

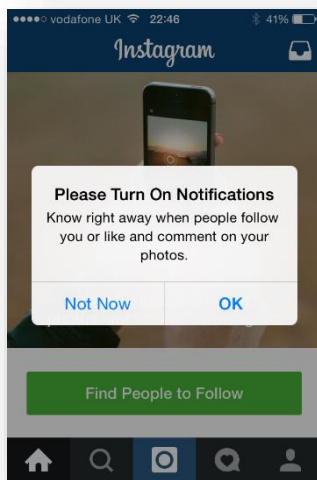
Instagram



Should we be worried?

Instagram is one of a number of photo and video sharing apps causing concern at the moment because of reported issues from schools:

- Children in primary schools are using it without full parental knowledge
- Children and young teens don't realise or care that photos and videos are publicly viewable unless default settings are amended
- Accidentally allowing built in geo-location identify where a photo was taken
- Children as young as 10 years old are sharing photos with people they don't know
- Children below the 13yr recommended threshold have received explicit images from someone they don't know.

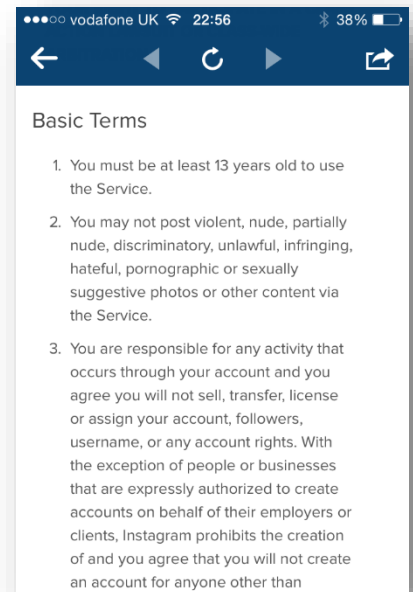


What is Instagram?

Instagram is a mobile app that will allow you to upload or take a photo and change the way the photo looks and then instantly upload it to a number of social networking sites and also to the Instagram community where people can like and comment on it. In other words it is a photo sharing social networking app. Instagram has strict Terms of Use and Community Guidelines that make their age requirement clear.

How does Instagram work?

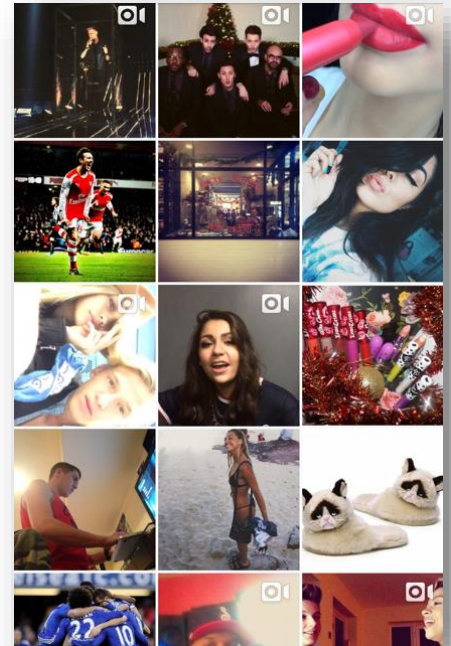
You download the app for free and easily create a profile which could include first and last name, username, birthday, gender, bio, email address and (optional) phone number. The only information required on signup is an email and preferred username. Once you have done that, by default, anyone, anywhere can view photos that you upload. This also means that your profile and photos are publicly viewable unless you alter your personal settings. Instagram settings turn geotagging off by default but it is quite easy to accidentally turn it back on and this would mean that when uploading a photo, the geo-location of the photo could be shared publicly. In other words – where the photo was taken can be traced!



So, why are we concerned??

The app has some strict guidelines but according to the terms and conditions, under 13's are not permitted. It also has Community Guidelines of Dos and Don'ts clearly aimed at older teens and adults.

You run the risk of seeing and hearing raw and suggestive images and videos and children and younger teens may be influenced and seek to join in or emulate what they see.



Community Guidelines

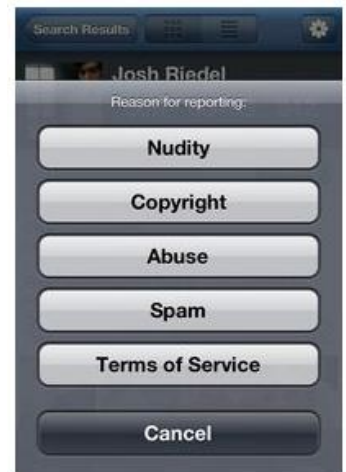
The Short

1. Post your own photos and videos.
2. Keep your clothes on.
3. Be respectful.
4. Don't spam.
5. HAVE FUN!

How can the risk be managed?

First of all, you need to recognise that there are risks when children and young teens use apps like Instagram. If you decide to allow the use of this app then:

- recognise that there is a chance that a young person may easily encounter inappropriate content
- stay involved- know what your child is doing online
- discuss the opportunities and risks in the online world to help these young people see for themselves how they might get into and out of difficulty
- use the tools built into the app to block someone or report if necessary



Keeping someone safe is something you are doing all the time- crossing a road, playing in the park, at the swimming pool, riding a bike SO- keeping them safe in the online world should be no different.

To find out what young people are doing online go to the [THINKUKNOW](#) website where there is an area for parents and carers or try the [SAFER INTERNET CENTRE](#)

Ongoing discussions with young people in your care about the consequences not being internet savvy is a must.
If it's not Instagram it will be the next new app on the block!

