

# SOCIAL MEDIA ALGORITHMS



## WHAT'S AN ALGORITHM?

An algorithm, very simply, is a method. A systematic way of doing something: sorting objects, locating cities on a map, multiplying two numbers, extracting a square root, looking up a word in the dictionary. Any mechanical action can be described in a general way, identifying procedures, sequences of actions or precise manipulations to be performed sequentially. That is what an algorithm is.

## ALGORITHM IN SOCIAL MEDIA?

The algorithm controls the order of presentation of posts and ads in the News Feed, and thus shows users what is most likely to interest them. It works as a recommendation system.

## FACEBOOK

To rank content in the user's News Feed, the Facebook algorithm relies on 4 factors:

**Inventory:** As soon as you connect to the network, Facebook takes inventory of all the publications posted by your friends and the pages you follow.

**Signals:** Then, the algorithm predicts which contents are likely to interest you. How does it do this? By analyzing all the information at its disposal: who is publishing? on what device? what time is it? what type of content is published? etc.

*Note that this is the only factor you can influence and control.*

**Predictions:** The social network uses the previous indications to make predictions about a user's behaviour, and the probability that he/she will have a positive interaction with a piece of content.

**Rating:** The algorithm then selects and ranks the posts in your News Feed. A relevance score is assigned to the content based on the probability that the user will respond positively to it. It is calculated according to the 3 previous factors.

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## TIKTOK

The TikTok key ranking signals are:

**Users interaction** with the content of the App. It is very similar to Instagram's algorithm.

**Video information:** content you tend to look for.

**Devices and account settings:** language, location, type of mobile device, category of interests you selected as new user etc.

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## INSTAGRAM

To decide where each post ranks in the Instagram user feed, the algorithm filters and ranks posts based on various factors:

**Interest:** Instagram predicts each user's interest level based on past behaviour. This makes the algorithm more likely to show the same type of posts a user has viewed in the past.

**Recency:** Recent content is valued more highly than posts that are several weeks old and are therefore more likely to be placed at the top of users' feeds.

**Relationship:** The algorithm analyses posts from accounts that a user already interacts with. Time and frequency: Instagram tries to show its visitors the best posts since their last visit to the application.

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## SNAPCHAT

Prior to 2018, the algorithm looked at users' interactions with each other over the past week, then created an ordered list based on the number of interactions. Now, the algorithm is more complex, taking into account participation in group chats, number of Snaps sent, etc. It is this algorithm that allows the ranking of your friends and the attribution of their emojis.

<b>Topic</b>	Social media's algorithms		
<b>Activity Title</b>	Tips for winning on social media		
<b>Type of resource</b>	Self-Help Resource (SHR)	<b>Type of learning</b>	<i>This activity promotes self-directed learning. It can be used for personal use by the individual.</i>
<b>Duration of Activity (in minutes)</b>	<i>15 minutes for the activity; 10 minutes to answer the self-reflection questions.</i>	<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<i>To know more about the algorithms of each major social media platform.</i>
<b>Aim of activity</b>	<i>By completing this activity, you will know more about the algorithms and what have been implemented in 2021. It will also provide you some tips to "trick" the algorithms.</i>		
<b>Materials Required for Activity</b>	<i>PC or Smartphone + Internet connection Paper and pen to take notes.</i>		
<b>Step-by-step instructions</b>	<i>Read the following article: <a href="https://storychief.io/blog/social-media-algorithms-updates-tips">https://storychief.io/blog/social-media-algorithms-updates-tips</a>  Then, answer the questions listed in the following box.</i>		
<b>Self-reflection Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What have you learnt in this activity?</i></li> <li>• <i>Will you use it?</i></li> <li>• <i>Do you feel more aware of the importance of your online behaviour?</i></li> <li>• <i>Will you be more cautious in the future ?</i></li> </ul>		



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