How to be an Influencer.

What it takes to not be a social media influencer: 40 fantastic & *free* tips!

Pia Jane Bijkerk

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HOW TO NOT BE A SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER | Pia Jane Bijkerk | www.piajanebijkerk.com

So you want to know what it takes to not be an influencer? You've come to the right place! I've comprised this handy eBook just for you, with 40 fabulous tips on what it takes to not be a social media influencer. And, it's free! That's because this is a topic I am incredibly passionate about & I want to share my expertise freely so you too, can start to make the necessary steps it takes to not become an influencer. This is something I know a lot about: I have been unintentionally practising how not to be an influencer for many years. I've gathered a wealth of experience over the eight years I've been active on social media platforms such as instagram & facebook. In fact, I would say I'm now an expert as I have successfully maintained being not quite influential the entire time – I've managed to *not* grow my following for many years now, even though I've continued posting and sharing my new work and the work of other artists who are highly talented in their creative fields.

First up, let me introduce myself for those who have no idea who I am – and I get why you wouldn't, because no doubt you haven't seen me pop up on your social media feeds.

My name is Pia. Pia Jane Bijkerk to be exact but that can be tricky to say so just call me Pia, that's fine. I am one of those people who do not have a real job. That's right, I'm an artist. I've been an artist my whole life and like most artists I work with many different mediums, switching from one to the other at a whim, which makes it difficult for people to label what I do - I've heard that's frustrating in this modern world where everything and everyone needs to fit into a neat and tidy brand. I write books, take photographs, play piano, make films, create soundscapes, make websites, and draw stuff. And I mentor other artists too. I make a living from not having a real job. And all of this I have managed to do for 15 years without being a social media influencer. *But how?*

Here are my top 40 tips on how I've done it! The key is to remember, the world - not instagram - is your oyster. These tips will stimulate new, original ideas within you to get creative and be bold: to think and live outside the instagram grid. I truly believe it's a freedom worth pursuing.

With Love,



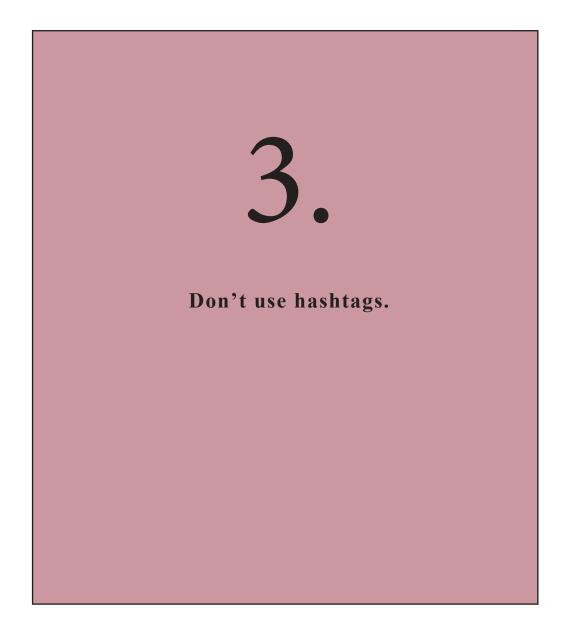
Here is my beautiful grandmother Norma circa 1940 who just passed away last month at 95 years of age. Like me, she was not a social media influencer - contrary to how amazing this photo is, it has not been seen on any social media platforms. Her sister Joyce took this photo. Joyce made her dress up like this, apaprently. In cotton balls. Looks like fun!

Whatever you do, do not sign up to do an instagram ecourse, no matter how enticing the summary is or how many of your friends are doing the course.

Need I say more? I need not.

Do not colour coordinate your instagram feed or "grid" as it's called. Or if you do, get bored with it and throw in a random new colour or random authentic photo.

Have a look around for inspiration: Do you see a garbage bin or bird shit or plastic wrapper near by? It can be hard to not see life through an instagram filter at first but it IS possible, give it a try. How about taking a photo of the mess you would usually have out of frame? Is your feed full of selfies? Then be bold and post a non-selfie! Is your feed full of "effortless" colour coordinated family and friends? Find your courage and take a photo when they, or you, are not dressed in these colours but instead, something outrageous – like an acryclic sweater that isn't mustard but pineapple yellow instead. This tip may take some practice – don't despair if you find it the most challenging, you will get there! Just take a deep breath and be persistent. Soon, you'll find your non-influential visual voice and I cannot tell you how free you will feel when you do! It's worth the effort to not make the effort.



Be an actual introvert.

Not a partial one or pretend one or sometimes one, but someone who genuinely dislikes crowded places; prefers their own company or the company of one person at a time; and needs a lot of quiet time – i.e. your pastime isn't socialising in real life, so it won't be socialising on social media. If you're unsure if you are an actual introvert or a partial one, there are online tests you can do to find out.

Personal note:

There are people who say they are introverts online but then you see them at social media events, farm table gatherings and they post selfies and appear to be on social media everyday. They may be confused as to what an introvert is — and this in turn confuses actual introverts and makes them feel that perhaps they are introverting it all wrong. I've stumbled down this path many-a-time over the years, and I too began posting the odd selfie because I started to wonder if I needed to experiment - I really started questioning my introverted-ness. Now with distance, I have much clarity: I am an introvert, and it's okay. It simply means I will not be a social media influencer.

Declare yourself a #bullshitfreezone.

Oh hang on, that's a hashtag.



Have clear boundaries.

Exploring what this means would take up a lot of space, there are whole books on the subject! I recorded a couple of podcast episodes on the topic with my friend Shona, you can listen to them here. The episodes were initially about children but the ideas are the same, really.

Eat baked beans for lunch and don't post about it.

Or eat out at an awesome place and don't share it. I do this regularly, at least weekly. I even have a favourite café that I don't tell anyone about on social media, only my friends or clients when we meet in person. So uninfluential, right? I know. Again, it takes courage to not post about this stuff. You'll get the hang of it!

Be shit at time management and or general organisation.

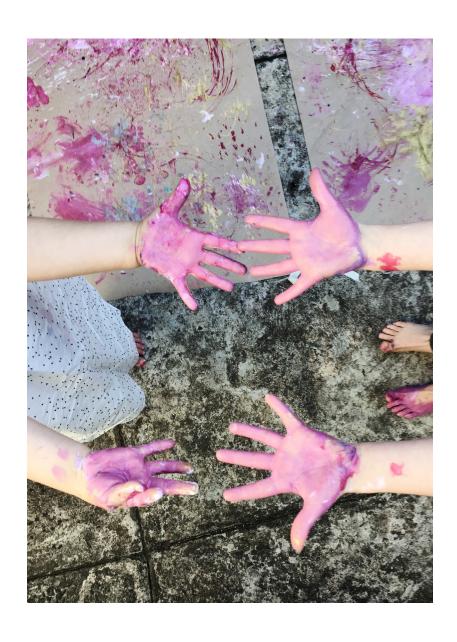
9.
Be non-photogenic.

10.

Don't take selfies.

Have a life partner (or husband or wife or bestie) who is shit at taking photos and never takes photos of you.

This can be extended further: Momentous events in your life that your partner, husband, wife or bestie never think to capture the moment with you in it.



Be torn and confused. And don't post about it.

13.

Feel vulnerable but don't post about it.

14.

Be a bit weird or kooky or interesting, or as I like to call it "normal".

Don't thank God or believe in "him" or refer to "him".

Again, this can be extended further:

I have managed to author five books over the past ten years and have never mentioned God once!

Except I just did. Whoops. But you know, this is for a greater cause – the cause of not being an influencer.

Read loads of fantastic books but don't post about them.

Not on purpose, just because you don't have time from being busy with life outside of social media. You can have the intention to write about them, many many intentions, but you never get around to it.

Find the whole social media thing overwhelming.

Consistently overwhelming - like you never get over the overwhelm, no matter how much you try to get over it.

18.

Have frequent bouts of wanting to delete all accounts.

Go so far as to have social media hiatus' and then, delete all accounts! It's incredibly freeing, or so I've been told. I will do it, I will! I believe in myself!

19.

Believe in your abilities but don't say so. Just don't.

Talk about something you love!

However here is the catch: share a product or service or person you know but that product or service or person you know has *nothing* to do with your other posts and isn't sponsored. You just genuinely feel passionate about it or them and want to share the love.

21.

Lose followers each time you post something you care deeply about.

This is such a great sign that you are on your way to not being an influencer: Congratulations!

22.

Don't follow trends!

Don't post about stories and events that the media (which is different to social media, a light internet search will help to clarify the difference, kinda) has reported.

This is a skill I've mastered. Because I rarely read the news, I am always many steps behind on what's going on in the media. But let me be clear, I'm aware of what's going on in the world as much as I can be—the stuff that the media doesn't report, the real stories in between the reported stories — I strive to learn about these as much as I can. But the reported stories, I'm not up on. And when I do find out about these events, I take my time to sit with them — be it the grief of incredible loss (it's very often incredible, unbearable human, animal and environmental loss) — my first response has never been to post or repost about it on social media. In fact I find myself withdraw from social media at these times, the intensity of the weirdness of seeing these things posted and reposted is, once again, overwhelming. Does this happen to you too? Then you're most likely not an influencer like me.

Personal Story:

Once upon a time there was a significant religious building that partially caught on fire in one of the world's most popular cities. I was so grateful no one was injured, knowing that in other parts of the world thousands of people were at that moment being tortured, killed or were on the brink of death due to starvation. So, my heart was - is - full of that heartache - I didn't have heartache available for this building which was accidentally partially damaged - my heart knew that this building would receive millions of dollars in support and repair. Within hours, my heart was proven right. I also knew that this event would receive much exposure on the socials. I had no intention of adding to it with my thoughts. Instead, I sat with how I felt - the immense grief that was not for the building. So I did what I know what to do when I feel a lot: I played the piano. And recorded that piece and put it on my patreon page where there are approximately 30 people. Then I posted about the piano piece on instagram but didn't talk about what that piece was about.

This is what not being an influencer is all about.

Keep your instagram followers under 10K.

It actually requires no effort at all – all you have to do is all of the above. I could go on about the reasons for why this is crucial, perhaps I will elaborate one day! For now though just remember: if you get close to that number or well exceed it, watch out, you could be on your way to being an influencer. Or, a *micro-influencer*.

Have conversations with friends that aren't about social media.

And have friends who don't have social media accounts. It's real, there are such people. And they are often rather wonderful: The conversations can be so refreshing and honest!

26.

Be random at times.

I have so many examples of this but to start with, here is an example: this eBook is totally random, most people would not think I would spend hours creating this and then offer it for free. But I have! You see? *Random*.

Have minimal skills in self-beautifying.

Don't know how to do your makeup?

Or perhaps you wear no makeup at all most of the time, so that if you feel bold enough to take a selfie one day or a friend offers to take a photo of you, you look completely natural and sickly.

This means that your casual look is authentically casual - so it will exclude some of the following: eyeliner, mascara, manicured eyebrows, salon-sun-kissed hair, tan, whitened teeth, polished nails.

If you're not sure if you're authentically casual enough to not be an influencer, a great question to ask yourself is this:

how long did it take me to get ready today?

If the answer is "more than 10 minutes", then you can start to consider leaving the house without certain styling rituals. Begin with one or two at first and then build up, otherwise you may get shocked by how you really look when you are captured in your natural state.

Remember this: Small steps for positive change.

This is also a great question to ask yourself:

Have I dressed and styled myself today with the intention - conscious or unconscious - of being photographed for social media?

It's one of those powerful, reflective questions to bring awareness to your everyday.

You could also go so far as to ask yourself this:

Am I doing this activity right now because I want to show everyone what I'm doing and who I'm hanging with? Or is this something I truly want to do, regardless of whether anyone ever sees me here.

So much to ponder.

Wake up thinking about something other than instagram.

And it can't be another social media platform.

Let your kids wear whatever they want.

Come up with really awesome ideas but don't have the resources, money or support to implement them.

31.

Prioritise your time to not be marketing on social media.

32.

Have other stuff to do. Like sleep.

Don't be an ambassador for anything.

34.

Have a really interesting dynamic career but not many social media 'fans'.

35.

Be contradictory from time to time.

Be an anti-consumerist.

This means you passionately dislike consuming things that we don't need to consume – that is: things on trend; things influencers tell you are amazing; plastic; plastic wrapped in plastic; branded anything; department store anything; hot travel destinations and travel paraphernalia. This will keep you well and truly out of the sphere of influence because it means you aren't going to be sprucing this stuff and brands will know it

Personal Story:

Malls? I shudder at the thought of one and have to do a lot of deep breathing when I find myself with no choice but to enter one. My idea for re-imagining malls is to turn them all into farmers markets and pop ups for local makers, artists, workshops, and services. Now that is a place I would frequent. Is it consuming? Somewhat, but at least you learn stuff along the way, buy things that are made with sustainability at the core (as opposed to financial gain for a few percent of the population), meet awesome people who make and grow things with their own two hands *and* you contribute to the local economy at the same time. The money you spend goes back into the place you live and the people who live there. What a wonderfully novel idea!

Have a podcast but then don't ask anyone to review it.

38.

Go on an overseas trip and not post about it!

Take it further: go to destinations that have become heavily occupied by influencers and don't post about it. I've done this lots.

Paris? Didn't post about it.

Northern Rivers a.k.a Byron Bay?

About to go and will not be posting about it.

Live, but don't post about it!

40.

Practice everyday alchemy, but don't post about it!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Pia Jane Bijkerk currently spends her days being mother to her 7 year old daughter Laly and working as an artist and mentor during the hours Laly's at school, all the while successfully maintaining her uninfluential status on social media.

This photograph was captured by her life partner, who had to be asked to capture the special moment, because it's not something he would ever think to do. In the photograph, Pia & Laly sit on a bed in a room on a hill rented by one of Australia's most talented creators, in one of Australia's most influential areas. She didn't post about it.

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Huge thanks and love and hugs to Romain Bigeard, Shona Smith & Midnight Blue for proof reading this for me on a Friday night, providing laughing face emojis via text along the way.

This was really fun to make. A little more time consuming than I had anticipated, but still, very fun.

Here are 4 ways you can enjoy free-thinking content from me outside of social media:

1. subscribe to my newsletter sent out randomly

2. listen to Shona & my podcast called It's All Up From Here
3. read my journal on my website. I have been blogging for over ten
years now so there is plenty to catch up on if you're new round here.
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