

Using Instagram to Promote Yourself as an Artist



1. First it's important to have good work to showcase. Perfect your craft and ensure you are consistently creating high quality art.
2. Create a profile on Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/> Ensure you upload a profile image and complete the 'about you' section. If you have other social media accounts (e.g. Twitter/Facebook) it's worth using the same images across all platforms - this is essentially your artist branding.
3. Photograph your artwork well. Instagram is a platform to showcase your art to the world, so you want to ensure the photos do it justice. For tips on how to photograph your artwork well, see our guide here: <https://www.creativefuture.org.uk/resource/photographing-artwork/>
4. Instagram has its own editing tools. If you take a good photo on your smartphone, you can use the tools to crop or apply a filter etc.
5. Once your profile is looking good, start building your network. Follow relevant people in the arts field e.g. art critics, artists who inspire you, galleries etc. If your goal is to promote your art on Instagram, be sure you only follow relevant people.
6. Post interesting images - quality is better than quantity.
7. Only post images that showcase you as an artist and are relevant to your practice. For example you might want to show 'work in progress' photos of your latest work. Shots of you in the studio also work well, or things that inspire you to make your art - this all helps to show off your personality.
8. Think about adding captions to your images; this can be a great way to engage followers - your visual story board.
9. As with Twitter, you can tag images using handles e.g. @creativefuture For example, if you've written a piece on an exhibition you've seen and shared it, you might want to tag the gallery in your post and they'll get a notification of this. It all helps to get your name out there!
10. Research influential Instagrammers in your field. Are there any art dealers with a large following? Perhaps some celebrities are particularly interested in the medium of art you create? Take a bit of time to look into this and follow relevant people.
11. Tap into current hashtags (#) that are being used. For example #artistsofinstagram or #lifedrawing. Do you research and find out what other artists similar to you use. Using #'s is a great way for people to discover new artists. If you're attaching yourself to the relevant hashtags, it's more likely that people will find your art on Instagram. The hashtags become clickable links and can also be specifically searched for.

12. Think carefully about the hashtags you use & don't overload your image with them - between 3 and 8 is a good number. If you create work in a specific medium, it's worth using a hashtag for this e.g. #digitalart or #streetart
13. You might want to also consider using a hashtag based on your location; some people search for artists in a specific geographical area e.g. #brighton
14. Think of innovative ways you can engage followers. Could you run a doodle competition or ask people to caption one of your images?
15. Keep track of how often you're gaining new followers, so you can see if this increases over time. It might also be worth noting if you did anything specific one week that attracted more followers e.g. a certain hashtag you used. Instagram is essentially a marketing tool for you - notice what works and use this to your advantage.

By using relevant hashtags, you're more likely to reach the people interested in art. For example, if you post an image and tag it with #Art, it will be automatically displayed alongside all others posts that have used the #Art.

Here are some examples of hashtags you might want to use to promote your work:

#abstractart #abstractartist #abstractexpressionism #abstractpainting #abstractphoto
#abstractphotography #acrylic #animation #art #artcall #artcompetitions #artcontest #artfair
#artgallery #artinfo #artist #artnews #artshow #artwork #blackandwhite #callforart
#callforentries #colour #drawing #fineart #graffitiart #graphic #illustration #markers #mono
#monoart #monochrome #mural #onlineart #onlineartsales #paint #painting #paintings #pencil
#photo #photobooth #photocollage #photography #photoofday #photooftheweek #photoshare
#photoshopped #portrait #selfie #selfportrait #sketch #spray #spraypaint #streetart
#streetphotography #urban #wallart #watercolour

16. If your goal is to sell work, ensure there is a way people can contact you on your profile. You could include your website under the information section. Instagram doesn't allow links attached to images, but you can comment and direct people to your information section.
17. Check your account regularly and react quickly - if someone comments on your work asking if it's for sale, you don't want to respond to them a week later as they may well lose interest.
18. As with all platforms, it's important not to use social media solely for *self-promotion*. You should be engaging in conversations, commenting on people's work you admire, and generally interacting on a regular basis. The more you interact with others, the more likely it is people will want to engage with your work. As a general rule, post images promoting your own work/exhibitions in-between several other posts; build a relationship with your followers first before trying to push any type of sales.
19. If you're set up to promote yourself on Facebook, you might want to consider linking the two accounts. You can add an Instagram tab to your Facebook page; this will automatically post images onto Facebook. It will encourage your followers on Facebook to find you on Instagram too.