

How to Block Comments on Instagram and Facebook?

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Kev Costello / Unsplash

For many, stalking comment sections can be both entertaining and vexing. On the one hand, it's amusing to watch people bicker in long paragraphs and spectators drop in their snide commentaries. On the other hand, it's frustrating to watch people argue over remarks and topics that are inconsequential. These days, anyone can feel enraged and offended over nothing.

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Yes, the comments section is both a curse and a blessing. Invented as a tool to foster meaningful discussions that could make any [Facebook ad agency](#) rejoice, it is now a battleground for keyboard warriors and ruthless trolls emboldened by anonymity. Posting on the internet is to risk exposing oneself to ridicule and hate.

A few social media networks allow you to block unwanted comments. Instagram and Facebook, specifically, allow you to block comments from the accounts you choose and filter out comments with offensive words. There are several reasons that may compel you to block comments on social media.

A Case for Blocking Comments

Higher Click-Through Rates

In an A/B test by Agora Pulse, the researchers found that Facebook ads with negative comments received lower click-through rates (CTR) than ads with positive comments. The researchers tested ads identical in copy, objective, ad format, and call-to-action buttons. However, one ad contained only positive comments while the other only contained negative comments. The results showed that the ad with positive comments received a 1.88 percent CTR while the ad with the negative comments received a 1.30 percent CTR.

The ad with the positive comments likely performed better because comments function as social proof. Users are less likely to click on an ad that people are bombarding with negative reviews. If people claim that the business or product advertised is bad, then it must be.

Peace of Mind

In an April 2018 survey by Pew Research Center, teens were asked why social media is harmful to their age group. The common answer? Bullying.

Of the teens surveyed, 27 percent said bullying, as well as rumor spreading, made social media harmful to their mental health.

This revelation isn't at all surprising. Mental health professionals have long suspected social media to be detrimental to the well-being of its users. According to CNN News, a recent study by the American Psychological Association found an [increase in reported negative psychological symptoms](#) from an age group called the iGen, teens born in 1995 or later.

Researchers suspect that the rise of social media resulted in negative psychological symptoms in teens.

Of course, correlation does not mean causation. One mental health professional advises the public to be cautious when correlating mental health with social media use.

"We can't say for certain that the rise we're seeing is the direct result of social media use," said Aaron Fobian, clinical psychologist and assistant professor in psychiatry at the University of Alabama, to CNN News. "For example, teens could have depressive or anxious symptoms and therefore spend more time on social media outlets to look for a way to connect."

Still, if the *ping!* of your comment notifications fills you with dread, blocking comments or filtering out offensive ones may give you peace of mind.

Curbing Defamation

Blocking comments may be especially important if you manage an online business page. As a business owner, you must uphold the reputation of your brand to attract and keep customers. However, there are bad actors—perhaps a competitor, scammer, or disgruntled ex-employee who's determined to take you down—who may make false, damaging accusations or statements about your business on your posts and ads.

In fact, back in 2018, [bitcoin scams were proliferating](#) in the comment sections of posts

published by several companies. One such company was the online publishing website The Verge whose comment sections were attacked by imposters using a fake account donning the publisher's name and logo. The scam invited victims into providing personal information in exchange for free bitcoins.

The scam, which can be damaging to The Verge's brand, fits the [definition of online defamation](#) as described by HG.org, a law, and government online resource:

"When individuals feel that their reputation is damaged because of a reckless comment made on Facebook, Twitter or other social media channels, they may consider pursuing a defamation lawsuit against the insulting party."

There are many ways to handle a person who defames your business, such as taking legal action as suggested by HG.org. However, taking legal action can be expensive and time-consuming. An alternative is to shut down perpetrators by blocking their comments from appearing on your posts, which Instagram allows you to do.

A Safe Place to Share Ideas

In the world of social media, engagement is key to increasing the reach of your organic posts. Both the [algorithms of Instagram](#) and Facebook place posts that are teeming with comments, likes, and shares higher in users' feeds. Because [social media engagement](#) is so pivotal to [organic reach](#), you, too, should strive to increase engagement on your posts, and you can do that by garnering comments. However, trolls may cow followers into silence.

By eliminating trolls from your pages, you are providing followers a safe space to voice their ideas, consequently encouraging them to write comments on your posts. Rather than spewing insults at each other, followers are forced to convey their opinions in a productive and useful way that avoids unnecessary conflict.

A Clean and Professional Page

As a business owner, you're responsible for maintaining your brand's image. There are many ways to do this, and one involves aligning yourself with reputable partners, such as influencers or celebrities who aren't plagued by scandals.

Aligning yourself with the wrong kind of followers can also damage your brand's reputation. Walmart, for example, has been negatively associated with the disreputable customers that shop at the company's stores, so much so that those customers have become a meme, earning the title "[People of Walmart](#)." Of course, not all of Walmart's customers are similar to the ones portrayed in memes, yet people associate both the brand and its customers with ill repute. Trolls who often post offensive comments on your page and attack other followers may negatively affect your brand's image. People may conclude that if your brand attracts unsavory individuals, your brand must also be unsavory.

An Alternative to Deleting Comments

Some businesses delete offensive remarks from trolls in an attempt to keep their comment sections clean. However, this practice is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, you're keeping your comments section from negativity, and as the aforementioned Agora Pulse A/B test showed, this can improve the performance of your posts. On the other hand, deleting comments shows that your business is not transparent, and it can provoke further criticism from trolls, who likely will have no qualms over calling you out.

How to Block Comments on Instagram

When you block comments from your Instagram account, you are only blocking the comments that appear on *your* posts. You can change your commenting preferences from the Settings page of your Instagram app. These steps are applicable to your personal account and your Instagram business account.

Step 1: Go to your Instagram settings

To get to your settings, first, navigate to your profile. From there, click the three-lined hamburger icon from the upper-right corner of the screen. Then click “Settings” from the bottom of the page.

Step 2: Go to “Privacy”

The “Privacy” tab is the third option in the settings menu, located between the “Business” tab and the “Security” tab. Click “Privacy” to access your comments settings.

Step 3: Click “Comments”

Once you arrive at your comments settings, you will find several different options to manage the comments on your posts. Each option will handle unwanted comments differently, so you must choose the option that works best for you.

From the top of the list, under “Controls,” you will see an option called “Allow Comments From.” This option allows you to enable comments from specific groups. You can allow comments from everyone, including the people who follow you, the people you follow, and the people who aren’t connected to your account (you don’t follow them, and they don’t follow you).

If that option is too broad for your liking—for example, you don’t want to receive comments from random Instagrammers who find your posts on Discover—you can, instead, only allow comments from the people you follow and the people who follow you. If you want even stricter limitations, you can choose to allow comments only from your followers.

You can also block comments from specific users. You can use this option in tandem with the “allow comments” option. For example, you can choose to allow comments for everyone except for your annoying roommate, Carla. You can choose to allow comments from only your followers except for your nosy coworker, Greg.

Of course, disabling all comments may seem drastic to you. If you only want to filter offensive comments, you can do so using Instagram’s filter tool. You can use this filter tool in tandem with your comments settings; meaning, you can set your comments preferences *while* having comment filters in place.

To turn on comment filters, swipe the toggle button called “Hide Offensive Comments” to the right until the button turns from gray to blue. Once enabled, Instagram will hide comments it deems offensive. Because the meaning of “offensive” is arbitrary and defined only by Instagram, the comments Instagram hides may, at times, seem inoffensive to you and to the person whose comment was blocked.

If you want to block comments containing specific offensive words, you can instead turn on the manual filter. For this option, you will need to type in the words you don’t want to see in your comment sections. When the filter identifies a comment as offensive, it blocks the comment from everyone’s view. Only the original writer of the comment can still see it; that way, the violating user is less likely to make the offensive content viewable by, for example, reposting variations of the comment to bypasses the filtering tool.

Another option is to filter comments containing the most reported words on your posts. For example, if your followers often report comments on your posts with the words “stupid,” “ugly,” or “dumb,” Instagram will filter out comments containing those words.

If you spot an offensive comment that Instagram’s filtering tools somehow missed, you can long-press the comment and click the exclamation icon that appears on the upper-right corner of the screen.

How to Block Comments on Facebook

Although you can block comments from the posts on both your personal account and business page, the options for your personal account are not the same as the options for your business account.

Personal Account

Step 1: Click the inverted triangle icon on the upper-right corner of the screen then click “Settings” at the bottom of the menu.

Step 2: From the left column, click “Public Posts” then click the “Public Post Comments” section.

From this section, you can choose who can comment on your public posts. You can either choose the public (everyone, including people who are not on your friends list), friends of friends, or only friends.

Facebook Page

The comment-filtering options from your Facebook page are different. In fact, it is a much better tool than the one provided for your personal account, allowing you to create more granular restrictions. Specifically, you can choose to block comments with specific words and filter comments containing profanity.

When you block certain words, these words will be immediately [marked as spam by Facebook](#) as soon as they appear on your page. Here's how you block words on your Facebook page.

Step 1: Go to settings

Step 2: Go to “General” then “Page Moderation”

From the “General” section, scroll down to “Page Moderation.” Click “Edit.”

Step 3: Enter words to block

Type in the words you want to block then click “Save Changes.”

Step 4: You’re Done

Facebook will block the words as soon as they appear on your page.

Filtering profanity works differently than blocking words. While you choose the words you want to block, Facebook determines which profanity to block based on commonly reported words and phrases marked as offensive by Facebook users. Facebook also determines which profanity to block according to the degree you choose. Choosing medium will block moderately vulgar profanity while choosing strong will block only strongly vulgar profanity.

Step 1: Choose degree then save

From “General,” scroll down and click “Profanity Filter.” Choose your degree then click “Save Changes.”

Step 2: You’re done

Your changes were saved. Profanities that fall under the degree you choose will be blocked from appearing on your page.

If Facebook missed comments that contained profanity or offensive words, you can manually hide the comment or report it to Facebook by clicking the three-dotted button that appears alongside the comment.

The Disadvantage of Blocking Comments

Although there are many legitimate reasons to block or filter comments, one disadvantage arises: loss of engagement.

Arguments often result in rapid engagement, as commenters heatedly respond to one another. These arguments spawn into a long string of back-and-forths, which the algorithm values. The more engagement your post receives, the higher it will appear in users’ News Feeds. The higher it stays in News Feed, the more exposure it receives.

Whether or not you should block comments is up to you. It depends on what you value most. If you’re in desperate need of engagement, then perhaps blocking and filtering comments may not be the most prudent choice. However, if you organically garner hundreds of comments, then missing out on a few likely won’t harm the performance of your posts.

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<https://www.advertisemint.com/how-to-block-comments-on-instagram-and-facebook/>

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