

# Instagram Marketing for Public Libraries



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The best techniques for libraries using the social media platform Instagram. Instagram has one of the fastest growing and largest active user bases of the predominant social media platforms today.

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Table of Contents

Introduction .....2

Creating Great Content .....3

It’s all about interaction! .....8

Instagram Tools.....10

Photo ideas .....17

Photography Tips .....22

Overview .....24

Other Libraries on IG .....25

Web links.....27

Interesting accounts.....28

Image list.....30

# Introduction

Instagram (IG) is a visual medium and libraries are visual places with interesting spaces, people, interesting events, interesting items for loan and use inside the library. Add to this that people love libraries, and they love visiting their libraries. All we need to do is connect the two. Connect what makes our libraries great to the people that love those great things about the library.



Picture 1 - A great simple bright and colourful shot by @rplnm. Text description lists the titles in the shot and also a good use of hashtags. This idea could be repeated many times to good effect. Note the description which lists the titles.

Let's imagine that your IG account has the most amazing pictures. The pictures are so interesting that even people that aren't members of your library would follow your account, because looking at your photos adds joy to their day. How would people find out about your account and these wonderful images? You will get a small amount of people accidentally stumbling onto it perhaps, but how do we increase the amount of people that can find our account? And, by increasing that amount hopefully increase the amount of likes, comments and follows?

I would like to go over the basics of using IG in a library setting and discuss the very best tips and techniques to grow your local audience. But before we get started on getting your great photos in front of potential new followers, let's first cover the basics of how we get those great photos.

## Creating Great Content

This is where it all starts from; marketing your library through a platform like IG will only work if you have great quality content.



Picture 2 by [@elisejoy](#). Stack of library books, good lighting and colourful. Interesting background with the potted plant as a prop.

### **Post the highest quality photos possible.**

If lighting in your library is bad maybe you need a higher quality camera to take your pictures. Even though IG is an app on your phone, that doesn't mean you have to take photos only on your phone. Can you afford a digital camera? Even the basic ones can potentially take better photos in low lighting. If you use a digital camera, think about how you can transfer the pictures, does the camera have wifi or Bluetooth, does your computer have a micro SD card reader? You can use Dropbox to get your photos from your computer to your device. Ask a friend to borrow theirs to take some test shots before investing in your own camera.

## **Have a consistent look or theme.**

People want to know the type of posts you will be making before they follow you. Your posts have to have value, they either have to look really good (think photo competition) or show something really interesting. As a library your two biggest points of interest are people (staff and patrons) and your collection (books, games, 3D printer etc). Put some thought into how you want to use the platform, how it can show the best side of your library and what it offers.

## **Produce more.**

Take more photos than you can possibly post. Try and take photos every day. The more photos you take the more you will have to choose from and the better you will get at taking them. While it can be fun and interesting to post photos as you take them, there is also nothing wrong with posting an image after the fact. For example you could post the next day something like “Look at what a great time the kids had yesterday at our special story time event, thanks to our children’s librarian Linda! Be sure to check out our website for future children’s events.”

## **Learn the art.**

IG is essentially about photography. Read up online and in books, tips about composition, lighting and 'framing'. Use every technique you can find. Any effort in this area can contribute to making your photos better.

## **Each post should show that you put some time and thought into the process.**

1. Generate ideas (jot them down, look at other accounts)
2. Take photos around your idea and chose the best one
3. Use photo editing app to get the best crop and visual enhancement of the image
4. Craft a descriptive and information caption for the image

## **Produce eye candy.**

People are looking for eye candy. They want to see great colourful, clear, bright and in focus photos, and not dark and blurry images. Take photos of colourful books, a pattern in your building, anything that catches your eye. It doesn't necessarily have to have a direct logical meaning, it could just represent an arty aspect of your library.



Picture 3- again [@rplnm](#), Good use of props, lighting and composition. The cup is a good chance to mention Powell's Bookstore account.

## Describe your photos.

Unlike Twitter IG has a large character limit for posts. In fact, you can post up to 2200 characters! You have the room to say something about the photo, where was it taken? Who is in the picture? What are they doing? Why is it important? You can safely assume your followers enjoy reading and will appreciate the extra details.



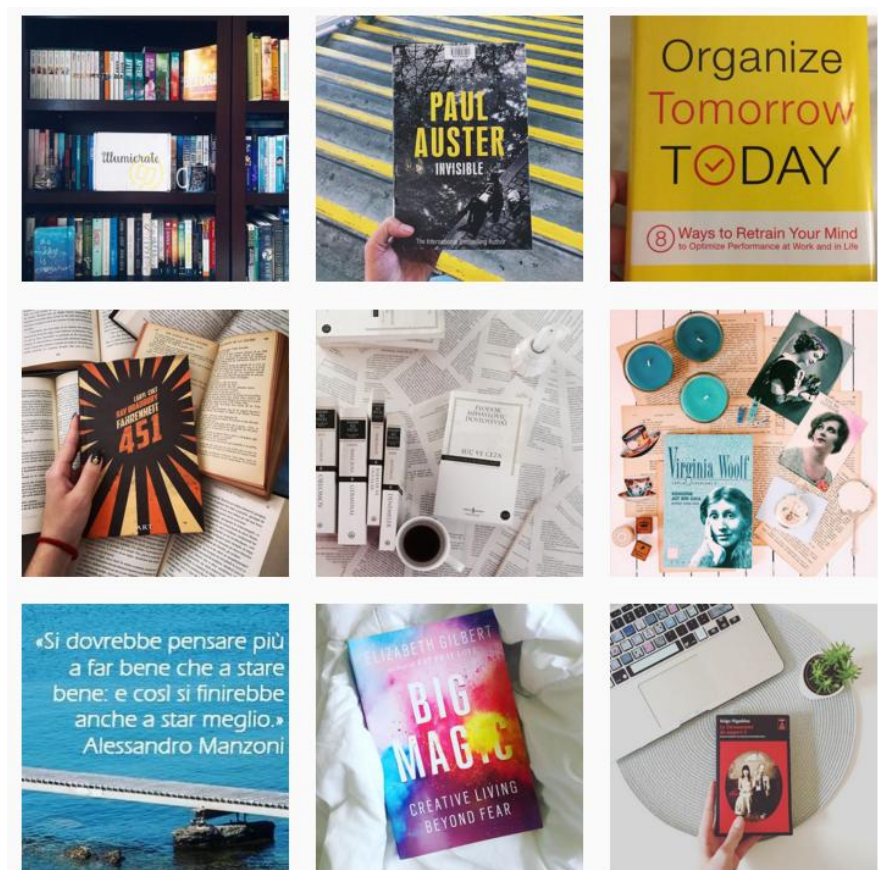
Picture 4 Picture by [@averyandaugustine](#), a good clear bright photo with some cute appeal. It's also a good example of how to describe and create a narrative with your post.

## Filters.

Filters were a very popular feature when IG first came out, but they can be overused and they tend to make photos look aged or dull the colour and brightness (after all this is their intention). I'm not suggesting they shouldn't ever be used, but be mindful of what "look" you are going for with each individual image. A quality photo will stand out on its own. If you feel you need a filter to make a bad photo look better, it may be in your best interest to simply retake the photo if possible. You are able to tone down filters in the app, so if you must use them consider lowering the amount of filter that is applied to your image.

## Curate

Don't be afraid to look back over your feed and delete an odd post if necessary. It's great to experiment and be spontaneous, sometimes that works great and sometimes it flops. You may wish to go back over your feed and delete those 'sore thumbs' that stick out in your feed. This is extreme, but I thought I would mention it as it is not out of the question.



Picture 5 A selection of posts from the popular hashtag [#bookoftheday](#).

## Use the Grid.

When launching an account, be sure to have at least 9 photos already posted. This will completely fill the grid of your IG account. Sometimes people play with the grid and post 3 or 9 photos in a row to make larger picture. Sometimes people post something like a text post every two posts and make a chequered pattern. These are more advanced ideas, and more optional than anything, but it gives you an idea of how people can get creative with the grid layout.

## Don't flood your feed.

Once every 1-2 days is an optimal amount to post. Be careful not to post a lot of photos in a short space of time, e.g, at an exciting event. Consider only posting the best 1-2 photos and space them out, or use an app to make a collage of images. Posting a lot of images all at once is a sure way for people to unfollow you. IG is more about quality over quantity. There are apps such as, 'Layout', 'Pic Stitch' and 'Diptic' that are good for creating photo collages in IG.



Picture 6 -Great lighting, simple background (with good colour and texture) and simple composition. Good long description and use of hashtags as well. By [@erindotsmith](#).



## *It's all about interaction!*

Getting noticed on IG is all about interacting with other users. I cannot stress this point enough, after you have delivered great content you must interact as much as possible. You cannot wait for people to find you based on your good content alone. Interacting on IG will make you visible to potential new followers. Users won't necessarily find you, you have to get out there and make yourself visible through likes and comments and follows. This is what will get the attention of other users and get you more followers.



Picture 7 [@Missinformation](#) is a great example of a good photo idea being used repeatedly. She also receives a lot of interaction in her comments section.

### **Like as many posts as possible.**

I'm not saying like everything indiscriminately, but don't hoard your likes by only using them sparingly. Give your likes out like free candy. They don't cost you anything and it means a lot to the user. Consider it a form of saying hello. Do this to posts in your feed, hashtag searches, viewing profiles, etc.

## **Comment often.**

If you see a post you really like or think is cool, then make a comment. Leave genuine comments on posts. Make as many comments as time will permit. Do this to posts in your feed, posts you find through hashtag searches, viewing profiles, etc.

## **Respond ASAP!**

This is important, if someone comments on one of your posts, reply as soon as possible. If they comment that they think your photo is great, then by all means thank them.

## **Following.**

Follow other libraries in the province, Canada and worldwide. Follow book review accounts, publishers, local community groups and businesses, anything related to your library. Follow lots of accounts. It's tempting to only follow a small amount of people to have an interesting feed just for yourself, but it is more valuable to follow lots of other important accounts for the networking potential it provides. IG now allows multiple accounts, if you wish to have a small curated following feed consider creating an alternate private anonymous account to do so. Note: be careful not to follow personal/patron accounts. When someone is followed by a business they can possibly find it creepy.

Use online IG viewers like [Inconsquare](#) or [Websta](#) to quickly like and comment on posts. There are also apps for viewing IG that you might like to use for better and quicker ways to like and comment, '[Padgram](#)' is an IG viewer for iPad that is particularly good. You can like up to 350 posts per hour according to the IG regulations, if you reach this limit you will receive an error message and IG may place some restrictions on your account.

## **Like-Comment-Follow...**

In short, this is the like, comment, follow method for getting your account noticed by others. Doing this on a regular basis will bring in new likes, comments and follows back to you. To be honest this can be hard work with only small gains, but it is the best and most consistent way to increase your followers and stand out among the crowd. The more you do it the more potential you have for highlighting yourself to potential new followers. I think of it like a get rich slow scheme. If you do this every day you might only get 1-2 followers each time but that adds up over time, doing this for a year could potentially add 365-730 new followers to your account.

Have an Iconosquare window open at the checkout desk and like posts in between tasks throughout the day.

# Instagram Tools

IG has many features and tools that you can utilise to expand your reach. Keep yourself familiar with new and existing features to make the most of them. Use these features as much as possible to increase your reach.

Follow the IG blog for news and updates on new tools and functions, <http://blog.instagram.com/tagged/instagram-news>



Picture 8 [@booksarelifeok](#) a simple image of a book with a background that suits. Nice and clear and bright photo. Good use of hashtags which will then make the post be seen in many more places.

## Understanding the algorithm

When IG first started, posts were sorted in your feed based on when they were posted. In 2016, IG changed the ways images are sorted in your feed to try and filter out content that is less interesting and promote content that is potentially more interesting. At least that's the official explanation. In a nutshell this means that you have to work harder now to get your content seen by your followers. IG will determine the importance of your post based on the post's engagement (likes, comments, views, etc) in the first hour after posting.

To counter the algorithm (the way your post get shown in your followers feeds) people have started using a technique called 'Instagram Pods'. An IG pod is group of people who commit to liking and commenting on each other's posts. They usually do this through IG messaging, alerting other members of the group that they have posted. By getting likes and especially comments longer than 4 words in the first hour, IG will push your post higher in people's feeds.

## **Always use hashtags!**

Always include hashtags on every post, there are varying opinions on how many hashtags you should use per post but 3-5 is a good rule of thumb. This is how people can find you. If you're not using hashtags you are almost invisible to the outside world on IG. Using hashtags on photos is like cataloguing items in a library catalogue, which luckily comes naturally to librarians.

There are many ways to add hashtags, you can add them in the description or even in a comment. If you are sharing your post to other platforms from IG you can always edit your post after sharing or add hashtags as a comment below. Keep a list of hashtags in a Notes page and copy and paste them into IG.

**#Library #Librarians #LibraryLife #librariesofinstagram #BookLife #LibraryLove  
#ILoveTheLibrary #Reading #Books**

These are just a few examples, the possibilities are endless!

## **IG search bar.**

Research keywords hashtags in your field and area. What hashtags do libraries use? Is there a special hashtag for your area/town/city? It could be your town's name or a nickname. These can also change, keep up to date with what is being used and take advantage of them on your posts.

You could even create your own library-specific hashtag, use it on your best posts, and encourage other users to use it.

Pick popular hashtags to use, find related hashtags, or use hashtags that are less popular and you might be able to get featured in the 'top post' section.

## Share your posts to other platforms.

IG makes this very easy to do right from the app. The options are Facebook, Twitter (link only), Tumblr, Flickr, or email. Or you can set up [IFTTT](#) recipes that can automatically publish your picture to those other platforms. Announce on existing platforms that you now have an IG account.

If you have a Pinterest account, you can pin your posts to get even more visibility.

### App

1. Go to the post you want to pin
2. Press on the three dots in to top right of the post and press 'Share'
3. Choose 'Copy Link'
4. Open the Pinterest app, add a pin, 'Copied link'

### Online

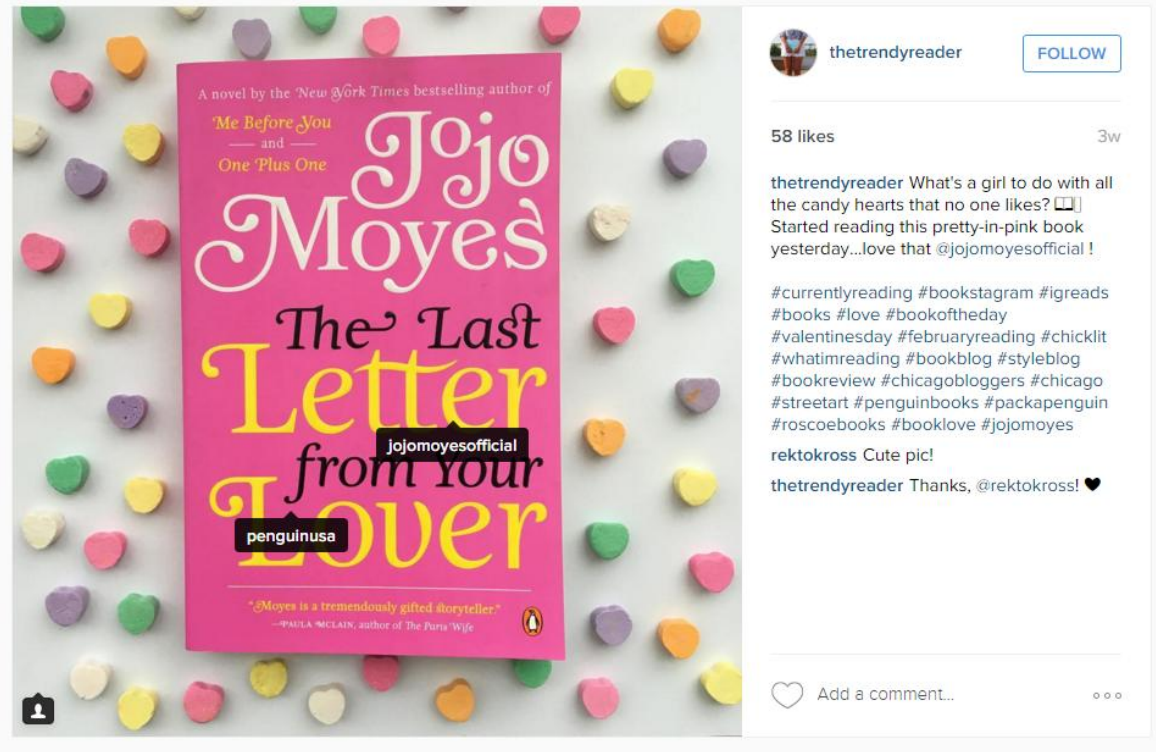
1. Navigate to your IG online profile ([Instagram.com/yourusername](https://www.instagram.com/yourusername))
2. Click on the picture you want to pin, and then click on the date/time to go to the unique page for that post
3. Copy and paste the URL or use a Pinterest browser pin button/tool to post to Pinterest

## Write an amazing bio.

You only have 150 characters though so you have to make them count. Many people even use emojis or place keyboard returns between sentences to stand out. Don't forget to add a profile picture. Usually your logo without the words is the best choice for libraries. Here are some tips and examples of how to standout ([link](#)).

### Link in Bio.

On IG you get the opportunity to only have one link. The majority of the time this will be your website. But it is also common practice to frequently update that one link to reflect a special event, call to action or even a unique landing page for people coming from IG. If you would like to link viewers to a special page from a post, all you need to do is say "link in bio" or "checkout the link in our bio" in your comments. Then update the link in your bio to where you wish people to go. Remember to change it back when the special occasion is over.



Picture 9 User [@trendyreader](#) has tagged the author and publisher of this title. This will then appear in their tagged photos section on their profile, enhancing the post's visibility and discoverability.

## Tag other users.

Tag other IG accounts where you think your users are. Example, photograph someone reading a library book in the local cafe. Tag the cafe's account, they might repost or at the least like, comment or follow you. Does an author of a book you're photographing have an account, tag them! Tagging a user means your photo is now in their tagged area on their profile. Just another way for people to find you, and to make yourself visible. You can even tag old posts you may have forgotten to tag. Click the 'Edit' option on the post and then add the tag.

### Users tag you.

Encourage users to tag you in photos they take in your library. This increases your visibility to more people.

### @mention a friend

This can usually be done in the form of competition where the call to action is, 'tag a friend to enter'.

## Geotag.

When taking photos always consider having the geotag option on. This ensures that local users can find you! You can even share images to the geotagging app 'Foursquare', just another way for people to discover your library and or IG account.

If you can't find your location or Library name in the locations you can create it on Facebook.

1. Create a Facebook check-in status update (Make sure Facebook location services is turned on)
2. Type your custom location title in the search box
3. Tap "Add..." to create your custom location.

The location should then be available to use in IG.

Be sure to check geotags and hashtags for your library regularly for new posts. Definitely like and consider making a comment on the posts. The picture might be so good you might want to ask permission to repost!

To discover local content and accounts (I.E, your target audience) go to the 'Search' page, tap in the search bar, and then the 'Places' option underneath, click on 'Near Current Location'. Options for your area and other local places will pop up.

## Video.

Don't forget you can take videos, while it is harder to get right it is still an option. All the tips about photographs apply to video too. You can also import video from a camera that is possible higher quality than one taken on your phone. And IG also has two separate apps to help with taking other kinds of video

**Boomerang;** for looping Gif type videos

**Hyperlapse;** for taking steady time-lapse shots

## Stories.

Similar to stories on Snapchat, Instagram stories are a way to take candid videos and pictures. When you upload a picture to your story it can only be seen for 24 hours. Whereas your Instagram feed to be more polished and professional (don't forget fun) your stories can be more "off the cuff". You can even get creative and add

- **Stickers & Emojis** (pictures, emojis, location, temp, time)
- **Filters** (swipe to left or right to scroll through a few filter options)

- **Drawings** (change the brush size, scroll across for more colours, press and hold colour to customise)
- **Colour text** (change colours as above, highlight text to add multiple colours or just keep adding text and choose a different colour each time, type another users name preceded by the @ symbol to tag them)

Once you are finished adding to your image you can either save, add to your story or send in a private message (to one or more people).

You can also go 'Live' which will broadcast a temporary video, great for Q&A sessions or to live stream an event for example. You can record a small video and add all of the above or you can make a Boomerang video (a looping gif style video) without leaving the Instagram app.

Keep in mind anything you create for your story can always be saved and posted to Instagram or any other social media. For example you might create a bunch of Boomerang videos for your Instagram story and then save the best one and post to twitter.

## Business Profile

Switching over to a [business profile](#) gives libraries some enhanced IG features:

- Analytics for posts (Impression, Reach, Engagement, Likes, Comments, Saved)
- Contact button
- Ability to promote posts

I highly recommended that you switch you account to a business one. The option to have free inbuilt analytics alone is worth it.

## Direct Messages

When you are on your home page (where you see your IG feed of the people you follow) you will notice a 'paper plane' icon. Pressing on this icon will take you to you IG direct messages inbox. Here you can send private messages and videos to other IG users or groups of users. You will know that you have a message here when the icon is red with a number instead of the paper plane icon. You can send a message four different ways:

1. In the Camera Upload screen
2. From the Home Screen
3. In the actual Inbox
4. From a Hashtag or Location



## Private Collections

This is more of a helpful tool rather than a promotional one. IG offers users the ability to save posts to Collections. When viewing a post in your feed, you can click on the 'ribbon' icon in the bottom right corner of a post. This will save that post to your private collection. No one else can see your collection and the user does not get notified that you have saved the post. To view all of your saved posts, navigate to your profile and click on the same ribbon icon on the right side, just above your posts. You can even create areas within collection to sort and organise your saved posts. This could be useful when browsing a tag collection or an interesting users profile to save interesting posts for future inspiration. Some users have likened the feature to that of Pinterest.

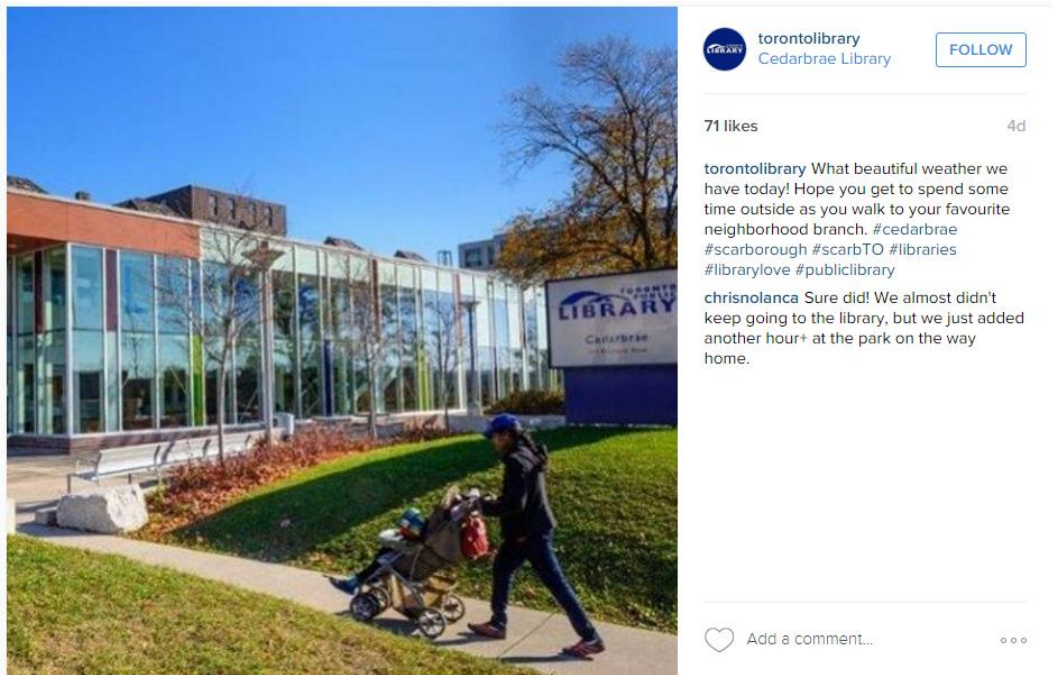
## Other tips

- Make your username the same across all platforms if possible
- Link to IG from other platforms e.g, "Check us out on Instagram", put the icon on your website on flyers and posters, make bookmarks, etc
- IG now allows you to post tall and also wide images and not just square
- When taking photos with a digital camera or scanning, you can save the photos to a Dropbox account on your computer, then open the image in the Dropbox app and save it to your camera roll. You can now post on IG
- Using developer mode in the Chrome browser it is possible to post from your computer. ([link](#))
- Some people use services such as 'Hoot suite' or 'Buffer' to schedule IG posts. While these services cannot actually post to your IG account it can give you a reminder and open the app with the post and text preloaded, ready for you to post
- Consistency is key, whether it be a theme, the quality of posts or something else. This is one of the reason why repeating a good idea works well for some users. When people look at you profile they want to know what they are getting, why they would follow you
- Instagram has three other separate apps in the Canadian app store, 'Layout', 'Boomerang', and 'Hyperlapse'
- You don't have to have taken the photo. Maybe it's a publicity shot for a visiting author or another library took the image. As long as you have permission and the photo is high resolution, use it if you've got it!

# Photo ideas

Here's a list of photo ideas for your library. Use the list to get inspiration for new posts, or perhaps you could set yourself the challenge and check of ideas from this list over the course of a month.

1. **Your library;** get a shot from the outside. Make this a regular post. Pair the image with a story, e.g, "even though it's snowing today we are open!" "It's almost fall and the leaves are starting to turn red!" Take the picture from the same location or take the picture from a different location each time.



Picture 10 - A great bright shot by [@torontolibrary](#) and a familiar sight to patrons.

2. **From the archives;** photos from the past, how the library used to look, previous staff etc. NYPL posts a picture of an old catalogue card with a reference request every Monday under the hashtag [#letmelibrarianthatforyou](#). You might need a scanner or a way to take a good clear photo of an old photo or note/object.
3. **Book display;** take a regular shot of what is on display this week, something that you've already put time into looking good. Check out these [great examples](#).
4. **Book highlight;** a special spot to highlight a title/s. Consider setting an area up where you have good lighting and you can use a tripod or something to stabilise the shot for a great image. Add some props. Get on the same level as the books. Check out the tag [#Bookstagram](#).

5. **Signs;** do you have a chalkboard or white board that you update with positive and cheerful messages. Again you can set it up with good lighting for steady shot, remember to only post positive messages.



Picture 11 - A great idea to have a sign in the library that get's updated and posted to social media. Posted on [@asskickinlibrarian's](#) personal IG account.

6. **Posters;** Photographing posters for events can work in some circumstances, although posters on their own could potentially be a bit dull. Here are some ways you could make it more interesting:
  - a. Focus on the graphic you have used on the page, with the idea being that people will see the image elsewhere and create the connection. You can put all the event details in the post, remember you have 2200 characters!
  - b. Photograph the poster in its environment. Make an arty composition which could make it look more attractive. Again, use the description field to add extra info. You can always edit it after posting if you want to share it to other platforms first, like Twitter.
  - c. Put the poster as a second photo in a gallery post (save the first image for something more visually interesting) tell people to swipe in the comments.
7. **Craft time;** pick an example of a craft that was made (or a selection using the layout app or a gallery post). Kids' art can be amazing, take a clear colourful close up!
8. **Events;** take a photo of an event taking place (pending permission), be sure to mention what it was for (context) and how patrons can learn about future events.

- This option has so many possibilities, visiting author, adult book club, kids entertainer, knitting circle, teen event, etc.
9. **Out and about;** are your staff doing an outreach session? A local school, fair or business event. Be sure to tag and geolocate posts for extra reach!
  10. **Step out!** As before, but more in terms of simply stepping outside the branch, is there an outdoor garden, a tree to read under, a cafe next door?
  11. **Visitors and patrons;** this can be harder to do as it can be awkward to ask to take someone's photo. But perhaps the delivery person is dropping off some new magazines, a patron is visiting the library with their guide dog, the local mayor is stopping by. Lots of strange and interesting people visit your library that might make for a good story. Think [Humans of New York](#) type posts.
  12. **Staff profiles;** introduce your staff, take a photo of them where they work (be sure they smile). Photograph staff helping or serving a patron (again make sure they look friendly and natural). Photograph a staff member with a favourite book, recommended book, book review, etc.



Picture 12 - This post by [@janebrarian](#) has it all. Staff feature; book display; event promotion; mentioned library's IG account; uses hashtags...

13. **BOOKS!**
  - a. Spine poetry (horizontally stack books with interesting titles on each other)
  - b. A vertical row of books with interesting spines (encyclopaedias, a series)
  - c. Stack of new arrivals
  - d. Staff holding a favourite book, or one they just read

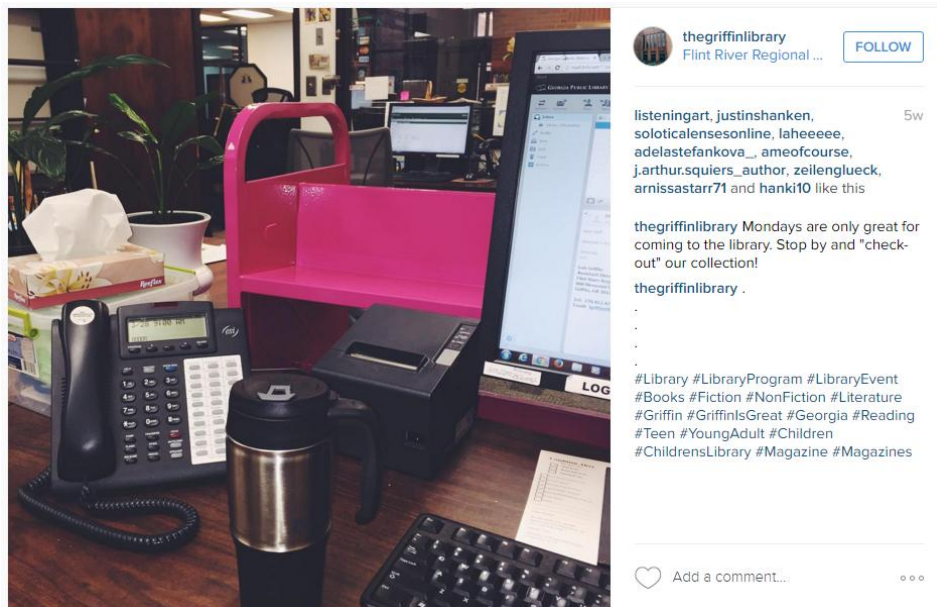
- e. Books with the same colour cover or a similar design, picture theme...
  - f. [Book face](#); book cover that has a face of a real person
14. **Repeat ideas**; is there something that happens on a regular basis, e.g, once per week? Using repeat ideas can make Coming up with posts each week easy. There's nothing wrong with repeating ideas if done creatively.
- a. Friday's a school group comes in
  - b. Every Monday you have a new display
  - c. Every second Friday you get a special delivery
  - d. Crime thriller Thursday book feature (create a hashtag #ThrillerThursday)
15. **Make a list**; think about all the services your library offers, programs & events, items for loan. Everything is up for grabs and everything is a potential post. Think of it as documenting your library to someone that has never been before or for a future historian that is researching everything you library offers. Create a post that reflects each thing on your list.



Picture 13 - A candid shot of a volunteer delivering book to a house bound patron. A feel good post by [@torontolibrary](#), that lets people know about additional library services.

16. **Photo opportunity**; create a poster, cardboard cut-out or wall decoration that people can take their photo in front of, maybe they can put their face through a hole to become a character in a book. Your patrons could do this or you could photograph them in front of it. Great for a kids section!
17. **Screenshots**; screenshot a webpage/website or within an app (e.g, overdrive) can work if used well, be sure what you screenshot is visually appealing, all the same

- rules previously discussed apply. Also make sure the screenshot is a high enough resolution to post, i.e., don't post if it is too small and looks pixelated.
18. **Behind the scenes;** take the viewer into the back room, the tea room, where all the new books arrive.
  19. **Text;** Check out poetry accounts on IG and see how they use typewriter text and handwritten text to display their poems. Find an old typewriter, write out on paper or print out some text and take a photograph of a good quote related to books or libraries. It is better to use a real and well taken photo of text rather than a digital file, which are often too low of a resolution and looks pixelated.
  20. **Library Object;** get a close-up shot of an old date stamp, a weird little toy that sits on the checkout desk, a 'reading is fun' magnet on the staff fridge. Fill the frame with the object, blur the back ground, get all the detail...



Picture 14 - A great example of behind the scenes, well lit, bright and colourful. By [@thegriffinlibrary](https://www.instagram.com/thegriffinlibrary).

## Photography Tips

The best way to get a good photograph is to have good (natural) lighting and a steady camera. Also getting on the same level/height with your subject helps. Many of the ideas listed above would work best if you choose a spot in your library that is well lit (and perhaps a time of the day that it is) and have a method of stabilising the camera/device. Consider using a tripod or resting the camera on a surface to take the photo, the less shaky the camera is the clearer the photograph will turn out. Use filters in moderation, or use them with toned-down effects. It's best to take bright, clear and in focus photographs. There are camera apps in the app store that have features that can enhance photos taken on your phone. ['Camera+'](#) or ['VSCO'](#) are two examples of good apps for editing photographs on a mobile device. The device may have inbuilt photo editing options that are worth exploring too.



Picture 15 - A good simple photo idea to highlight two books by [@ameliereadsbooks](#). Bright and clear with an interesting background, good caption, and use of hashtags.

Look at other libraries and copy ideas from them, they won't mind as long as you do it in your own way. Find posts you like, try it out at your library. Also look at other beautiful non-library feeds with lots of followers, what makes their photos interesting? How can you replicate that? What are they showing you about their business that makes them look interesting and vibrant? You have to get out of your familiarity with your library, photos of the library may not be

interesting to you, as you work there every day, but to your patrons, photos of your library remind them that you're there and full of surprises and reasons to visit.

## Quality, resolution and megapixels

There are varying ways to describe the quality of a photograph such as resolution, pixels or megapixels. These all basically describe the same thing, in more basic terms how detailed the photo is. Be careful of using images directly from websites, as the resolution may not be high enough. Your image could look blurry and pixelated. Any image taken on a smart phone or modern camera will have enough pixels to potentially look good.

## Purpose

Having a successful social media presence is about knowing who you are and what you do.

- Who is the library for?
- What does the library offer, champion and excel at?
- Why do people like and/or visit the library?
- What do people LOVE about the library?
- Where does the library live, how does it fit into the community?

Answering these questions can give you a good idea for what content to post and how to frame it. Your posts are a celebration of your purpose.



Picture 16 - User [@ksusha\\_reads](#) has her own interesting visual signature by photographing books on a white circle, and varies it by using props.



# Overview

## **‘Too Long; Didn’t Read’ version.**

**(Also for in three months time, if you forget!)**

Hopefully you will feel inspired and have some great ideas to take your account further. But, if in a few months time you lose steam again, here are the main points to remind yourself:

- Take the best photos possible; good lighting, steady hand, composition, etc
- Post regularly, e.g., once daily to a few times a week
- Share to other platforms, e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest
- Interact as much as possible with other users; search hashtags, geotags, and keywords... like, comment and follow (LCF) everyday if possible. Start conversations!
- Use hashtags, geolocation, and tag other users to show up in other areas and be discoverable

## **What now?**

Feel free to pick and choose from the information in this guide. I would recommend that you take a note of your follower count and set yourself a month-long challenge to grow your overall followers.

1. Follow the links at the end of the document, read the articles and watch the videos
2. Choose a goal for the number of new followers you would like to see in one month’s time; be realistic, perhaps start at 1-2 new followers per day over 30 days, which would be 30-60 new followers
3. Use the photo ideas listed here to post one new picture each day for the month
4. Like, comment and follow every day for the month (e.g., Aim for 100 likes, 10 comments and 1-2 new follows per day)
5. At the end of the month undertake a review. What went well? What didn’t work? How did these efforts translate into additional likes, comments and follows for your account?

## *Other Libraries on JG*

### **MB libraries on Instagram**

<https://www.instagram.com/bibliothequeritchot/>

<https://www.instagram.com/bmlibrary/>

<https://www.instagram.com/dauphinlibrary/>

[https://www.instagram.com/erickson\\_library/](https://www.instagram.com/erickson_library/)

<https://www.instagram.com/flinflonpubliclibrary/>

[https://www.instagram.com/gfrl\\_mb/](https://www.instagram.com/gfrl_mb/)

<https://www.instagram.com/headingleylibrary/>

<https://www.instagram.com/headingleylibrarykids/>

[https://www.instagram.com/Jolys\\_Regional/](https://www.instagram.com/Jolys_Regional/)

<https://www.instagram.com/lakelandregionallibrary/>

<https://www.instagram.com/libraryallard/>

[https://www.instagram.com/nn\\_mac\\_library/](https://www.instagram.com/nn_mac_library/)

<https://www.instagram.com/sirlbookmobile/>

<https://www.instagram.com/sirlstonewall/>

<https://www.instagram.com/southcentralregionallibrary/>

<https://www.instagram.com/teulonlibrary/>

<https://www.instagram.com/thepasregionallibrary/>

<https://www.instagram.com/thompsonlibrary/>

<https://www.instagram.com/winnipegpubliclibrary/>

## **A selection of libraries on Instagram**

<https://www.instagram.com/hclib>

<https://www.instagram.com/nyp1>

[https://www.instagram.com/library\\_vic](https://www.instagram.com/library_vic)

<https://www.instagram.com/britishlibrary>

<https://www.instagram.com/torontolibrary>

<https://www.instagram.com/vancouverpubliclibrary>

<https://www.instagram.com/rplnm>

<https://www.instagram.com/seattlepubliclibrary/>

# Web links

## Further tips and techniques

5 Steps for more followers

<http://buildmyplays.com/5-steps-to-get-more-followers-on-IG/>

Top library Instagram accounts

<http://www.polkacafe.com/top-library-IG-accounts-1329.html>

Interesting ways to use Instagram for your library

<http://oedb.org/ilibrarian/10-interesting-ways-to-use-IG-for-your-library/>

Getting Started with IG Marketing

<https://youtu.be/olFr7siYXTg>

3 Tips to Launch a New IG Account

<https://youtu.be/6L6Pu3sR5y0>

10 Simple Ways To Get More Instagram Followers And Likes

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/02/instagram-followers\\_n\\_5537524.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/02/instagram-followers_n_5537524.html) \

Instagram stats and tips

<https://blog.bufferapp.com/instagram-stats-instagram-tips>

First 1000 followers on Instagram (skip to the end of the article for IG)

<https://blog.bufferapp.com/first-1000-followers-twitter-facebook-social-media#instagram>

Instagram analytics

<https://blog.bufferapp.com/instagram-analytics>

Instagram Marketing Strategy

<https://blog.bufferapp.com/instagram-marketing>

Hashtag Strategies on Instagram

<https://youtu.be/ySkP63U5kLM>

## *Interesting accounts*

Not an exhaustive list by any means, but here is a selection of interesting non-library accounts that feature books in various ways. Great for when you need an injection of inspiration!

### **Type Books in Toronto**

“Typebooks Independent bookstore located at 883 Queen Street West, across from Trinity-Bellwoods Park. “

Great photos and mostly focus on new and interesting titles and their store. It’s a very simple approach but one that tells the viewer we always have something interesting, come and visit our cool little store.

<https://www.instagram.com/typebooks/>

### **Books Of Wonder (NYC)**

“NYC’s largest independent children’s bookstore and the city’s leading specialist in children’s literature.”

Everything they are doing on this account could be done in a similar way by a library. Featured titles, author signings, and smiling staff.

<https://www.instagram.com/booksof wonder/>

### **The Reading Ninja**

“NYC’s Literary Vandal championing #ReadingisRAD”

Colourful clear photographs. Mostly of book covers and peeks inside books. Plain backgrounds, nothing fancy just the book in all its glory.

<https://www.instagram.com/thereadingninja/>

### **Trees of Reverie**

“I work at a bookstore. I love to read and share my thoughts on books. For awesome book quotes, photos and reviews, check out my book blog!”

Good creative ways to display books. Some pictures could benefit from better lighting but the concepts are good.

<https://www.instagram.com/treesofreverie/>

## **Book Riot**

“Always books. Never boring.”

Admittedly a larger account, but still their ideas are fairly straightforward and could be an inspiration for your own posts.

<https://www.instagram.com/bookriot/>

## **Readings Book**

“Independent Australian booksellers.”

Another great bookstore account. Lots of creative ways to display books and show staff. Repeated ideas, done in varying and interesting ways. Also good use of a chalkboard to convey a message.

<https://www.instagram.com/readingsbooks/>

## **Babbling Books**

“Reviews & Inspiration Tamsien Melb, Aus Classics + YA + Dystopia + Fantasy + SciFi ”

Creative colourful and always something different. Flowers plants and other props are used in interesting ways to create eye catching compositions.

<https://www.instagram.com/babblingbooks/>

## Image list

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Picture 1 - A great simple bright and colourful shot by @rplnm. Text description lists the titles in the shot and also a good use of hashtags. This idea could be repeated many times to good effect. Note the description which lists the titles. | 2  |
| Picture 2 by @elisejoy. Stack of library books, good lighting and colourful. Interesting background with the potted plant as a prop.   | 3  |
| Picture 3- again @rplnm, Good use of props, lighting and composition. The cup is a good chance to mention Powells Bookstore account.   | 5  |
| Picture 4 Picture by @averyandaugustine, a good clear bright photo with some cute appeal. It's also a good example of how to describe and create a narrative with your post.   | 5  |
| Picture 5 A selection of posts from the popular hashtag #bookoftheday.   | 6  |
| Picture 6 -Great lighting, simple background (with good colour and texture) and simple composition. Good long description and use of hashtags as well. By @erindotsmith.   | 7  |
| Picture 7 @Missinformation is a great example of a good photo idea being used repeatedly. She also receives a lot of interaction in her comments section.  | 8  |
| Picture 8 @booksarelifeok a simple image of a book with a background that suits. Nice and clear and bright photo. Good use of hashtags which will then make the post be seen in many more places.  | 10 |
| Picture 9 User @trendyreader has tagged the author and publisher of this title. This will then appear in their tagged photos section on their profile, enhancing the post's visibility and discoverability.  | 13 |
| Picture 10 - A great bright shot by @torontolibrary, and a familiar sight to patrons.  | 17 |
| Picture 11 - A great idea to have a sign in the library that get's updated and posted to social media. Posted on @asskickinlibrarian's personal IG account.  | 18 |
| Picture 12 - This post by @janebrarian has it all. Staff feature; book display; event promotion; mentioned library's IG account; uses hashtags...  | 19 |
| Picture 13 - A candid shot of a volunteer delivering book to a house bound patron. A feel good post by @torontolibrary, that lets people know about additional library services.   | 20 |
| Picture 14 - A great example of behind the scenes, well lit, bright and colourful. By @thegriffinlibrary.  | 21 |
| Picture 15 - A good simple photo idea to highlight two books by @ameliereadsbooks. Bright and clear with an interesting background, good caption, and use of hashtags.   | 22 |
| Picture 16 - User @ksusha_reads has her own interesting visual signature by photographing books on a white circle, and varies it by using props.   | 23 |