



# GAA HANDBALL

## SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

A RESOURCE FOR GAA HANDBALL CLUBS ON CREATING  
AND MAINTAINING A POSITIVE ONLINE PRESENCE





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# INTRODUCTION

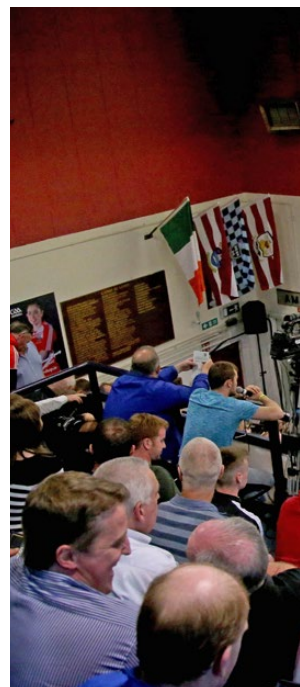
**As a GAA Handball official, volunteer, player or member, you will often encounter the world of digital and social media. It is an enjoyable and engaging place, however, it can also be a formidable one. This document has been created by GAA Handball to help educate and guide those who use social media in a GAA Handball capacity.**

**B**efore going any further, it is important to remember that as an administrator of any social media account that is associated with GAA Handball, you must fully comply with all GAA Handball social media policies.

The use of social media can have huge impacts on any organization. As such, your club may be able to increase the amount of membership, support and indeed, sponsorship that it currently has. Both at a local

and national level, individuals and businesses alike will be able to see the value of being able to promote their interests/products to the people that “Like” your Handball Clubs’ social media page.

The correct usage of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat is very easy to accomplish and has become a very effective communication and marketing tool in modern society.



# FUNDAMENTALS

## Setting up an Official GAA Handball Social Media Account

GAA Handball's online presence is made up of a network of individuals operating websites and social media channels at club, county, provincial and International levels. As such, we want to ensure that a common set of guidelines and policies are in place so that each entity is working in unison as one GAA Handball family.

There are a few simple steps to follow when setting up your account:

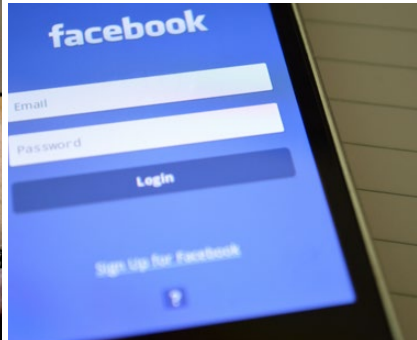
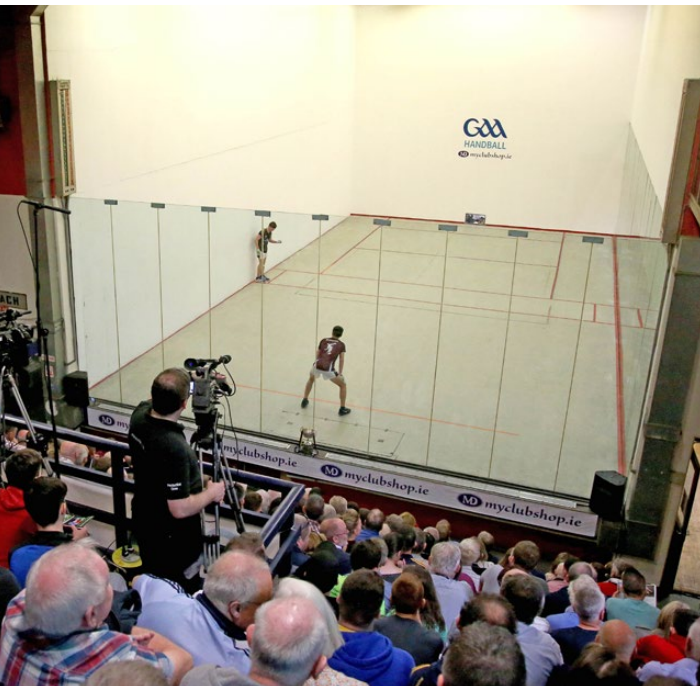
**Username/Handle:** Please ensure that you have your Handball Club's name followed by GAA Handball Club, OR, for counties/provinces please have the name followed by GAA Handball for example:

1. Kells **GAA Handball Club**
2. Wexford **GAA Handball**
3. Munster **GAA Handball**

**Profile Picture:** Please use the appropriate crest of the organization that you are setting up a social media account for i.e. club/county/provincial. Or, where possible, use a logo that has been designed for use by your organisation and is fit for purpose, e.g.;



**Email:** When creating a social media account, you will be asked to enter an email address for authentication. At county and provincial level, the email provided should be the one that GAA Handball has provided all Club Officers with i.e. pro.county.handball@gaa.ie or pro.province.handball@gaa.ie so that when a changeover of committee roles occurs there is transparency and ease of access.



At club level, these email addresses are not yet available. As such, it is recommended that GAA Handball clubs use a free email provider (e.g. Gmail) for all club PRO related business i.e. [pro.fahy.handball@gmail.com](mailto:pro.fahy.handball@gmail.com)

**Register:** As each Handball club is a part of the GAA Handball Association, it is important that Handball clubs, county boards and provinces register their digital channels with GAA Handball at national level by contacting a member of the GAA Handball team via [pr.handball@gaa.ie](mailto:pr.handball@gaa.ie).

As such, any person who speaks on behalf of GAA Handball via a social media platform is authorized to do so. Again, this is to ensure that we as a community are working together to give GAA Handball an appealing online presence.

As the creator/administrator of a GAA Handball affiliated account you will

also need to register your official GAA Handball website and social media channels with your relevant County PRO.

### The Do's of Posting on Social Media Platforms

- Always remember when posting on social media sites to ensure that the content is appropriate and follows all GAA Handball's official guidelines
- Make it clear that you volunteer or work for GAA Handball
- Confirm that all spelling and grammar is correct
- Keep all social media platforms and website(s) as up to date as possible so that 'followers' are up to date with the latest club/county/provincial news, results and fixtures
- Use sound judgment and common sense



### The Do Not's of Posting on Social Media Platforms

- When posting on the internet, do not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the GAA Handball Association, or that is confidential to any third party that has disclosed information to the GAA Handball Association
- When in doubt, do not post. As a representative of GAA Handball online, you are personally responsible for your words and actions online
- As an official GAA Handball online spokesperson, you must ensure that your posts are completely accurate and not misleading

- Posts on social media platforms should not reveal any non-public information regarding the GAA Handball Association or affiliates

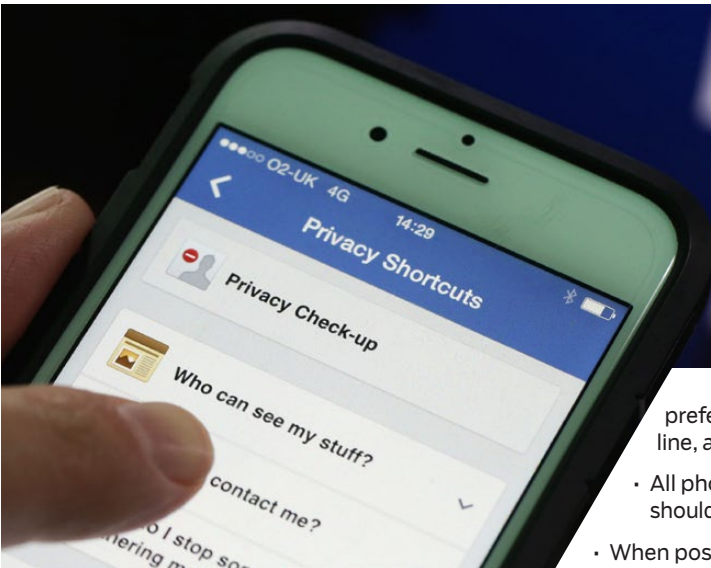
### Posting Photographs on Social Media Platforms and Websites

Posting photographs is an integral part of any successful social media forum – it is a method of visually and actively engaging with 'followers' and encourages other users to 'share' your post.

However, one key area where many people fall-down is saving and re-posting photographs from social media platforms. Once a photograph is uploaded onto social media it becomes

#### Some examples of bad and good photographs taken and posted by club/counties





more pixilated (that is, it appears grainier and is of lower quality). When a photograph is constantly posted, saved and re-posted on social media the quality becomes dramatically worse. As such, it is recommended that only original photographs should be shared online.

When requesting/sending a photograph, always ensure that you do so by email – never send a photograph through Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp or any other Application, particularly if the photograph is to be re-posted, or to be sent to a media publication.

When you are requested to send a specific sized photograph, i.e. 1 MB, it is easy to check what size your photograph is. Simply left click your mouse over the photograph and then select 'Properties' the pop up screen will display File type and Size of the photograph. Adding to this, there are a few simple guidelines that every person should follow before 'posting' a photograph on-line;

- When taking a photograph, make sure you do so in landscape mode as it is the

preferred format for posting on-line, and that the camera is straight

- All photographs that are posted should be focused, clear and centred
- When posting photographs that include the GAA Handball logo, try to make it so that the logo is evident in the post
- When present, ensure that the club crest and sponsors logo are evident in the photograph
- Please ensure that there is a written post attached to each photograph that is posted on-line, that informs readers of why, where and when the photograph was taken
- It is also important to mention who is in the photograph (e.g. from left to right, front row etc.,) and, where possible, 'tag' them
- Use titles for all photographs, e.g. Ladies Senior Singles Open 40x20 All-Ireland Final, Kingscourt HC, Co County Cavan, March 2017
- Where possible, try to make sure that all players are in matching attire for the photographs i.e. they are all wearing playing gear or all wearing a jersey and tracksuit
- Please edit dark/dull or broad photographs using the editing software that is readily available on your smart phone/laptop



# SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

## **FACEBOOK**

### What is Facebook?

Facebook is a social utility/website that connects people with friends and others who work, study and live around them. People use Facebook to keep in touch with their friends, upload photos, share links and videos and to learn more about the people they meet.

Increasingly, businesses and organisations use Facebook as a two-way channel to communicate with customers and members. Facebook is a very useful tool for promoting fundraising events for your local club, to publicise upcoming games, events etc., As a page affiliated

with GAA Handball, your club/county/province should create a public page that other users of Facebook can 'like'.

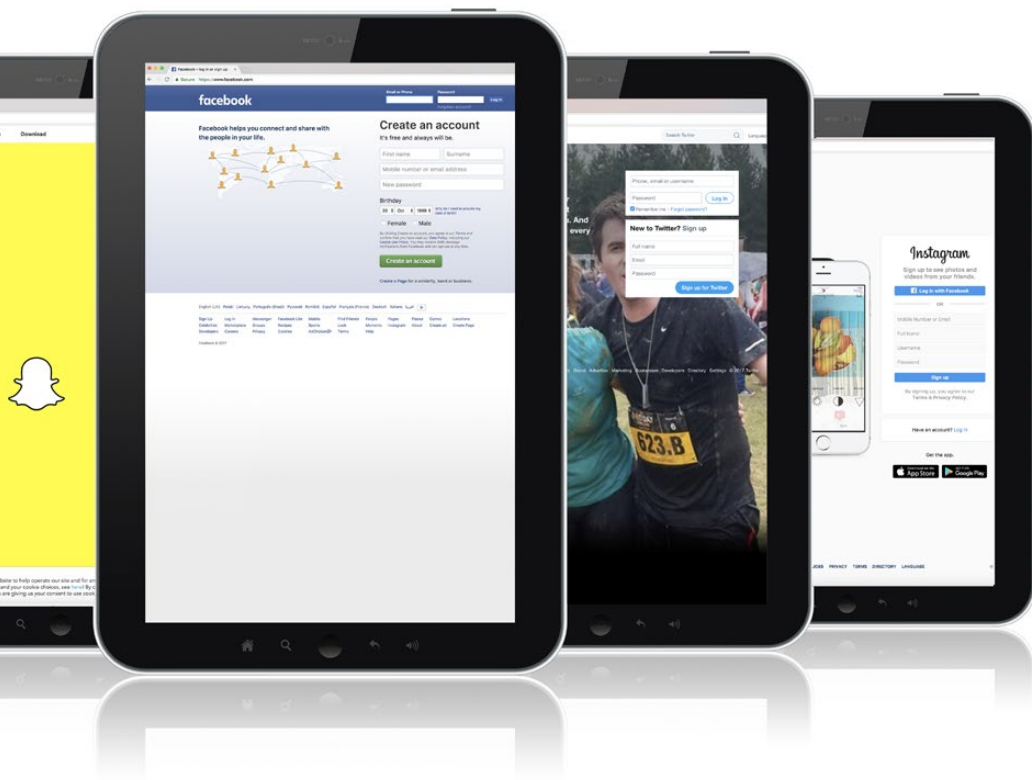
### Top Tips for a Successful Facebook Page:

Post updates on your Facebook Page often – do not bombard your page with constant updates for one weekend and then leave vacant for days.

Encouraging followers to engage with posts is the best way to reach other Facebook users who have not yet 'liked' your page – do so by using pictures, like & share competitions (even for handballs or gloves) or fun news stories.







Use global trends e.g. **#ThrowBackThursday** – this will allow your post to be seen when anyone searches or clicks into that hashtag. This is not something that needs to be done every week, but adding a short post with an old club picture(s) can generate a lot of interaction on Facebook.

Use Facebook as a forum to promote and organise club/county competitions – create a rivalry and a comradery among clubs and present a united front Live Streaming – live streaming is a valuable tool that allows users to showcase important club/county/provincial games. To effectively live stream, it is recommended that a

phone/device be placed on a tripod/stand/stable surface where the camera will remain still. It should be shot on a landscape format and positioned in the centre of the gallery/viewing area of the Handball alley. After each game, the recording should be stopped, published, and the score posted in the video comment section by the page administrator(s). A post should also be attached on the live stream that explains who is playing, who they are representing, what the game is and include **#GAAGHandball** for example;

**LIVE:** Ladies Softball All Ireland Final  
 Martina McMahon (Lim)  
 v Catriona Casey (Cork)  
**#NothingBeatsBeingThere #GAAGHandball**



## TWITTER

### What is Twitter?

Twitter is an on line social networking tool in which users post 140 character updates of what is going on in their lives along with links to items that they believe are interesting or relevant or useful to their followers.

People use Twitter in many ways: some as a newsfeed by following prominent people or networks; some as a pseudo-chatroom by limiting their followers and whom they follow i.e. close friends and family; and some as a microblog for updating people about what they are doing and their personal lives.

People also use Twitter to share photos and videos taken on their phone/device. Twitter is a very useful tool for giving updates of match scores and relaying the latest GAA Handball news. There are several validated accounts which confirm the identity of the person or company that own the account(s). This is demonstrated by a blue tick adjacent to the Twitter handle (or user name) in this case it would be the county boards, and the official GAA Handball account.

### Top Tips for a Successful Twitter Page:

When using Twitter, bear in mind that you have the restriction of 140 characters. Hence, keep your message short and to the point.

Using hashtags is essential on Twitter as it allows your post to be viewed on any 'thread' where that hashtag appears e.g. #GAAGHandball.

Posting a photograph/video is always a good idea on Twitter as it allows you to tag other people/companies/organisations in the photograph/video and does not use any of the allotted characters.

A constant and vibrant Twitter feed is easy to attain, when using this platform, you are encouraged to 're-tweet', 'quote-tweets' and reply to 'tweets' that do not necessarily relate to Handball. It is an excellent way to create interaction and generate followers.

Make sure that your Twitter page is set on 'Public' so that anyone can view and interact with your tweets.





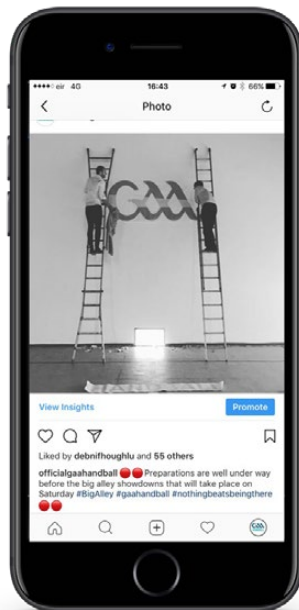
### What is Instagram?

Instagram is a social networking app made for sharing photos and videos from a smartphone or device. Like Facebook or Twitter, everyone who creates an Instagram account has a profile and a news feed.

When you post a photograph or video on Instagram, it will be displayed on your profile and on the 'Newsfeed' of your followers. Instagram is a forum that requires a picture with each post and then followers like, share or comment on that post.

### Top Tips for a Successful Instagram Account:

The basic rules of other successful social media platforms apply to Instagram e.g. vibrant and constant posts, the use of hashtags and engaging with other users of the App. However, with Instagram you are encouraged to 'Follow' other users in a bid to entice them to 'Follow' your account back



When posting photographs to Instagram, make sure that you use a clear photograph and add in a filter to make it look appealing (do not over filter photographs), the more interesting and diverse the photographs are the better. Again, with Instagram, use global and popular hashtags to get your photographs displayed on the 'threads' of these hashtags.

With Instagram, you can also add a 'story' to your profile, this can be in the form of a short 6 second video, or photograph, the App offers many special effects that you can invoke. Frequent, relevant and vibrant posts are the key to a successful Instagram account.



## SNAPCHAT

### What is Snapchat?

Snapchat is a mobile messaging application used to share photos, videos, text, and drawings. It has become hugely popular in a very short space of time, especially with a younger demographic and is the application used the most by 17-23 year olds.

There is one feature that makes Snapchat different from other forms of social media texting and photo sharing: the messages disappear from the recipient's phone after 10 seconds or less. However, in a recent update, Snapchat have created an 'infinity setting' that allows pictures to remain open, and videos to play on a loop, until the recipient closes them.

The 'Snapchat Story' function is the main function of the App which is used by companies and organisations alike. This is done by adding photographs

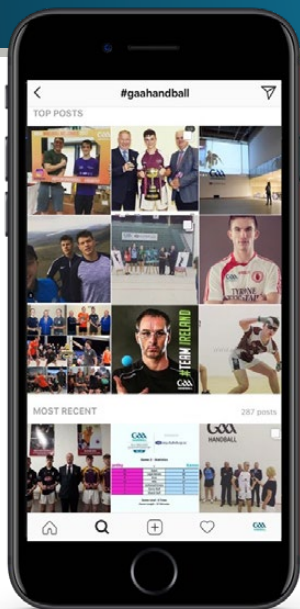
and videos of tournaments/events that the organisation may be hosting. These 'stories' can then be viewed by anyone who 'follows' the organisation on the App.

### Top Tips for a Successful Snapchat Account:

In a recent update, Snapchat have added a feature where by an account administrator can allow 'friends' to add to the account's overall story. This is an excellent feature as multiple events (or games) can be added to an official story simultaneously from different locations by different users.

Snapchat is an excellent way of showing followers what is happening right now. It is an exciting and dynamic tool, but should not be used in the same manner as Facebook or Twitter.

When you create an official Snapchat account, be sure to add your unique user ID image to other social media platforms so that your followers there can add you on Snapchat also.



## HASHTAGS

### What is a Hashtag?

A hashtag is a type of tag used on social media and microblogging platforms. It allows users to apply dynamic, user-generated tagging that makes it possible for others to easily find messages with a specific theme or content. Users create and use hashtags by placing the number sign or pound sign (colloquially known as the hash character) in front of a word or un-spaced phrase, either in the main text of a post or at the end.

Searching for that hashtag will yield each message that has been tagged with it. A hashtag archive is consequently collected into a single stream under the same hashtag. For example, on the photo-sharing service Instagram, the hashtag #GAAGHandball allows users to find all the posts that have been tagged using that hashtag.

### Top Tips for using Hashtags

As explained in this document, a Hashtag is a valuable tool which can be

used across all social media platforms. When creating a Hashtag keep it short & snappy e.g. #KellsHandballClubKilkenny Always use #GAAGHandball on your posts, as the official GAA Handball tag line, it will allow your post to be seen on the most viewed thread which relates to Handball.

Do not over load your posts with Hashtags, the most common mistake is putting a # symbol in front of every word on a post. The more Hashtags a post uses, the more diluted it becomes and will appear lower down on threads when the Hashtag is searched. Three Hashtags on one post is the maximum that you should ever post.

### Protecting Young People

Many social media platforms attract teenagers and younger children. GAA Handball and its affiliated clubs, counties and provinces use some of these social media platforms, hence, it is imperative that we safeguard for both our protection, and the protection of these users.

However, challenges arise as young people nowadays excel at technology, but this may not be the case with their social media skills. Some may be at risk for online bullying, or from publishing personal information without considering or indeed, being aware of the possible consequences.

When you as an administrator operate on a social media channel which is used by young people, including children, you must ensure that the site is suitable for a family audience. This includes content that users post on your site/page, and articles that you post. If you post a link to an outside site, you are responsible for ensuring that these sites are suitable for respective audiences. GAA Handball takes the welfare of young people extremely seriously. Further details of our child welfare related policies can be found on [www.gaahandball.ie](http://www.gaahandball.ie)





# ALWAYS REMEMBER

## 1. Follow Association Values

Approach online communities using sound judgement and common sense.

## 2. Be Transparent

Make it clear that you are a volunteer of GAA Handball. Your honesty will be noted on social media platforms. If you have a vested interest, or are feeling uncomfortable at any time, you can use a disclaimer at any time, or have it visible on your page/site;

*"GAA Handball accepts no responsibility for the opinions expressed on this forum, which are those of the of the individuals expressing them, and do not necessarily represent the views of GAA Handball."*

## 3. Protect Confidential Information

When posting on the internet do not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the GAA Handball or GAA Association(s), or which is confidential to any third party that has disclosed information to the Association(s).

When in doubt, do not post, you are responsible for your words and actions on line.

## 4. Be Respectful

If you are representing GAA Handball in an official capacity (i.e. through your affiliated social media platform), it is important that your posts convey the same positive, volunteer-led spirit that the GAA instils in all its communications.



When disagreeing with the opinions of others online, keep it appropriate and polite. If you find yourself in a situation that might become antagonistic, do not get defensive or disengage from the conversation abruptly.

It is important to not respond in the heat of the moment, in a way you may regret later.

## 5. Be Honest

Stick to your area of expertise and feel free to provide your unique perspective on non-confidential activities of GAA Handball.

## 6. Correct Use of Imagery

Do not post pictures of others without their permission. Please respect brand, trademark and copyrighted information and imagery.

## 7. Respect the Law

Internet postings must respect copyright, privacy, fair use, financial disclosure, and other applicable laws. When using GAA Handball affiliated social media platforms and official websites, security is essential. You may wish to pass on interesting content or links, and you should, but, be careful, and do not blindly re-post something without checking the content.

When using social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.), always adhere to their terms & conditions.

## 8. Do Not Plagiarise

Give credit where credit is due. Do not violate the rights of others by claiming ownership of something that is not yours, or by using someone else's content without their permission.

## 9. Deal with Major Mistakes

Correct any mistake immediately and make it clear what you have done to fix it. If it is a major mistake, let your PRO, secretary or chairperson know immediately so appropriate action can be taken to minimise the impact.

GAA Handball reserves the right to withdraw certain posts, and to remove inappropriate comments.

## 10. Be Mindful of Trolling & Spam

A 'troll' is someone who, without a valid reason, adds disruptive or offensive posts or content to a forum. 'Spammers' are people who illegally post comments, links or promotions on a thread.

# CONCLUSION

As noted at the start of this document, the world of social media has become an integral part of today's society. It is a place of mass communication, but also it potentially can have negative implications.

However, if you heed the advice set out in this document, the realm of social networking should become a fun and enjoyable part of your club/county/provincial structure.

As always, if you do have any questions or concerns you can contact the National Office on 01 819 2385 or via [pr.handball@gaa.ie](mailto:pr.handball@gaa.ie)



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Social Media** are computer-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks.

**A profile picture** is the image that represents a social media account in all its interactions across a platform. Profile pictures are displayed as an avatar next to the account name on posts, comments and mentions (depending on the platform).

**Follower(s)** is a term used on Twitter, Instagram, and other social media sites, a follower is someone who subscribes to receive your updates and posts on their news feed. In turn, you can follow other users of the social media platform back, or pre-emptively.

**A share or 'sharing'** on a social media platform is a way to show your friends/followers a post that you are interested in. Or vice versa, by a friend/follower sharing your post, it allows their friends/followers (who are not yours) to see what you have posted on the platform.

**Posting** is simply a phrase that refers to when you write, put a photograph or any form of content on a social media platform.

**A Tag** is when you put an @ symbol in front of a person's username or 'handle' on a social media platform, e.g. if you were to mention GAA Handball in a post, you would use @GAAGHandball. The post you tag the person in may also be added to that person's timeline/news feed. For example, you can tag a photo to show who's in the photo or post a status update and say who you're with.

**A link** is when you share a URL of another website i.e sharing the GAA Handball website by copying and pasting their website address: <https://www.gaahandball.ie/>

**Like/Liked** refers to two things. As a public page, you want as many people to like your page as possible, and you as a public page can like other Facebook Pages i.e. GAA Handball's page. It also refers to the option of clicking a like below a post on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. It is an easy way to let people know that you enjoy their post



without leaving a comment. In turn, the more likes that one of your posts receives, the more people will view it on their news feeds.

**Trends** are described as the most popular subjects discussed on Twitter. Trending topics can involve a variety of topics e.g. politics, the entertainment industry, other current and world issues and even everyday mundane things, it is reflected by the amount of use that a hashtag generates.

**140 Characters** is the number of letters, numbers, spaces, symbols etc., allowed in a Tweet.

**Pseudo-chatroom** refers to a private Twitter account that only allows friends to see Tweets that you post and vice versa.

**Microblog(ing)** is a social media platform to which a user makes short, frequent posts e.g. Twitter.

**A Handle** on Twitter simply refers to your username, it is your online identity.

**Thread** is an internet forum, or message board, it is an online discussion site where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages, it is the format that Twitter displays Tweets that have the same hashtags.

**News Feed/Twitter Feed** is the method by which news is provided on a regular or continuous basis for onward distribution or broadcasting, it is the format that is used by Twitter and Facebook.

**Tweet, re-tweet, quote-tweet**, a Tweet is merely what any post on Twitter is called, a re-tweet is when you 'share' a post by someone else and a 'quote-tweet' is when you re-tweet someone else's Tweet but edit or paraphrase what they have said.

**A filter** is anything that changes the colour of or adds to a photograph, it is mainly used on Snapchat and Instagram as they are features which are built into the App.

**A friend** on Facebook or Snapchat is someone who asked you to connect with them, or you asked them. Either way, it is a consensual agreement that both parties can see, share and comment on each other's posts.

**Live Stream** is to transmit or receive live video and audio coverage of an event over the Internet i.e. GAA Handball Live stream finals.

**An App** is also known as an application and is especially downloaded by a user to a smart device to access software such as social media platforms.



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