

# What is Instagram?

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Instagram is a photo-sharing social network that can be used online at [www.instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com) or via a free smartphone/tablet app.

## Key features and benefits of Instagram

- Instagram launched in October 2010 and grew fast. It currently has over 1 billion active users. It became so popular, that Facebook bought the company in 2012 for a reported \$1 billion.
- Instagram is free to download and join.
- The app allows users to add 'filters' to their images to change the look and feel of the picture.
- Although the focus had been on photos since Instagram launched, as of June 2013 15-second videos/reels are now being prioritised.
- Users can send video or photo messages to specific groups of friends through Instagram Direct. Only those users choose to share with will see these messages in their Instagram Direct inbox.
- Instagram is very popular among young people and has many celebrity users.
- Similarly to other social networks, users can follow one another, add comments under others' images, use hashtags to describe the image and search for other images and options to keep accounts private.

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