

GETTING ONLINE: SOCIAL MEDIA BASICS

Technology is often foreign at first. It takes a little while, and a little knowledge, to understand what does what and how to use a computer, mobile phone and the internet.

The Australian Government has created several online courses on its Be Connected website to help get every Australian online. Here is what they say about social media basics.

Introduction to social media

You've heard the term social media – but what does it mean?

Social media is a collective term used to describe the apps (short for applications, or programs) used on our computers or smart devices to communicate with each other and share information, ideas, and interests. In times past, we met up in person at clubs and other social gatherings, or even picked up the phone to talk to each other.

We can still do all of that of course, but we can also share information using our computers and smart devices as well.

In the past 20 years, social media apps such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and others, have become ever more sophisticated, and even changed the way we interact with each other and the world.

What is Facebook?

Facebook is an online social media platform that allows its users to share their thoughts, photos, and interests with just a few people, all their friends or the entire world. When you share something on Facebook, it is called a post.

People use Facebook for many reasons, including:

- staying connected with family and friends, even if they are living far away
- reconnecting with people from the past
- keeping up with the travel adventures of children, friends, and other loved ones
- connecting with likeminded people in the community and abroad
- joining groups based on common interests and hobbies
- keeping up with news and current affairs

What is Instagram?

Instagram is a photo and video-sharing social media platform where users can upload and share photos and videos from their mobile device.

You can access Instagram by downloading the app to your mobile device.

Instagram works based on its users following, or linking to, other users. Users can then interact with posts by:

- Liking them
- Commenting on the photos or video in them
- Sharing posts with their own followers.



FAMILIES OF VETERANS GUILD

What is X (Twitter)?

X is one of the world's largest and most widely used social media apps or microblogging sites. The premise of X is simple: users share their thoughts with their followers via small snippets of text called posts.

Posts can have a maximum of 280 characters and can consist of text, photos, or short videos.

When an X user posts, it can be seen by other users who follow that person.

The post will appear on each follower's Timeline, also known as a feed.

Users can simply view a post in their feed, or they can interact with it by:

- **Liking:** showing appreciation by giving the post a thumbs up
- **Replying:** Commenting on someone's post
- **Reposting:** Showing appreciation by sharing the post with their own followers
- **Quoting:** Sharing a post and adding their own commentary with their own followers
- **Sharing:** sharing a post outside of the X platform

What is Pinterest?

Pinterest is a social media platform that allows people to view billions of photos called Pins. Pins are photos that are posted to Pinterest by its users. These photos can be of anything and are categorised by theme and genre.

Pinterest allows you to set up Boards, where you can save photos that you like.

For example, you might set up a Board with the name Vegetarian Recipes. You can then save Pins of vegetarian recipes that you come across when you are using Pinterest. Saving Pins to Boards allows you to access them quickly without having to search for them again.

For more information about social media basics, visit <https://beconnected.esafety.gov.au/topic-library/social-media-apps>

