

KNOW HOW TO TALK WITH YOUR TEEN ABOUT INSTAGRAM: A Parents' Guide



FROM THE PARENTS OF INSTAGRAM

If you're reading this, you're probably a parent. We work at Instagram, and like you, we're parents too. It's with our teens in mind that we go into work every day. Parenting has always been an awesome responsibility — it's tough! — and to make it even tougher, we're raising the first generation of teens who have only known a world with social media.

We know that as a parent it may be hard to understand what your teens are doing online and why they're spending so much time on their phones. It's hard to know how to have an open conversation with our teens and keep them safe while we're learning to navigate the landscape ourselves. We share these concerns, as does every parent who works at Instagram. That's why we've created this guide. We're here to fill you in on what Instagram is all about, give you some easy conversation starters to ask your teens about how they use the app, and also teach you about some of the tools that are in place to help your teens have a positive and safe experience.

We feel a great responsibility to make sure Instagram is a supportive community for teens to do and share what they love, and we want to make sure you as a parent feel informed and empowered to help guide them. We believe that the first step in having an open line of communication with your teen is understanding why they use Instagram, and what tools are available to make sure their experience is positive, inspirational and safe.

For more information, and to watch a video from me and some of the other parents of Instagram, head to parents.instagram.com.

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GLOSSARY

WHAT IS INSTAGRAM?

Instagram is an app and social network used to share photos, videos and messages. The minimum age to have an Instagram account is 13. Teens use Instagram to celebrate big milestones, share everyday moments, keep in touch with friends and family and connect with others who share their passions and interests. It's a vibrant community, where teens can explore the world through their phones.

To learn more about the ways teens use the Instagram app, see the glossary at the end of this guide.



Instagram



Instagram



Instagram



Instagram



Instagram



Instagram



Instagram

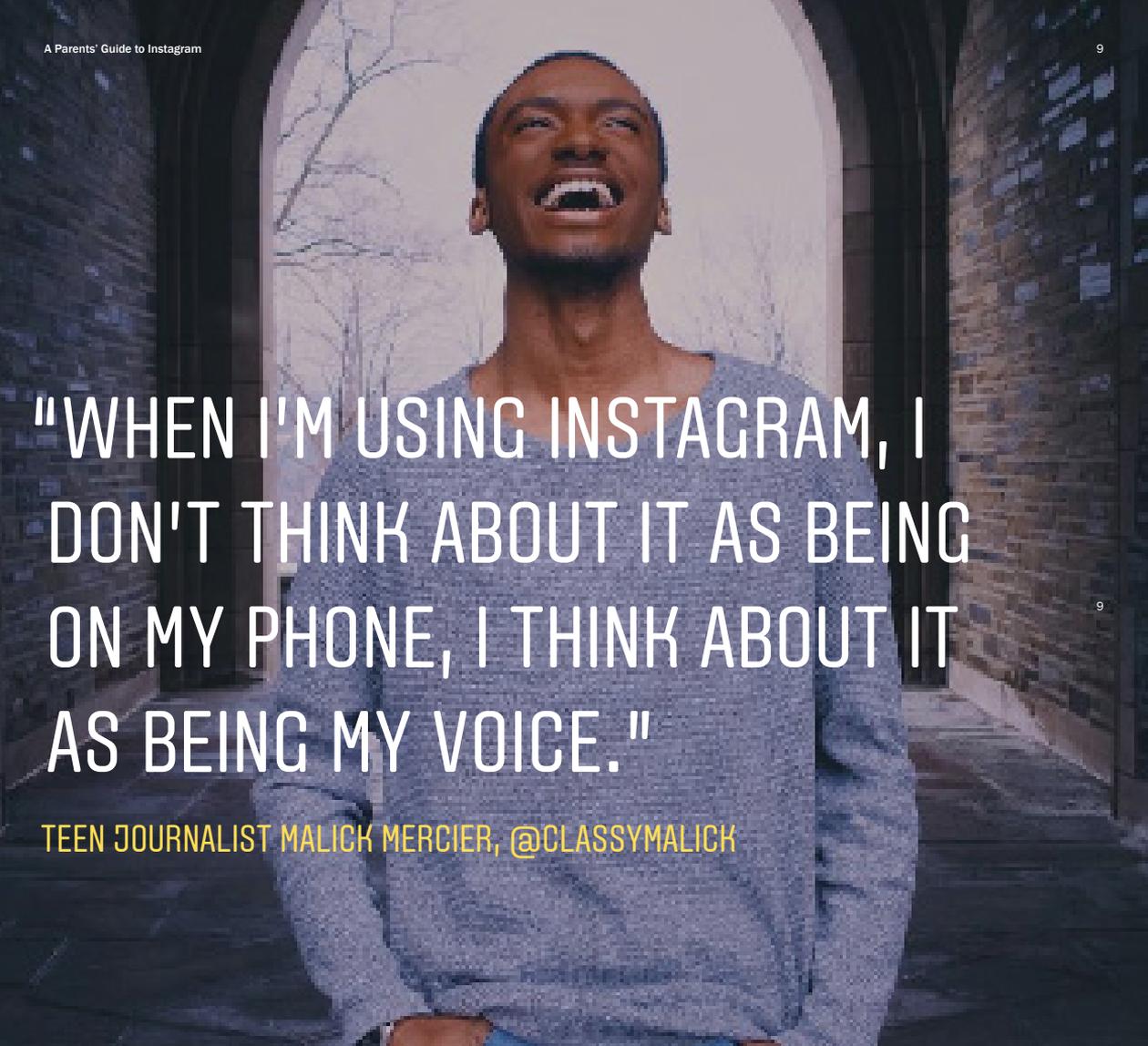


Instagram



Instagram



A young man with short dark hair and a beard is laughing heartily, his mouth wide open, looking upwards. He is wearing a blue textured sweater. He stands in a large, arched stone doorway. The background shows a brick wall and bare trees outside. The lighting is soft, highlighting his face.

"WHEN I'M USING INSTAGRAM, I
DON'T THINK ABOUT IT AS BEING
ON MY PHONE, I THINK ABOUT IT
AS BEING MY VOICE."

TEEN JOURNALIST MALICK MERCIER, @CLASSYMALICK

TEN QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU START THE CONVERSATION

We partnered with Ana Homayoun, author of *Social Media Wellness*, to create a set of ten questions you can use to guide a conversation with your teen about Instagram. Our hope is that you use these questions to learn more about how your teen is using Instagram, and to ensure that they're using the app in a positive way.

- 01 What do you like about Instagram?
- 02 How do you feel about the amount of time you spend online?
- 03 What do you wish I knew about Instagram?
- 04 What would you do if you saw someone being bullied on Instagram? (Do you know about the reporting tools and the offensive comment filter on Instagram?)



- 05 What are the top five Instagram accounts that you enjoy following?
- 06 What are some things you think about before you post something on Instagram?
- 07 Do you know your followers? (If your teen has a private account, ask them how they decide who follows them.) What do you do when someone you don't know tries to contact you via direct message?
- 08 If you have multiple Instagram accounts, what do you share in each account?
- 09 How do likes and comments affect how you feel about a post?
- 10 Have you ever felt uncomfortable with something you saw or an experience you had on Instagram?



"MY SON CONSIDERS [INSTAGRAM]
TO BE THE KEY FOR HIM
TO RELATE WITH HIS PEERS."

PHOTOGRAPHER AND DAD RUDDY ROYE, @RUDDYROYE

KNOW HOW TO STAY SAFE



SAFETY TOOLS OVERVIEW

While it might seem like posting photos and videos is the norm for teens, many of them actually put a lot of thought into their online interactions. Even posting a selfie can feel like a big deal, so it's important that teens feel supported to be themselves on Instagram.

There are a number of tools you can share with your teen that will help keep them safe and give them more control over their digital identity and footprint.



KNOW HOW TO STAY SAFE

MANAGE PRIVACY

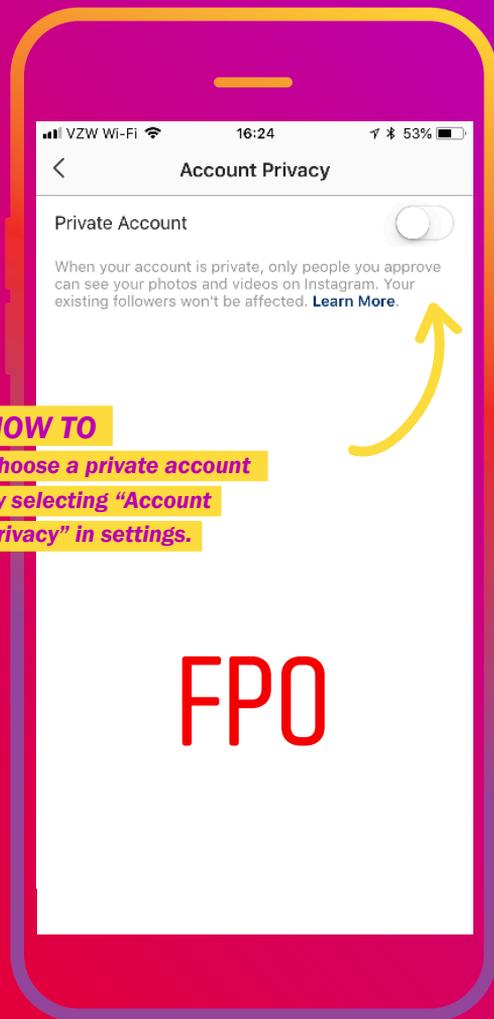
Your teen can choose to make their account private. This means they approve the people who follow them, and can remove followers at any time. Your teen can also turn off “Show Activity Status” so friends can’t see when they’re online.

INSTAGRAM TOP TIP

If your teen already has a public account, they can switch to private at any time. They can remove followers, choose who can comment and more.

HOW TO

**Choose a private account
by selecting “Account
Privacy” in settings.**



KNOW HOW TO STAY SAFE

BLOCK UNWANTED INTERACTIONS

Your teen can block accounts they don't want to interact with, including blocking people from seeing and commenting on their posts.

INSTAGRAM TOP TIP

Teens can turn off comments from all posts or individual posts.





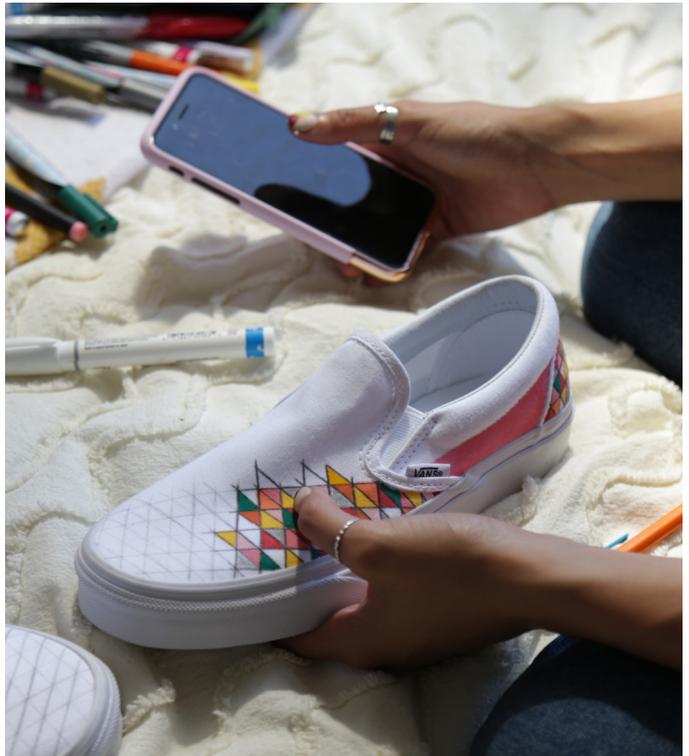
"MY MOM HELPS ME BY
MAKING SURE THERE
ISN'T ANYBODY NEGATIVE
IN MY COMMENTS.
WE EITHER IGNORE IT
OR BLOCK THEM OUT."

AUTHOR, LEXI P., @CURLANISTAS

MANAGE YOUR TIME

Teens go on Instagram to engage with their friends' posts and discover new things, but knowing when to focus on homework or spend time with family is important for teens, too.

There are a number of tools to help you and your family understand the time your teen is spending on the app.



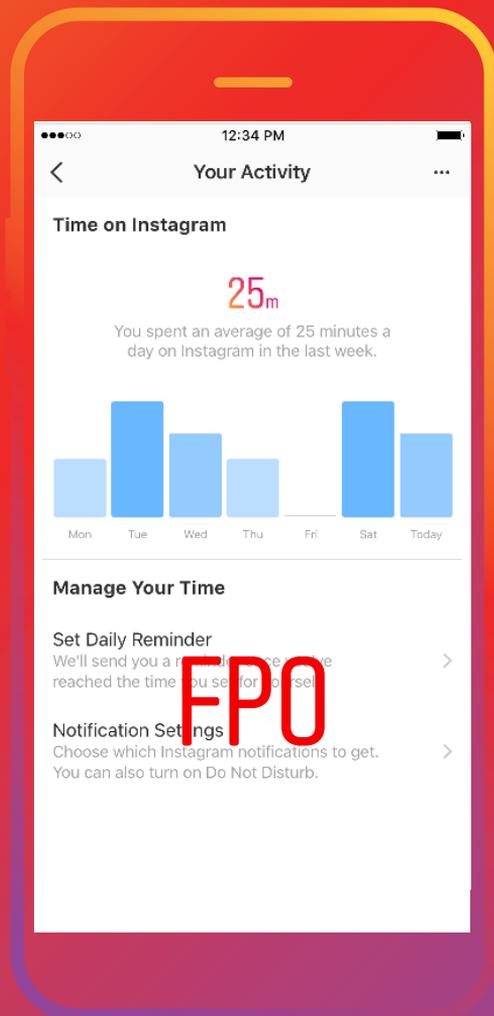
MANAGE YOUR TIME

VIEW YOUR ACTIVITY

Your Activity Dashboard shows your teen how much time they've spent on Instagram for the past day and week, as well as their average time on the app.

INSTAGRAM TOP TIP

There's no right or wrong answer when it comes to how much time is too much or just right — it's up to you and your teen to decide what the right balance is for them.



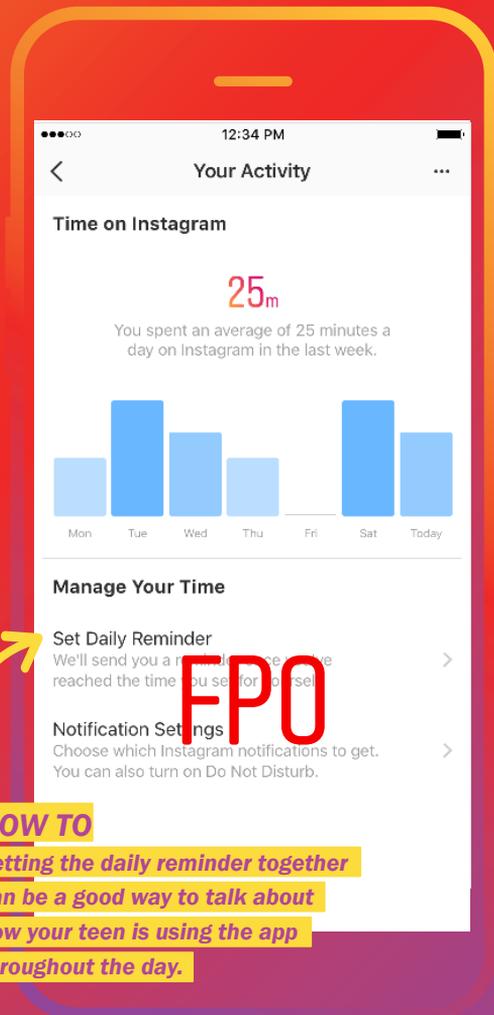
MANAGE YOUR TIME

SET A DAILY REMINDER

Your teen can use the daily reminder to set a limit on how much time they want to spend on the app before closing it for the day.

INSTAGRAM TOP TIP

Talk with your teen about how they feel while using the app. Is there a point when they don't get as much out of it?



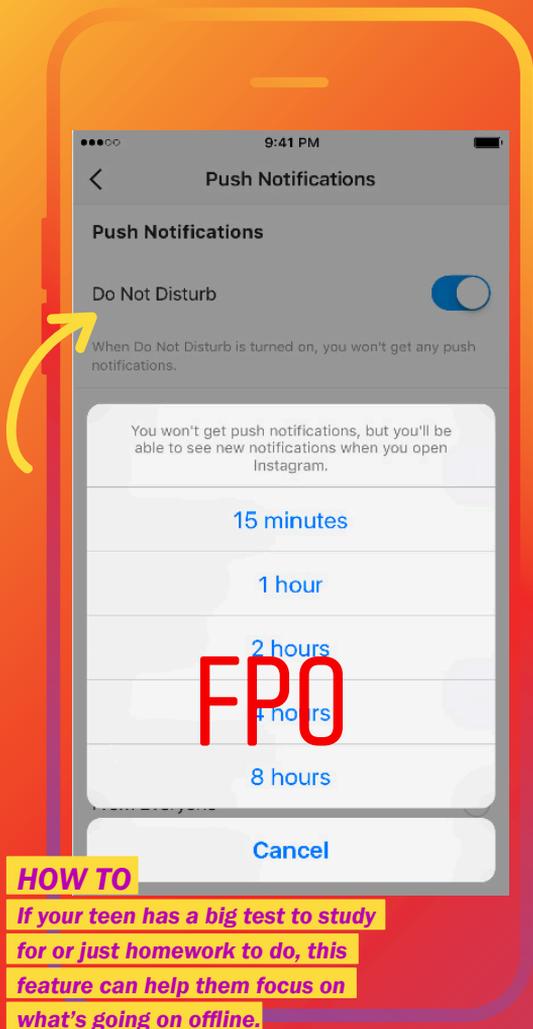
HOW TO

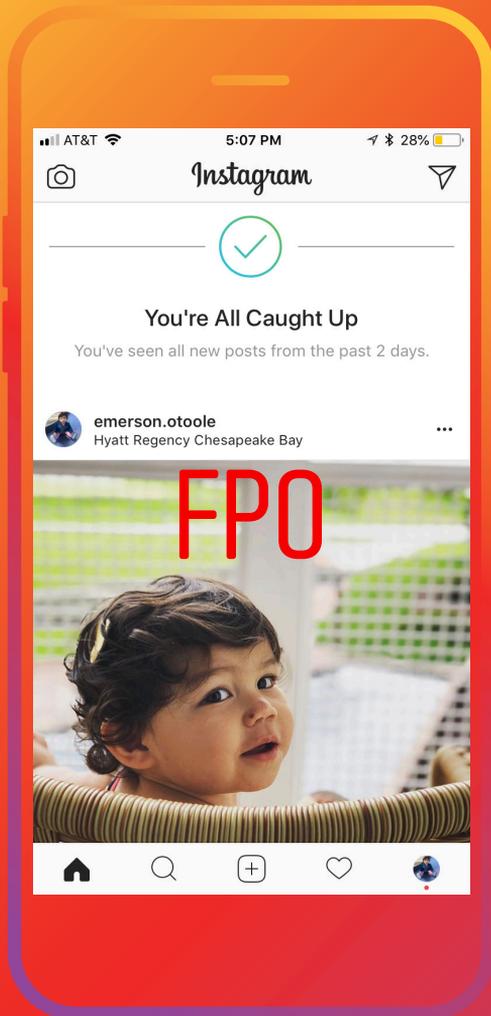
Setting the daily reminder together can be a good way to talk about how your teen is using the app throughout the day.

MANAGE YOUR TIME

MUTE PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

When your teen needs to focus, use the “Mute Push Notifications” feature to silence Instagram notifications for a period of time. When the preset time is up, notifications will return to their normal settings without having to reset them.





MANAGE YOUR TIME

YOU'RE ALL CAUGHT UP

Teens can feel pressure to see and interact with all of their friends' posts. Now, when they scroll through every post on their feed since they last logged on, they'll see a message that says "You're All Caught Up." This way, your teen knows that they've seen it all, and can log off.

A woman with glasses, wearing a black and patterned dance costume, is captured in a dynamic dance pose against a plain grey wall. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. Her right arm is extended outwards, and her left arm is raised and bent at the elbow. She is wearing light-colored dance shoes.

"HAVING THIS ACCOUNT HAS
CHANGED MY LIFE, BECAUSE I'VE
[HAD] A LOT OF EXPERIENCES AND
MET A LOT OF PEOPLE I NEVER
THOUGHT I WOULD MEET."

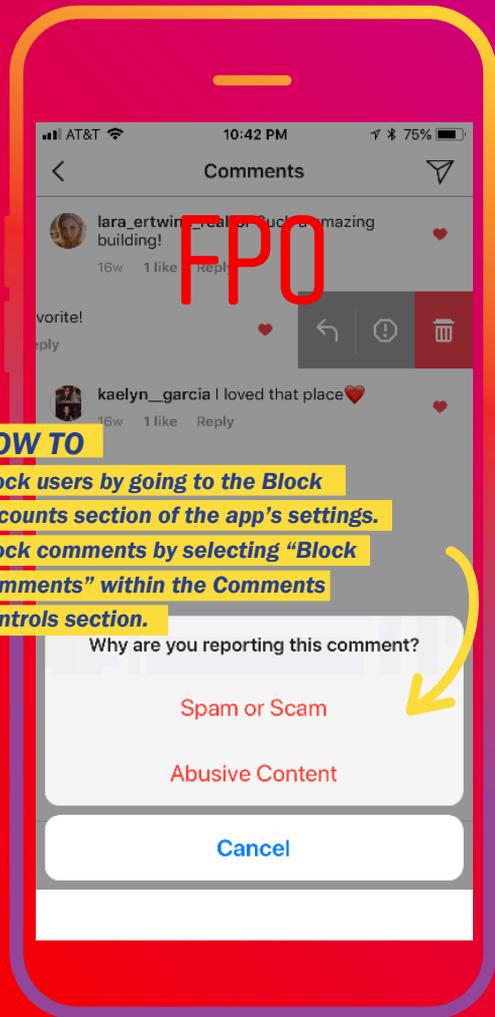
DANCER LIZZY HOWELL, @LIZZY.DANCES

COMMENT CONTROLS



REPORT COMMENTS AND ACCOUNTS

There is no place for bullying of any kind on Instagram. Tell your teen that if they spot an account, photo, video, comment, message or story that is intended to bully or harass someone, they can report it from within the app by tapping “...” on the post, comment, profile, message or video and tapping “Report.” Reporting is totally anonymous; we don’t share your information with the person who has been reported.



COMMENT CONTROLS

BLOCK COMMENTS AND ACCOUNT

Teens can block accounts they don't want to interact with. Blocking accounts will block their comments from appearing on your teen's content.

INSTAGRAM TOP TIP

When you block an account, that person is not notified. You can unblock them at any time.

HOW TO

- Block users by going to the Block Accounts section of the app's settings.
- Block comments by selecting "Block Comments" within the Comments Controls section.



"SOCIAL MEDIA CAN BE
INCREDIBLY HELPFUL AND
IMPACTFUL. IT CAN GIVE
YOU A COMMUNITY WHERE
YOU DON'T OTHERWISE
HAVE THAT COMMUNITY

ACTIVIST ELEANOR WHEELER, @ELIEWHEELS

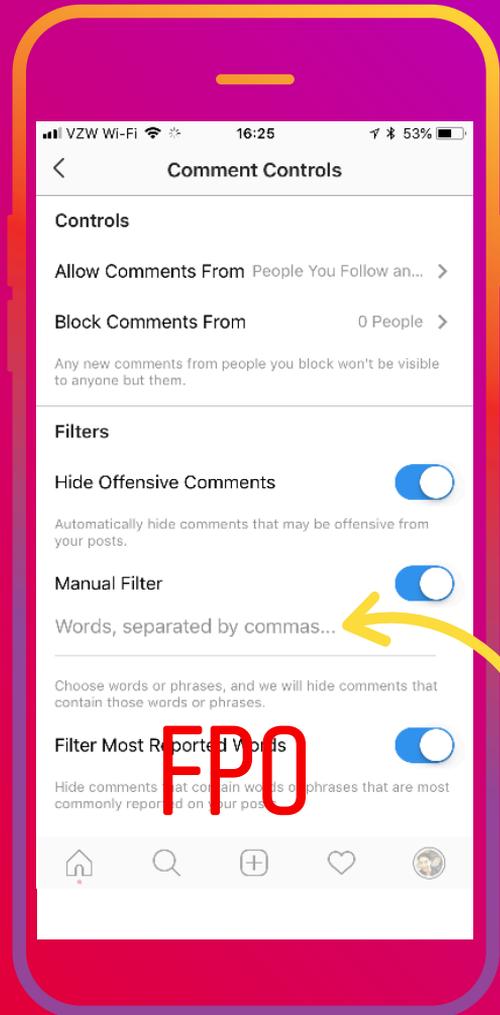
COMMENT CONTROLS

MANAGE COMMENTS

Teens are in control of who can comment on their photos and videos. In the “Comment Controls” section of the app settings, they can choose to allow comments from everyone, people they follow and those people’s followers, just the people they follow, or their followers. Teens can also remove comments entirely from their posts.

INSTAGRAM TOP TIP

You can remove followers from a public or private account to customize who can comment on your posts.

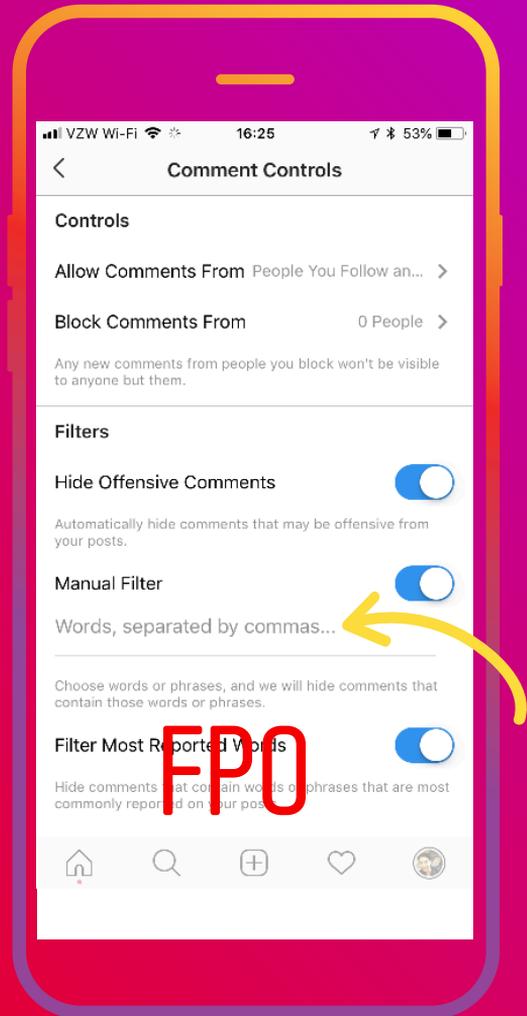


COMMENT CONTROLS

FILTER OUT COMMENTS

There's no place for offensive and bullying comments on Instagram and we've built filters that automatically filter out offensive words and phrases and bullying comments intended to harass or upset.

Your teen can also create their own list of words or emojis they don't want to have appear in the comments section when they post, by going to "Filters" in the Comment Controls section.



GLOSSARY OF INSTAGRAM TERMS

BLOCK

Block is a tool your teen can use if someone is bothering them on Instagram. When you block someone, they aren't notified, but they'll no longer be able to interact with your teen in any way.

COMMENT

A comment is a reaction to the content someone posts on Instagram. Comments appear below posts on your teen's feed. Comments can use words or emoji.

DIRECT

Instagram Direct is where teens can message each other individually or in groups. They can also share photos and videos just with the people they're messaging.

EXPLORE

Explore is where teens will see photos and videos from accounts and tags they might be interested in. Explore is different for everyone — the content changes depending on accounts your teen follows and their interests.

FEED

Feed is where teens can see posts from the accounts they follow. Teens generally see feed posts as being more celebratory or special. Feed posts can be photos or videos.

IGTV

IGTV is a place for long-form video up to one hour. Your teen can find videos from their favorite creators, and can make their own longer content.

LIVE

Teens can go live to share with their followers in real time. They can invite friends to go live with them, and their friends can like and comment while they're live.

POST

A post refers to the media teens are putting on their feed or on stories. This can be video or photos.

GLOSSARY OF INSTAGRAM TERMS



PROFILE

Your teen's Instagram profile is where their friends and followers will find their feed, and can access their stories. It also includes a short bio. If your teen's profile is private, all that will be visible is their main avatar and bio.

REPORT

Reporting is a way your teen can let Instagram that a post, account, or comment is inappropriate. Teens can report inappropriate or bullying comments and posts, or those that they believe violate community guidelines.

IGTV

Stories is a place for more casual moments. Teens can post video or stills on stories, and can have fun with filters, stickers, effects and GIFs. Stories disappear after 24 hours, but people can take screenshots of them. Your teen can also save their stories and share them in their stories highlights.

For more tools and resources to help you navigate healthy social media habits with your teen, visit parents.instagram.com

 Instagram

