

ARTIST GUIDE: LIVESTREAMING



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INTRODUCTION

Livestreaming is a way to broadcast live content to your followers. You can livestream via most social media platforms, a bit like having your own TV channel. The details vary, but for most platforms, people watching can send written comments or questions and [Reactions](#) such as hearts to show appreciation. These show up on the screen for viewers.

When you've finished, you can save the livestream to your page or profile so that people can come back and watch it after the event.

Video content is extremely popular, and you can read more about making videos in our [Guide to Creating Short Films](#). For most platforms, live video is watched by more people, and for longer than pre-recorded video. People like the excitement and feel of live, even if they're watching after the event. Livestreaming has an authentic feel which people respond well to, and it's ideal for artists' behind-the-scenes videos, for showing work in your studio and talking about your practice. Live video helps you to make a connection with your audience.

It's quick and easy to go live to your followers, and there's no editing to do afterwards. It's not expensive to do, and you can go live on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube as well as other social media platforms.

Livestreaming is a way to engage your local audience and to open up your studio to people who might not otherwise be able to get there, perhaps because of access issues, or because they're somewhere else in the world. Read more about accessibility in our [Welcome Guide](#).

PLANNING YOUR LIVESTREAM

You should plan your livestream in advance to make sure you're going to do the best job you can. You can practise going live without anyone else being able to see, or with just a select audience so that you can make sure you're familiar with the tech.

Think about your goals – what do you want people to do as a result of watching the livestream? Are you encouraging them to visit your open studio event? Would you like them to sign up for your newsletter, or perhaps make a purchase online?

Watch other people's livestreams. Are there things they do well that you can learn from? Are there things that don't work so well that you could improve on, or which you need to avoid?

Audience

As for all communications, it's important to think about who your audience will be, what they would like to see, what you want to talk to them about, and when they might be watching. Is the evening a better time to attract people's attention than during the day? Will people be watching from other countries in different time zones? What works best for the people you want to attract?

Content

Make sure you have something interesting to say; something that your audience want to see or hear. People love to see how art is created, and sharing that process with them is an ideal way to engage. You could talk about your inspirations, show behind the scenes, demonstrate your creative process, or show some completed artwork.

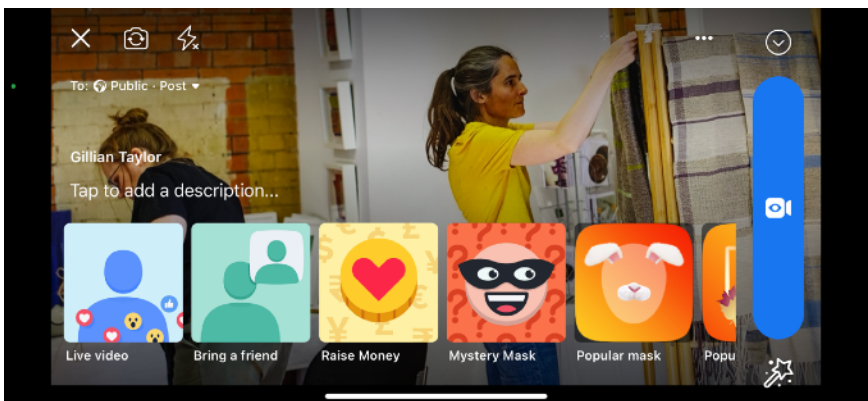
You can open up the conversation so people can ask questions – always a good way to gauge how people are engaging with what you’re doing.

Make sure that livestreaming is the best way to show your content; some things are better carefully edited to show them off to best advantage. Things that might appeal to a live audience are: creating a ceramic pot with a special technique, opening the kiln after the pot has fired, showing progress with a number of livestreams over a period of time as you paint the landscape, make a sculpture or stitch a quilt.

Artists have lots of visual content, so make sure you don’t just talk to the camera; this is an opportunity to showcase your work. You can also create a feeling of ‘exclusive content’ where your audience are seeing something that people don’t normally see.

Equipment

You can go live directly from your phone or computer, depending on the platform. Using your phone will usually be more flexible and give better results. There are a few pieces of kit that will help you get a better result, including a tripod and a microphone. You can read more about these, about other kit and about creating video in our Guide to Creating Short Films.



PLATFORMS

Use the platform that you think is most likely to draw the audience you want to attract; a platform where you already have a presence, and one where your audience is active. Read our [Guide to Social Media](#) for more information.

Facebook Live

Facebook has a huge number of engaged users. If you have a Facebook presence, this is a good place to livestream. Facebook prioritises live content, so your Friends or Followers are more likely to see it. You can save the livestream for people to watch later, which often also reaches large audiences.

You can broadcast live via your [Facebook Profile](#), [Facebook Page](#), to a [Group](#) you're a member of or as part of a [Facebook Event](#).

Before you go live, you can add a description, choose your audience, and select your location if you wish. You can tag other people and add emojis. Once you press the Start Live Video button, you'll see a countdown and your followers will see a notification that you're about to go live.

You can switch the camera between front and rear facing, which is useful if you want to start off talking to the audience and then switch to a demonstration. You might want to ask someone to be your camera operator, which would allow you to focus on what you're doing and saying while they deal with the tech.

During the livestream, your audience will be able to comment and ask questions. You'll see these appear as text and you'll be able to answer them.

When you finish, you'll be given the opportunity to save the video and add it to your Profile or Page. Before you do this, you can make some very basic edits. For example, if you didn't speak right at the beginning, or there was a wobbly start, you can trim that.

Find out more in the [Facebook Live guide](#)

Twitter

Before you start, you can add a description, and a location as well if you choose. Twitter allows you to livestream video or livestream just audio. While you're livestreaming, you can flip the camera to face you or to focus on what's in front of you.

As with other platforms, your audience can comment or ask questions during the livestream, or you can change the format to Theatre Mode so that only the video is visible. Twitter also has an interesting feature which lets you draw on the screen while you're broadcasting live, which could be useful for a very basic illustration or to demonstrate something.

It's easy for viewers to re-tweet your live content, and you can ask people to share it while you're live, which can increase your audience. Whereas Facebook is a place to livestream to your existing friends and followers, Twitter is a place where you're more likely to be able to engage a new audience.

Find out more in the [Twitter livestreaming guide](#)

Instagram

Instagram is a good place to reach other artists and people interested in art. You can only go live using the app on your phone, not via a computer.

If your followers have the Instagram app open, they will receive a notification that you're going live. Your live video will also appear amongst the [Instagram Stories](#). Before you start, you'll see how many of your followers are active.

You can livestream on Instagram for up to an hour. Viewers can type comments and questions which you can respond to during the live stream. Before you start, you can choose whether these comments are visible to other viewers.

When your livestream has ended, you can share it to [IGTV](#), Instagram's platform for videos [longer than 60 seconds](#). You can also choose to download or delete your video. Find out more in the [Instagram Live guide](#)

YouTube

There are lots of users on YouTube so there's a large potential audience there. As with other platforms, you'll need to spend time building your audience. It's easy for users to find content on YouTube and you can easily share links to YouTube on other social media platforms, as well as on your website.

If you don't already have one, you'll need to [create a Google account](#), which you can then use to [create a YouTube account](#). You'll also need to [verify your account](#) before you can livestream.

You can go live from a computer or phone, and you can [schedule your livestream](#).

Find out more in the [YouTube Livestreaming guide](#)

Other platforms

Other platforms which allow you to livestream include:

- [LinkedIn](#) – the platform for professional contacts which allows approved account holders to livestream.
- [Twitch](#) was designed for gaming but is increasingly used by artists and makers.
- [Zoom](#) allows you to livestream to an invited audience, to share a link widely or to [stream to other platforms](#).

Once you've experimented with livestreaming, other things you might want to think about are:

- Inviting a guest – you could ask someone to interview you, you could interview them, or the two of you could just chat about your work.
- Streaming to multiple platforms. You can use software such as [Restream](#) or [Streamyard](#) to stream to Facebook, YouTube and other platforms simultaneously. You can also use [Zoom](#) to stream to other platforms.
- Multiple cameras – apps such as [SwitcherStudio](#) allow you to use multiple cameras and live vision mix (switch between cameras).

GETTING STARTED

- Make sure you have a good internet connection.
- Check your battery – livestreaming uses a lot of battery power.
- Plan your livestream before you start.
- Think about your set up and how it looks.
- Practise first with a private livestream or just to one other person.
- Promote your livestream in advance so that people know it's coming up.
- Share the livestream after it's over – people will still want to watch.
- Save the livestream to your phone and re-share on other platforms.
- Build your audience so that there are more people to watch your livestreams.
- Check your social media analytics so you can see how your livestreams are performing.