

# How to become an Eco-friendly Influencer on Instagram

We've all heard of influencers. Everyone knows that this phenomenal movement has transformed the way we interact with social media and make lifestyle choices.

But, what are influencers exactly? What do they do on a daily basis? How do they make a living? And, most importantly to us eco-conscious folk, how can being an influencer can help the planet?

It's hard to go on Instagram without wondering how influencers work, and in turn, how you can become one yourself!

As a zero-waste, we are keen to hear from more eco-friendly influencers. At the same time, we want to give any aspiring influencers a hand in getting started on your journey to become an eco influencer. For that reason, we've prepared a handy guide that tells you all you need to know.

As a sustainable shopper, you might simply want to learn more about how being an influencer can help the planet. Well, read on for all the answers.

## But first — what are influencers?

Influencers are individuals who wield the ability to influence the shopping and lifestyle decisions of other individuals. Consumers

make purchasing decisions based on what influencers talk about and share online.

And what do influencers do? Influencers operate on social media with Instagram being the most popular channel for influencers. They create enticing visual and written content which markets anything from a product to a service, a destination, or a course. In fact, influencers exist in most industries.

Each influencer operates within a specific niche, where they review products and services that are relevant to their followers. It's considered a form of marketing that adds credibility to a brand. Influencers are knowledgeable and passionate about their chosen domain, and that instills trust and confidence in their consumers.

Influencers work hard to ensure that they are creating authentic, original and organic content. Some influencers manage their business on the side, while others are able to build a life as a full-time influencer.

## How do influencers earn money?

Influencers earn money by partnering with brands within their sphere of expertise and influence. You'll find travel influencers partnering up with tour agencies, hotels and travel gear companies. Meanwhile, fitness influencers team up with gyms, promote new exercise trends, and may be sponsored by a sportswear brand. And over here in the eco domain, influencers partner with eco-friendly brands and service providers.

This may be zero-waste fashion, organic food brands, Earth-friendly homeware products, or sustainable tour companies and hotels.

The brand and the influencer negotiate a partnership, whereby the influencer creates content that promotes their product. Influencers earn money from this post, which is 'sponsored' by the brand.

There's no set salary for an influencer. What an influencer earns will depend on the budget of the brand(s) they partner with, and how many followers they have.

In addition to the number of followers, brands prefer to work with influencers whose followers are active.

As we say, the payment rates fluctuate. A new influencer with less than 10,000 followers may not necessarily receive monetary payment. It's more likely that they will receive complementary goods and other freebies in exchange for content. Once an influencer hits the sweet spot of around 10,000 followers, they may be able to earn between £50 - £150 per post. A veteran influencer with 100,000+ followers can make several hundred pounds for each piece of content they curate.

A number of influencers strike up an ongoing collaboration with a brand. This usually means that they will post an agreed amount of promotional posts per week or month and receive a retainer fee.

## How can being an influencer help the planet?

So exactly how can being an influencer help the planet? Well, once you've built up a following who you have a great relationship with, you'll find that your followers have genuine appreciation for what you say. They'll listen to your advice, and aspire to follow in your footsteps.

Just imagine, you can use your voice to help others make the switch to a zero-waste lifestyle! Reviewing sustainable products,

spreading the word about new ventures, and sharing tips on how to be kinder to the planet. Once you've connected with your audience you can really make a difference.

If you ever ponder over why influencer marketing works so well, it's simple. Consumers trust other people over adverts and other traditional forms of marketing.

For authenticity, Instagram influencers must declare to their followers when they receive payment for a post. That's what it means when the caption announces that the post is sponsored, or when the hashtag #ad is applied. But, the post is curated in such a way that we know that the influencer genuinely uses and finds value in the product or service they are promoting.

## How to become an eco-friendly influencer in 6 steps

Now you know what influences are and how influencers earn money. The next step is to learn how to become an eco-friendly influencer on Instagram yourself.

### 1. Choose your niche

We've already established that you want to become an eco-friendly influencer but within the green sector, you might want to specialise on a certain topic. This might be anything from zero-waste travel to natural grooming and beauty products. You can even keep it broad, and establish yourself as a general lifestyle blog.

Browse other sustainable influencer accounts and get a sense of what style you like and what identity you wish to build for yourself.

## 2. Launch an Instagram account

You may already be a step ahead of us but if you haven't already launched an Instagram account now's the time. You may want to start a blog too. Not all eco-friendly influencers have a blog, many rely purely on social media to conduct their influencer marketing. This is your call.

Start to create content about products that you use and love and post this on your channels. You won't get paid right at the start, you'll need to get your followers built up first. You need to create your own style for reviewing products and build a bit of a portfolio — consider it a CV for influencers.

## 3. Develop a content strategy

Ensure that you have a strategy behind your content. Followers respond to regular, consistent updates so you'll need to create a content schedule. You can use a platform such as Hootsuite to do this. Make sure that you research the optimum time to post based on your timezone and your demographic.

Don't forget about hashtags: these are your golden ticket to gaining followers. Invest some time researching eco-friendly hashtags.

## 4. Grow your following

As you create and share content, you will start to see your followers rise. Follow other sustainable brands, publications and other influences and engage with their content to see an impact on your own statistics. What are influencers doing that you can do better?

Encourage your followers to engage and chatter amongst themselves. Ask questions in your posts which will inspire your followers to reply. Show that you're following the news relating to the environment and climate change, and share your thoughts.

Always respond to any questions and comments. By engaging, you will get to understand who your demographic is, something that brands you partner with will want to know.

## 5. Approach brands

Once you've developed a decent following, you can start to reach out on Instagram to eco brands you love. Each brand sets their own terms for what they offer influences. While your following is still in its infancy, brands may offer you complimentary products in exchange for an honest review on your Instagram channel, YouTube, or blog. Generally, the sweet spot for generating income with sponsored posts is around the 10,000 followers mark.

At this point, you should edit your bio to say you are open to collaborations with brands.

## 6. Monetise your channel

Once you have a high volume of followers, you can start to monetise with sponsored posts. The closer you get to 100,000, the more income you can expect to generate per post or campaign.

You should perfect your pitch that you can tailor to suit each brand you reach out to. You may want to create a media or brand kit, with infographics demonstrating your followers, demographic and published content.

Now you know why influencer marketing works and how being an influencer can help the planet, you can get started.