

How many Instagram followers do you REALLY need to start making money in 2018?

It is frustrating to see influencers making thousands of dollars per post on Instagram while we struggle just to see our follower count rise on a daily basis. We all want to be the next influencer to land big sponsored deals that pay for us to travel the world and eat the best looking food, but it's hard to know exactly when your account is ready to start making money.

One of the first metrics that users and brands look at to determine account influence is your follower count, mostly because it is front and center for everyone to see. Even so, there is no set Instagram follower number to make money in 2018 that works for every influencer in every niche. In today's post, I am going to go over how to approach your follower count and when should you monetize them.

How much money can you make on Instagram?

This is the first question anyone who is trying to monetize their Instagram has, but there is no hard and fast answer. There are a lot of variables that factor into the amount of money a user can make by posting on Instagram such as account niche, the way of monetization, quality of posts, follower count, and engagement rates, just to name a few.

One of the most popular ways (if not THE most popular way) that influencers make money on Instagram is through sponsored posts. Influencers are responsible for setting their own rate for working with brands, so the income potential varies even more here.

For instance, an account just branching out into influencer marketing and sponsored posts may start by charging \$25-\$50 a post and accounts that are already established as influencers with 30-80k followers can charge hundreds of dollars per post. Once influencers reach over 100k followers, they tend to start charging at least \$1,000 for just one post such as [Sam Ushiro](#) who has 283k followers and charges \$1,500 a post. Not to mention, celebrities like [Kim Kardashian West](#) with 107 million followers can rake in over \$500,000 for a sponsored Instagram post.

Couple influencers' wide variety of rates with the varying amount of brands they work with and the number of sponsored posts received, and it becomes completely possible to make a full-time living just by posting on Instagram!

How many followers do you need to make money on Instagram?

The answer is... it depends! If you feel like this answer is a let down, hear me out.

When brands are looking to work with influencers, they want to know that their marketing budget is well-used. What brands really look at is how well your audience is engaged, no matter the follower count because that means more product awareness, and potential sales, for them. Brands also look at how your follower count and engagement rate fit in with your niche and quality of your posts.

Engagement rate is gold

While the amount of followers you have can be anywhere from 1,000 to 1 million to make money from Instagram, one thing that is a constant is high engagement rates. There's no point in posting content on Instagram if your followers aren't seeing or interacting with it.

For instance, imagine you had \$100 and wanted to make more money with it. You could invest it with a person who had hundreds of thousands of potential buyers at their fingertips, but you noticed that only a hundred or so were actually paying attention to what they said. Your best bet would be investing that \$100 with someone who only had a couple thousand potential buyers, but they are all constantly paying attention to what they say.

The key to making money on Instagram is not follower count. It is having good a engagement rate. Your engagement rate is the total number of likes and comments on a certain number of posts, divided by the number of posts, divided by followers, multiplied by 100. (There are plenty of online tools available if you don't feel like doing the math yourself!) [Later](#), an Instagram marketing and scheduling platform, states that engagement rates between 2-3% is average and rates between 4-6% is considered high. An engagement rate that breaches double digits is considered to be "viral."

When your engagement rate is high, that tells brands that your followers are hearing what you are saying and, better yet, listening! They will invest their money with you because it will, in turn, result in your followers buying their products.

Your niche matters a lot

Did you know that, according to [Leverage Marketing](#), 74% of people rely on social media to make purchase decisions? They also report that 49% of customers rely on the opinion of influencers. Whether you know it or not, people out there are looking for recommendations to follow and yours is one of them! If you are passionate and knowledgeable in a particular niche, you could be earning money just by promoting brands and products you already love!

Some of the most profitable niches on Instagram are Health/Wellness/Fitness, Travel, Fashion, Beauty, Business, Wealth/Finance, Luxury and Lifestyle. Users in these niches work with a variety of brands, create a wide range of content, and have great success in monetizing their Instagram accounts. Take [Huda Kattan](#), for instance. She started as a beauty influencer on Instagram and currently has over 2 million followers and recently launched her own popular line of makeup. [Kayla Itsines](#) is also a successful Instagram influencer who started as a personal trainer but now has 7 million followers and a huge following for her series of bikini body guides.

Some niches are so specific, that you don't have to have a lot of followers to start landing sponsored posts, such as "hamburgers" instead of "food" or "acne skincare" instead of "beauty."

More and more brands are working with microinfluencers in these specific niches to promote their products because they have a more engaged, targeted following. While the definition of a microinfluencer varies from professional to professional, they are generally defined as a user who has more than 1,000 and less than 100,000 highly engaged followers. That's great news for accounts who are still growing but are ready to start landing sponsored posts!

Don't limit yourself to sponsored posts

Earn extra as an affiliate

Partnering with brands isn't the only way to monetize your Instagram account. On top of working directly with brands in sponsored posts, you could also use affiliate marketing to make an income on Instagram. Affiliate marketing is when a brand pays you a commission after someone buys a product that you recommend. Usually with a promo code or affiliate link, the affiliate marketing networks you are a part of will track of the amount of sales your recommendation garnishes and will pay you a percentage of the profit when it's all said and done.

Selling affiliate products is as simple as recommending a product as long as you always remember to include your tracking link or code. The best place to start is with products you

already use and recommend and researching if those brands are already a part of affiliate marketing networks.

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of affiliate programs available for you to join and in every niche imaginable. Some of the top affiliate marketing networks to join when just getting started include Amazon Associates, Linkshare, Shareasale, and Commission Junction.

Earn even more with your own products

By far the best way of monetizing your Instagram account is by selling your own digital products. Just like Lucy Davis, an Instagrammer in the [fitness niche](#) who earned over \$20,000 in six months by selling her ebook online and promoting it on Instagram. [Selling on Instagram](#) isn't as difficult as it may sound. It can be as simple as writing an ebook in your niche and marketing it to your followers!

Even though there is no numerical threshold you have to cross in order to consider yourself an influencer and start making money on Instagram, that doesn't mean you should give up on growing your audience. Growth is always a good indicator of a successful, thriving account and once you have 1,000 followers, a lot of monetization opens up for you.

You can even earn \$1,000 as long as you have 1,000 followers without using paid ads. More on this in the guide below.

All in all, as long as you are seeing great engagement and creating quality content, you are on the right track to making money on Instagram.

How Photographers Can Earn More with Social Media

Let's be honest...

If you're a photographer and you're not on social media, you're doing something wrong. There are literally thousands of photographers that have built their career around Instagram.

That said, today I'm not going to talk about best social media platforms for photographers. There are 1001 articles written on this topic (just Google it).

I'm going to cover something that's far less talked about. Monetizing your social media.

Instagram and YouTube can literally turn your hobby into a full-time career (make full-time income) if you're smart about it.

More Than a Side Hustle

There are plenty of ways how you can earn an [income from photography](#). Here are some of my favorites:

- **Selling Services:** Being paid to take photos of an event or conduct photoshoots are often the first thing anyone thinks of when making money as a photographer. What many people don't think of is using social media to market photography services.

Think of your social media feed as a portfolio, especially Instagram. The best way to be successful in selling your photography services is to make your feed niche specific, such as wedding photography. Then, add your contact info in your bio and a link where someone could purchase a photography package. An online store like Sellfy is perfect for listing your packages and super simple to do.

- **Reviewing Gear:** If you get into reviewing photography gear and equipment on YouTube you can earn some money by signing up for affiliate programs.

You may even receive a free product from time to time in exchange for your honest opinion.

Start by reviewing equipment you already have experience with. Make sure you are honest in your review. And check into everything you use to see if there is

already an affiliate program available for you to join. Amazon has one among many affiliate programs that works.

- **Getting Sponsored:** Having a brand sponsor a post or video is another great way to start monetizing your social media and is usually done in conjunction with a lot of other monetization options.

Once you have several posts or videos that either review a product or feature it in anyway, contact the brands you would like to work with.

Send them samples of your work, samples of posts you could make, and even detail the ways sponsoring you could help their brand or product. It's usually a good idea to work with brands you love and honestly want to recommend. Remember that social media is super transparent.

- **Selling Digital Products:** Among all the monetisation methods mentioned above this has the biggest earning potential and many photographers actually use their social media to sell them. ([Here's one example](#))

In essence digital products are intangible (digital) items that you can sell. You can sell an infinite amount of that product without worrying about running out of stock. And, even better, it provides you a residual income!

There are all kinds of digital products you could sell as a photographer such as stock photography, ecourses, ebooks or even... Lightroom presets.

Presets, Presets, Presets

You might have noticed the currently popularity of presets in the photography community. They are definitely a hot item right now!

Everyone from bloggers to fellow photographers are eating up photography presets like they are going out of style. If you are considering selling digital products as a photographer, you should definitely consider creating your own presets.

Presets have become so popular because everyone who posts photographs on a regular basis want to have their own photography style.

They want their images to scream their name so everyone knows who posted it, no matter where they see it. Having this unique style is important for so many businesses, entrepreneurs, and more, so your products would be in high demand.

Not only that, but selling presets would be a great way for you to grow your audience. Since presets are such a hot topic, it is a great way for you to get your name out there.

There are plenty of eyes searching for presets and once they come across yours, they will be led to your actual photography and follow you for more. Not to mention, creating presets that help other photographers helps build your reputation in the photography social sphere and establish you as an expert or influencer- whatever you are going for!

Presets can be sold on any online store that allows you to sell digital products, like Sellfy. All you need to get started is photo editing software and your first preset!

Your Sellfy store can be up and running in 5 minutes. From here, you can embed your store anywhere, easily create promotions and coupons to attract customers, and receive a payout as soon as you sell a preset.

Do it Like the Pros

Even world class photographers are selling presets on social media. With millions of people scrolling through feeds full of photographs, there's no wonder! By getting your name and products out there every chance you get, you are increasing the chance of selling one of your products or services. Take a page out of the pros' books and start using social media to market your photography, whether it be your services, stock images, or presets. Here's how they do it:

- **They advertise everywhere.** Posting about your products isn't the only way to market your photography on social media. You could take out a paid ad. Take advantage of Facebook and Instagram Stories. You can even advertise your online store in your social media banners. Just like [Peter McKinnon](#) who uses the banner on his [YouTube channel](#) to direct viewers to his Sellfy store filled with his own presets.
- Speaking of Instagram Stories, don't forget to **add links to your Instagram Stories!** Instagram may be one of the best social media for photographers and the fact that you can now add more links than just what you have in your bio is game changing. Take advantage of the See More link in Instagram Stories every chance you get by directing viewers to specific products and promotions.
- **They create videos to promote their products.** Photographs aren't the only content that does well on social media, so try making videos for your products! Videos can be as simple as a product launch announcement but you can get

more mileage out of videos that show how to use your product or the benefits of using your product. [Sorelle Amore](#) always makes a [video](#) when she has new products for sale so that all of your YouTube subscribers are directed to her Sellfy store.

- **They use Sellfy's embed feature to create Facebook stores.** Adding your products to your Facebook page is a great way to get new customers. Some people may only be following you on Facebook, so make it easy for them to buy your products! Sellfy's embed feature makes it that much easier to make sales on Facebook and any other social media platform. [Salt in Our Hair blog](#) used this feature to create a [Facebook Store](#) that can be found and shopped alongside different sections of their profile.

Utilize Your Following

Making money as a photographer is as simple as using social media. You're great at what you do, so let the world know it! By getting your services and products out there, you are not only growing a following but a loyal customer base, as well. Take advantage of the fact that people already love your work. Once you start marketing your photography to them, you'll have a line of ready and willing customers.

Don't believe us? Check out our guide for making \$1000 from 1000 followers without paying for ads below!

Write the Perfect YouTube Description (Templates & Examples)

YouTube descriptions are not mandatory. Many YouTubers actually leave them blank.

That said, there's an incredible power in them.

Use them correctly and you will increase your video views, get more followers and make way more money (if you monetize your channel.)

Today I'll briefly describe some core principles that you should keep in mind when writing them and give you some examples/ YouTube description templates to will get you started.

Tell Viewers About You with Channel Descriptions

Your YouTube channel description should tell viewers everything they need to know about you, your channel, and your videos, without giving too much away.

It should make them want to subscribe and watch some of your videos to get to know you better. It is also a good place to answer questions they may have about your channel and content.

Here is how to write the perfect YouTube channel description:

1. **Describe your channel.** This might be the most obvious thing to do, but it's where most people get hung up. The goal of this description is to tell your viewers what will happen if they subscribe and watch your videos. What kind of content will they see? How frequently will they see it? Will they learn anything? Make sure they know the benefits of subscribing such as your amazing sense of humor or your easy to understand tutorials.
2. **Include links** to your website, social media, and online store (If you have one). You want to make sure viewers know where to find you, so link to everything you want people to find. If you have a channel trailer or introductory video, this would be a good place to link to it, as well.
3. **Include a call to action** to whatever you want your new followers to do. Do you want them to subscribe? Turn on notifications? Share your content? Or maybe sign up to receive newsletters? Whatever you want them to do, ask them to do it!

Word it in a way they won't be able to resist and put the CTA at the end of your channel description.

Pr

4. **Write it like you are talking to a friend.** You don't want to make your channel description too formal. It should be easy to read, or even skim, with short sentences and paragraphs and maybe even bullet point, if that is applicable to your content. If you are having trouble with your channel description, try actually describing it to a friend and use the same language and terminology you use to talk with them!
5. **Make it brief.** Don't go overboard and give them too much information. Leave them wanting to know even more beyond your channel basics because that will make them want to watch your videos or visit your website. A short channel description that gets straight to the point is best.
6. **Add your personality.** Anyone can write a plain-jane channel description, but only you can write one with your style and tone of voice. Don't be afraid to crack a joke or use slang words, as long as that is something you do anyway. Always be true to yourself on your YouTube channel. You want viewers to get to know the real you!

Channel Description Template

Look at the channel description for [TheSorryGirls](#).

Their channel description only takes up one paragraph, but readers immediately know what kind of videos will be on their channel. From there, they list everywhere else they want future subscribers to find them.

Now check out the channel description for [Nikki Tutorials](#).

Nikki's description is loaded with personality and tells subscribers when to expect new videos. Her description does a wonderful job of getting to the point but is still loaded with information.

Both channel descriptions are different, yet still have the same effect. There are several different ways to write cool YouTube channel descriptions without giving too much info. To get you started writing your perfect channel description, check out our YouTube channel description template below:

Hi! I'm [your name]. On my channel, you will find [topic]. I love [topic] and sharing my experiences with you. Subscribe to see more [topic], [topic], and [topic] on your feed!

[Upload Schedule]

Facebook:

Twitter:

Instagram:

Pinterest:

Blog/Website:

Online Store:

Get Found in Search with Video Descriptions

When writing descriptions for your YouTube videos, there are several things you need to keep in mind. First, it is important to do keyword research so you know what your ideal audience is searching for. Placing keywords in your video description is important for getting found in search and can also help with choosing the best video tags.

Second, you have 5000 characters to work with- make the most of them! It may take several different attempts at writing video descriptions to find what works best for you and your channel, so don't be afraid to mix it up!

Here is what you need to do to write the perfect YouTube video description:

1. **Pay close attention to the first three lines**, for several reasons. For starters, the first three lines of your video description are what viewers will see before the "see more" break. You want to captivate their attention in these three lines so they will click the link to see more. The first line of your video description is also what appears under your video in search results, so you want to get straight to the point if you want people to click on it. Not to mention, these lines are where your keyword research will come into play. Since the first line is what appears in search results, you'll want to place long-tail keywords and other search terms users are searching for here. Be careful not to stuff it with keywords. Still keep it conversational, but make sure it is phrased in a way people would search.
2. **Be clear about what the video is about.** Much like the last tip, you want to be clear so people know to click on your video in search and click on the "see more" link. You also want to be clear so people aren't confused by anything. After the first three lines, if you feel the need to go into more detail about the video topic, do so! It's ok to have a long video description as long as it provides relevant and important information and is easy to read. Consider using short paragraphs, bullet points, or characters like asteriks to break up text.

3. **Add timestamps if your video is long or covers a wide range of topics.** If you have several different points in the video where you have important advice or information, link to each one in the description. While having viewers who watch the whole video is a good thing, not everyone who wants to hear what you have to say will have the time to watch the entire thing, especially if your video is over 10 minutes. Some people are looking things up with a limited amount of time to learn it, so help them out with timestamps. Your helpfulness might just be what makes them subscribe and look to your channel for more information in the future.
4. **Link to anything you talk about.** Whatever you mention in your video, whether it be another YouTuber, an article, a tool, or even a product, link to it! You never know when that will help a viewer out. This is especially important if you are trying to monetize your YouTube channel through affiliate links or selling digital products in your own online store.
5. **Give credit where credit is due.** Did you use someone else's music? Quote someone else's written words? Talk about someone's services or teachings? You may have credited them in the video, but it is also important to credit them in the video description, as well. Not only is it the right thing to do, but viewers will trust you more when they know you are respectful of other creators.
6. **Don't forget your call to action.** Most anything you create online should have a CTA to link all of your work together and grow your audience, and the same goes for your YouTube description. Whatever you want viewers to do next, ask them to do it, whether it be subscribe, turn on notifications, or share your video. You could even mention an opt-in opportunity you want them to sign up for on your website.

Video Description Template

Let's take at Chris Ramsay's video description for his video on [solving a brain teaser puzzle](#).

Right away, he takes the first three lines to tell you what you'll be watching and then dives immediately into where you can buy one, similar videos of his you can watch, and where you can go for more information on him. He uses great, searchable keywords and doesn't beat around the bush.

Now, let's look at Sorelle Amore's video description discussing [presets for photography](#).

She takes the first line to repeat the title of the video (which already has plenty of keywords) and then lists products of hers related to the video before going into more detail below.

Both of these techniques work well for each YouTuber and both follow the guidelines as mentioned above. As you can see, there are so many ways you could apply these writing tips and the possibilities are endless!

To get you started, here is our template for the perfect YouTube video description. This copy paste YouTube description can easily added to your YouTube channel by going to the Creator Studio, then channel, and save it to Upload Defaults. That way, you always have the proper YouTube description formatting ready to go!

Today, I'm going to [topic]. Watch to learn [topic] and don't forget to turn on your notifications!

ONLINE STORE:

WEBSITE:

FACEBOOK:

TWITTER:

INSTAGRAM:

[LINK TO PRODUCTS USED/MENTIONED]:

[give more information on video topic]

Practice Makes Perfect

Writing the perfect YouTube description isn't always easy. But with our tips and templates, you are a few steps closer to getting it right! Just remember, practice makes perfect, even with YouTube descriptions. Don't be afraid to try different descriptions on different videos until you see one performing better than the rest. Once you find that perfect description, trust us, you will know!

And, if you are ready to make \$1000 from 1000 followers without using paid ads, check out our guide below!