

Helping your learner set up a social media account

From connecting with friends, old and new, to staying in the know, social media can be a great tool for your learner to get the most out of the online world and discover all sorts of new things.

This factsheet will introduce them to some of the most popular social networking sites and guide you to help them set up their own social media account.

What you'll cover

1. What a social network is
2. How to get your learner set up with a social media account

Remember: This is about helping your learner build their confidence and skills. Encourage them to carry out each step themselves and avoid doing it for them. If they do get stuck, feel free to show them, but then ask them to repeat it on their own.

What a social network is

A social network is an online community where people can share information with each other in several ways, such as posting updates about what they're up to, posting photos, or commenting on current affairs.

As well as being a handy way to keep in touch with people, social networks can also be great fun. Even when your learner's friends or family aren't next to them, they can still chat or share experiences with them online.

There are many different social networks out there for your learner, each offering slightly different things:

Facebook



Connect with friends and join interest groups, for example about your local area.

Twitter



Keep up with what's happening in the world.

Instagram



Share photos.

Pinterest



Share and discover new interests.

Helping your learner set up a social media account continued

Signing up to social media

For your learner to sign up, they will need to provide an email address and possibly phone number to create a password. If they don't have an email address, they can check out our factsheet to help them set one up by clicking on the following link or, if this sheet has been printed, by typing it into their web browser: bt.com/seniorskills

They may be asked to go to their email inbox and open an activation/verification email. This will contain a link which they'll need to click to open their account for the first time.

Once they're up and running, they can start searching for people they know. Facebook, Instagram and Twitter have search bars that will allow them to look for friends or family that also have a social media account on this site. Your learner can simply click on the search bar and type in the name of the person they want to find. There may be more than one person with that name, so make sure they select the right one.

If they are using social media on a phone or mobile device, it may suggest people in their saved contacts.

Your learner might start receiving connection requests from other people when they join the social media network. It's up to them whether they want to connect or not. Encourage your learner to think twice before accepting a request from someone they don't know: it might be a spam account.

If they do connect with someone, that person will now become a 'friend' or 'follower', which means they will be able to see what your learner posts. Your learner may have

to send them a request back so they can see their content/profile in full.

As well as friends, your learner can also follow pages that relate to their interests, such as BBC News or a favourite football team.

Each person using a social network (including your learner) has a profile. If they want to see what someone has been up to, or start a conversation, they can go to their profile. A profile shows information about that person, and what they have shared recently.

When your learner logs in to a social network, they'll see a list of the things that their friends/the people and pages they follow people have recently shared. This is called a newsfeed or feed. People post lots of different things, like what they're doing, photos, videos or news stories, so can be a great way to find out the latest news.

What about Pinterest?

Pinterest is slightly different to Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, but is a great way of discovering new hobbies or interests. It allows your learner to 'pin' images or videos you find interesting to virtual 'boards' on your profile. Others can then share their board with them so they can discover what other people are into and broaden their horizons.



Links to further learning

To find out how your learner can navigate social media safely, click on this link or type it into your web browser's search bar: bt.com/seniorskills

For more information on setting up social media accounts across a range of platforms, your learner can visit Age UK's website by clicking this link: www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/work-learning/technology-internet/using-social-media

Alternatively, if this sheet has been printed, they can type 'Age UK – using social media' into a search engine and click on the top result.

Setting up a social media account

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This factsheet will introduce you to some of the most popular social networking sites and tell you how to set up your own social media account.

What you'll learn

1. What a social network is
2. How to set up a social media account

What a social network is

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If you are using social media on a phone or mobile device, it may suggest people in your saved contacts.

You might start receiving connection requests from other people when they find out you've joined the social media network. It's up to you to decide whether you want to connect with them. Think twice before accepting a request from someone you don't know: it might be a spam account.

If you do connect with someone, that person will now become a 'friend' or 'follower', which means they will be able to see what you post. You may have to send them a request back so you can see their content/profile in full.

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