

# Social Networks

## What Are Social Networks?

Social Networks are websites, or online applications that allow you to communicate with other people by posting information, comments, messages, pictures or videos.

## What is a Post?

A 'post' on a social network can be many things. It can be something you write, a photograph you have taken, a short video you have made, or a picture or image you have created. You can either create your own posts, or share those other people have created.

## Some Popular Social Networks

There are lots of social networks, some are general interest, and some are specific to one area of interest. Some of the most popular social networks are Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.



### Twitter

Twitter is a 'microblogging' platform. This means that posts you make to the site, which are called tweets, are limited to just 280 characters. Twitter also lets you post short videos and images. Twitter is popular because it lets people 'follow' (choosing to see all of another user's posts and updates) many different people or areas of interest. Lots of Twitter users like to follow popular Twitter users but don't always make their own posts. Lots of businesses and people in the public eye use Twitter.



### Facebook

Facebook is a site that lets you set up a personal profile page and add friends. You can then share posts, pictures and videos to your page which your friends will then see in their timeline of news. If your friends post things, they will be visible to you. You can react to other people's posts to show you like, love, or dislike what they have posted. Facebook also has a messaging service called Messenger that allows you to communicate privately by calling, or writing messages to the people you have added as friends.

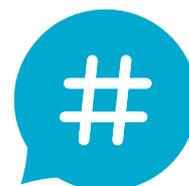


### Instagram

Instagram is a picture sharing social network. It is mainly used to share images or short videos rather than written messages. If you do want to share a written message on Instagram, you have to do this as a caption on a picture or a comment beneath the post.

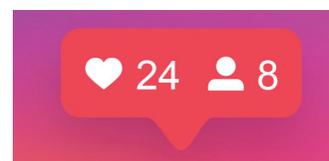
## Hashtags

Hashtags are words that are prefixed by a # symbol. When you add a hashtag to a word, without a space between the # and word – like this: #hashtag - it means that other users of a social network can press, or click on the word and find other content people have shared with the same hashtag added. Hashtags are a great way of following a particular area of interest. You would do this by searching for #ClassicCars or #knitting for instance.



## Friends and Followers

One thing all social networks have in common is that they enable you to connect with other people, some call these followers, and others call them friends. You can choose to add settings to your accounts that mean you have to 'Accept' followers or friends, to stop people you don't know from being part of your network.



## Liking and Sharing Content

791

46 Comments 25 Shares

Like

Comment

Share



All social networks have the ability to 'like' and 'share' other people's content. The option to do this is often found beneath a particular post – usually in the shape of a heart or a thumb for 'liking' and an arrow for 'sharing' with friends.

This is how social networks are used to spread a message to lots of people. When many people share someone's content this is known as it going 'viral'.

CONNECTIVITY 1 Social Networks

## Checklist ✓

### Follow our simple Do and Don't checklist

# Do

- *Consider whether you want to make your account private or restricted rather than public - this means you have to approve anyone who wants to follow you.*
- *Try searching for hashtags about things you are interested in.*
- *Think about which social network is right for you. Facebook is great for connecting with people you know well, Twitter for following accounts you are interested in, and Instagram for photo sharing.*
- *Be aware of what you are sharing. If your account is public, then anything you post or share can be seen by anyone.*
- *Try using social networks, they are a great way of keeping in touch with friends and family.*

# Don't

- *Be afraid to ask for help. There are lots of different social networks and we have only mentioned three. Millions of people use these daily so it's likely people will be able to help you if you get stuck.*
- *Share personal information with people you do not know. If you receive a message from a stranger, it is OK to ignore this if you don't feel comfortable.*
- *Transfer money to anyone who approaches you through a social network. This is a popular scam and you should be aware of it.*
- *Believe everything you read on social media. Always get your news from a reputable source such as the BBC.*