3. Collaborate with other Instagram users
4. Use Instagram stories and video
5. Post consistently

1. FOLLOW AND ENGAGE STRATEGICALLY

Unfortunately, when it comes to Instagram content, it's not simply a case of 'if you post it, they will come.' It's important to be proactive about getting your content in front of the right people. One great way to do this is by strategically engaging with your target audience on Instagram.

Now, this doesn't mean just bulk following thousands and thousands of accounts. It means taking the time to really engage with targeted accounts — liking their photos, leaving meaningful and relevant comments (that is, not just 'cool!' 👍) and replying to their stories.

Look, we're all human, and us humans love to feel important. So, people are far more likely to follow you back if you're taken the time to shower them with some (genuine) virtual attention.

So, how do you actually go about finding the right accounts to engage with? Your 'discover' feed can be a great place to start. Another great way is to find brands that are similar to yours, and check out who's following them and engaging with their content. Chances are, they might like your content, too! You can also search for relevant hashtags within your industry or niche, and engage with the people using those.

A good rule of thumb is to spend half an hour engaging with accounts before you post, and half an hour afterwards. Don't post and ghost!

2. USE TARGETED HASHTAGS

Speaking of hashtags, these remain one of the most effective ways to get your content in front of the right eyes. But, not all hashtags are created equal! It's important to use hashtags that 1) your target audience is actually searching for 2) that aren't so popular that they get swallowed up into the abyss 3) aren't so specific that nobody would ever search for them (so, #ilovedolphinsanddonuts is probably a no-go)

You can use up to 30 hashtags in your Instagram posts (anymore than that and Instagram won't let you post it) Generally, a good ratio is around 30% big, popular hashtags (think, more than 10,000 results) like #instagood and #picoftheday, and 70% smaller, niche hashtags (less than 10,000 results) within your industry.

You should also mix up your hashtags in each post, so you're not using the same ones every time (it's believed that the Instagram gods don't look favourably upon repetitive hashtag use) The great news, you can use handy Plann's hashtag feature to save hashtag sets, and easily pick and choose between them each time you post!

To give you ideas on what hashtags to use, you can use discovery tools like Flick Hashtags or Display Purposes. You can also check out what hashtags other people in your field are using.

Bonus tip: You can — and should! — also use hashtags to get eyeballs on your Instagram stories! Just add them in as text when you're editing. However, you'll probably want to use less than 30 and make them as small as possible so they're not too much of an eyesore on your content.

3. COLLABORATE WITH OTHER USERS

You don't have to venture on the path to 10,000 alone! Chances are, there are other Instagrammers in your circle that have similar goals. So, why not team up with them? After all, we're always stronger together than we are solo.

It's time to stop, collaborate and listen. Now, we're not talking about joining 'pods' where you like and comment each other's posts, as Instagram have cracked down on these in recent years and it's thought to negatively impact.

But there, are many other great ways you can collab with other users on Instagram. If you have someone you genuinely admire, why not show them some love with a shoutout on your feed or stories? Chances are, they'll share your post with their own audience, or even give you a shoutout back.

You could also team up to do an Instagram live (for example, a mini webinar on a topic you're both knowledgeable about), as this would be streamed to both of your audiences.

Another popular strategy that has catapulted many an Instagram user to 10K is loop giveaways! This is where you team up with other users to give away a prize, and each post it on your Instagram accounts. For example, if you're service based-businesses, you could each give away a package. If you're product-based, you could each supply a prize to create a mega gift pack In order to enter, people must follow all of the accounts. However, it's important to remember here that some people are just freebie-seekers and aren't genuinely interested in your content. So, you may lose some followers once the winner has been announced.

4. USE STORIES AND VIDEOS

If you're only posting on your feed, you're putting all your eggs in one basket and likely missing valuable opportunities to get your content seen! Supplementing your strategy with stories and videos will help you get your content in front of a much wider audience.

With over 500 million accounts using stories per day, successful influencers know the importance of showing up there each and every day. Think of your feed as your portfolio where you post your best content, but your stories as a testing ground where you can post on-the-fly, imperfect content and see what works for your account. You can also share your feed posts to your stories by clicking the little arrow button, to help amplify your content.

Then, there's video. These days, you'd be hard-pressed to find an account with over 10,000 followers that *doesn't* incorporate this medium into their strategy in some way. Video helps your content to stand out amongst a feed of stationary images. Plus, it's a great way to give people a glimpse at the real person behind the brand (you!) and build a stronger connection with potential followers. Not only do videos get around 38% more engagement than photos, but they keep users on your content for longer — which means they're more likely to stick around and throw you a follow.

There's now a range of different ways you can incorporate video into your Instagram strategy. You could post snappy, 60-second videos onto your feed or stories, stream Instagram lives on your stories or even create longer form videos up to 10 minutes on IGTV. The key is to experiment and see what type of video content performs best for you and your brand, and that you can easily fit into your lifestyle and schedule. It needs to be sustainable!

5. POST CONSISTENTLY

We know, we know. This one isn't a particularly fun or groundbreaking strategy. But, often what separates those people who break through the 6-d follower barrier and those that don't is consistency. After all, if it was easy and something you could achieve overnight, everyone would do it! Whether you can manage to post multiple times per day, or a couple of times per week, the key is to get into a rhythm with it and do it consistently long-term.

Luckily, Plann makes it super easy to do just that, by allowing you to quickly weeks worth of content in advance with our drag-and-drop interface and handy features. That way, you don't have to stress over what to post each day, you'll already have it ready to go!

The same consistency should allow to with engaging with relevant hashtags and accounts. Unfortunately, it's not enough to just bulk-follow people in dribs and drabs. Having a solid engagement schedule and a target in mind as to how many accounts you're going to engage with with each day or week will help make sure you're moving forward.

At the end of the day, there's no magic bullet for quickly reaching 10,000 followers. But by following the strategies in this guide consistently, you'll put yourself on the front foot to some serious growth. And the good news is, once you get over the initial 10K hump, it tends to be a lot quicker to jump up in thousands — so you'll be on the track to 20K, 50K and beyond!



EXCITED, OVERWHELMED AND INSPIRED?

Now that you're brimming with ideas to grow your following, let's schedule your posts.

With Plann you can plan days, weeks or months in advance and leave that social media overwhelm outside in the snow.

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