



# Safe on Social

## #Hashtags

## Cheat Sheet

**If you are a novice social media user or not regularly using your social media accounts to promote a business, a hashtag may seem a bit unnecessary. But they are an important part of online communication.**

The **#hashtag** feature is supported on multiple platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr, You-tube and others.

**What they do**, is turn specific words into searchable links, allowing messages, images and discussions on a specific topic to be collated under the particular word. A hashtag referencing a subject and event of personal interest can link to other social media users who following the same pastime, providing links to online communities.

Clicking on the hash tagged word will link to all current posts using that hashtag, and adding the same word to your contribution with a #, will include your post in online conversations about the topic.

For example, fans of the Melbourne Cup or the Kardashian horde could use **#Melbourne Cup** and **#Kardashian**. Wildlife or surf photographers can link to others with tags like **#naturephotography**, or **#surfing** or even **#stormchasing**. Animals lovers could try **#backyardchooks** or **#leopards**. Simple, once you know how to start. (A hashtag will generally sit after the text of your post, underneath your image, or at the end of a twitter comment)

### What can be in a hashtag.

- Any word or combination of words that you like. And yes, there are some negative connotations to that concept.  
NB - When using the hashtag with children, it's recommended to search the hash tagged word yourself first - especially on Instagram.
- No spaces are allowed - **#thewordsmustallruntogether**.
- A mixture of upper and lower-case letters will get you to the same place. #withcapitals or #WithCapitals - both will create the same searchable result.
- Numbers are fine, so **#MelbourneCup2017** or **#VoteYes2017** are acceptable.
- No commas, asterisks, ampersands, exclamation marks, question marks or any other special characters will work.
- @ is a completely different thing to a #. Using the @, before an individual's username will post to them directly - notifying them that you have referenced them. A hashtag will not do this. For a user wanting to draw the attention of a particular celebrity @ is what you want to use.

## A powerful tool.

It's worthwhile noting that the hashtag is a very useful device to create brand awareness for both businesses and campaigns.

One of the more recognisable of these campaigns in Australia was #illridewithyou on Twitter. Following the Lindt café siege in Sydney in 2014, many Australian Muslims were afraid, in the face of negative public sentiment, to catch public transport while wearing traditional religious attire.

A twitter user started #illridewithyou as a way of connecting those who were both offering support for Muslims and their availability to help, by catching transport with those who were in fear. The @ came into play allowing supporters to be directly messaged by those who felt they needed the additional security of having someone ride with them.



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