

Tips on Social Media

General

- You are aiming to capture people's attention, so that they do not scroll on.
- Anything with film or captions is likely to get higher engagement. You can look at insights on your posts to check.
- Instagram and Facebook – they work slightly differently, but you can cross post to save time. If you create a post in Instagram, scroll down to 'also post to: add your Facebook account', beware however that @mentions on one don't always work on the other, if the account you are mentioning has different names on Instagram and Facebook. Consider that your audience on Instagram might be different to those on Facebook, so your posts may need to reflect that.
- Create a bank of social media stuff which you post later. As you are working in your studio, get into the habit of photographing/filming before you start and when you finish and if you take a coffee break. You can then use this material later to create posts.
- Before you post, engage with other 2-3 posts/accounts.
- After you post, be available to engage if people comment.
- Scheduling posts works well for some artists.
- When creating posts, explore the options such as: 'add a location' (Instagram). Look at the other options available.

Facebook Events

Create a Facebook event for your Open Studio. Invite everyone. Post in the event in the week leading up to it. It will send out reminders to those going & interested.

Facebook Banner

Use your Facebook banner to advertise your event. You can create a graphic in Canva (free software). Remember to change it once the event is over.

@ mentions

Use this to tag another account, in the copy on your post, type @ and start typing the account name. A list of accounts will appear; click on the correct account.

Example: I enjoyed a visit to see @sheryllkfox_art this weekend in her studio.

This will then appear in their notifications. This will encourage them to like, comment & share your post. Alternatively, you can press: 'tag people' option when you are creating your post. Add @swindonopenstudios to your posts so that we can see and share them too.

Hashtags # (Keywords)

These are used more on Instagram than Facebook. You can put these at the bottom of the text in your post, or in the comments. Users can follow a hashtag, and the algorithms use them to serve your content to other users, for example if a user has followed a hashtag #Art and #Swindon they may get SOS posts.

- Think about: What are people searching for?
- You can use up to 30, but around 10-20 is optimum.
- Keep a bank of hashtags in a document on your phone/laptop. But do vary them.
- Aim for a mixture of popular and specific hashtags, some with a high number of posts and some with fewer posts, ranging from 30k – 300k public posts. To find the number of posts a hashtag has – type it into the search bar in Instagram. E.g #art has 1.3 billion posts, #swindonopenstudios has 1,000
- Avoid hashtags that have a very large number of posts (more than 1m) as your post will be less visible in such a large group and you may attract unhelpful accounts or bots.

Ideas for hashtags:

- Swindon open studios hashtags: #swindonopenstudios (1.2k), #swindonopenstudios2025, #swindonopenstudiosartshare or #swindonopenstudiosworkshops (new for 2025)
- Location-based hashtags: Like #swindon(676k), #visualartswindon (1.3k) or #swindonartist (11k)
- Industry hashtags: That describes your niche, like #abstractpainter (1m) or #ceramicart (309k)
- Community-focused hashtags: To bring your community together, like #artistsupportingartists (810k), #whatsoninswindon (1.1k) or #openstudios (125k)
- Descriptive hashtags: Which describe the content of your actual post, like #inmystudio (214k) or #sketchbookartist (426k)

Reels

Reels are short films on Instagram & Facebook – these should get more engagement than a post

- Effective reels are generally quite short. 6-15 seconds is the optimum length! So make sure the best bits are at the beginning.
- *You don't have to be on camera.* Film yourself painting, or if you paint flowers film a beautiful garden. Film topics relevant to what you like to paint.
- You can use time lapse videos, available on some phones, or download an app to create these. You may need a small tripod to ensure your phone does not move. These can be more engaging to watch than real time videos.
- Add captions; this is done when you upload them to Instagram or Facebook – there is a square smiley sticker at top once video is selected from your phone. You can also add music, however remember some people view on mute.
- Try doing a voice over. For example: you could record a short video of you painting. Tap the musical notes icon. You can mute the original sound recording, or lower the volume. Then add captions.

Topics

You can add 3 relevant to your post to help find the right audience for your post.

Instagram and Facebook Stories

Stories only last for 24 hours, unless you keep them as highlights. They can be video or images based, usually fun, capturing a moment in time.

- You can add polls, ask questions (square smiley face icon)
- You can turn a post into a story (in Instagram click on the arrow below the post), or create a story using any image.
- You can share other people's posts as stories (in Facebook click 'share' at the bottom of the post, in Instagram click on the arrow below the post)
- These work well if you cross-post.

Instagram

- Post multiple images on one post (up to 10) a carousel, so that people swipe across to see the next post. These work well with text on – ‘call to action/instructions’.
- Videos (reels) usually gain more reach than image-based posts

Facebook

Facebook posts – click on those who ‘like’ your posts and invite them to ‘like’ your page.

Ideas for Content

- **Video just before your event** make a short video of outside your studio. Where is the parking, what does the entrance look like? It can make it less intimidating for people visiting.
- **Processes Video** people love to see your process. Keep them short – 6–30 secs. No more than a minute. Try these: timelapse of you creating, real time video of you flicking through a sketchbook, real time video of what’s on your easel today, real time video of the mess after you’ve been working in the studio.
- **‘Lives’** – connect with another artist, or group of artists and do a ‘live’ call chat about your event. Ask each other questions about work, process, the open studio event. It’s easier than talking about yourself.
- **Reposting / Sharing** Instagram – you can repost to stories easily. There are apps (such as repost) you can use to repost to your Instagram grid. Facebook – share posts to your page and add a personal comment above. E.g. ‘I love this artist’s work...’ Share your posts to appropriate groups (check group rules).

Advertising and use of Boost

Facebook and Instagram advertising is not expensive and you can target an audience. You will generally pay per click. Posts which have lots of engagement can be converted to ads. Ads can work well for artists who do workshops and classes. Think carefully and get support, or experiment if you have the budget to do so.