

DIY: Make Instagram Holiday Cards



Extra photos for bloggers: [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)

WHY IT'S COOL:

Sending snail mail is always cool, even if you only do it around the holidays.

These Holly-Jollygrams spread holiday cheer with loved ones that aren't technically "your followers" (yet!).

With just a few clicks and the right apps, you can brighten up someone's mailbox without even leaving the couch.

How's that for makin' a list and checkin' it twice?!



WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

Depending on how you print your cards, you may need more or less of the items below.

- Smartphone
- Tripod (optional)
- Photo Paper
- Printer
- Scissors
- Photo Corners
- Blank Cards
- or Card Stock
- Envelopes
- Ruler



STEP 1: GET READY:

Planning outfits and picking locations can be tricky, but there are ways to simplify this.

Pick a theme to help you choose coordinated looks. Don't be afraid to let your funky personality shine through.

Have everyone wear red and green to be festive, or polka dots and stripes, or even their favorite Ugly Christmas Sweater.



Are you wanting a black and white photo card? Or do you need props like Santa hats or reindeer antlers?

These decisions might influence how you dress. Make a plan beforehand.

STEP 2: TAKE PHOTOS:

Locations don't need to be exotic, unless of course you hiked Mt. Kilimanjaro this year.

Simple backgrounds can help you stand out more.

Pick any ol' painted wall or textured fence for a backdrop.

Use a tripod and a self-timer app for your phone. The [GorillaCam](#) app and the [Gorilla Pod](#) are a pretty great team for iPhone users. The [iPhone Shutter Remote](#) will also do the job.



Android users, check out the free [Self Timer](#) app. It has options for 10 and 20 second timers.

If 10 seconds isn't long enough for you to stage your photo, try using the [iPhone Shutter Remote](#) or have a friend help you out by clicking the shutter for you.

TIP: If you are using camera apps, make sure you have them turned on to the highest quality setting.

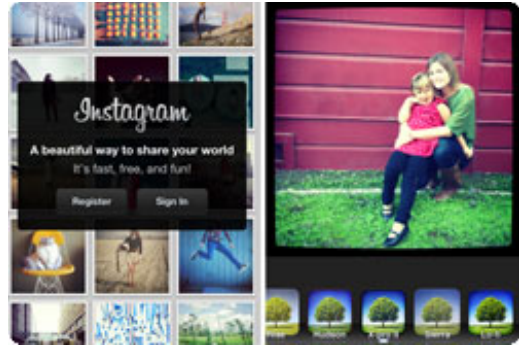
STEP 3: EDIT:

Okay, we know you're familiar with this part.

Choose the best photo from your shoot. Use your favorite app to edit, crop, and make other minor adjustments.

We like [PhotoForge2](#) and [Snapseed](#) for iPhone, and [PicSay](#) and [Camera360](#) for Androids.

After straightening and making adjustments, use [Instagram](#) to get that square retro look we all love.



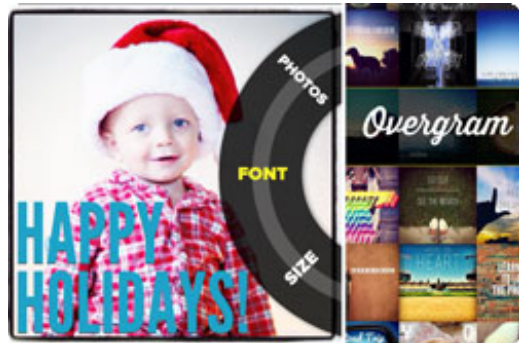
TIP: If you want to keep this pic a secret until you send your cards, use your phone in airplane mode for Instagram edits.

STEP 4: ADD TEXT: _____

Spice up that photo with your favorite holiday greeting.

Apps like [Overgram](#) for iPhone and [Instanote](#) for Android allow you to edit the font, size, and color of your text.

You can then save the photo with text right to your camera roll.



If you prefer to edit text on the computer, just email the photo to yourself and open it up on your computer to edit.

Use Photoshop or any other editing software to add a greeting to your pic.

TIP: Use a contrasting color to make your text stand out on your photo. If the area where you want text is dark, use a light color and vice versa.

STEP 5: MOBILE CARDS: _____

The best things about smartphones are the smart apps that have come along with them.

While there are tons to choose from, we found [Red Stamp](#) for iPhone and [Sincerely Ink](#) for Android or iPhone, to be our favorites for designing cards.

Both have great layouts, fun text, and plenty of greeting options.



You can design, personalize, and send your cards from your phone for about \$3 a pop.

InstaCard **sends customized postcards** to any of your contacts. It stays true to the square format that makes Instagram photos so rad. And it's available for [iPhone](#) and [Android](#).

STEP 6: MAKE PRINTS: _____

Designing your card on your phone may seem quick and easy.

But we know there are still some of you who prefer the more DIY approach.

If you're one of these crafty people who likes to personalize things the ol' fashioned way, then check out the tips below for printing.



Apps like [PostalPix](#) will make beautiful prints of your photos.

Upload and order them from your phone, then get creative with them when they arrive in your mailbox a few days later. These lovely prints are about \$0.30 cents each.

Not into uploading? Take your files to a local photo lab to be printed, or print them out at home.

STEP 7: CHOOSE PAPER: _____

There are almost as many paper choices as photo editing apps. Well, okay, maybe more.

The trick to making a homemade card look professional is choosing a nice, thick paper.

Fiber based drawing paper or textured card stock can be found in the scrap-booking aisle at your local craft store.



Many places sell square cards and envelopes, or [you can order them online](#).

If you plan to print directly on the card, consider the finish of the paper and how it will affect your photo.

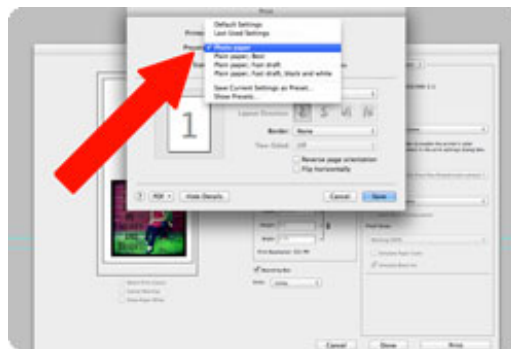
A matte finish will have less contrast, while glossy finishes tend to be shiny with richer black tones.

STEP 8: PRINTER TIPS:

Getting the best print at home means a little sweet talkin' with your particular machine.

A lot of factors effect the way the prints come out, but the most important are the paper and ink quality.

When you are ready to hit the print button, a dialog box opens allowing you to choose from a number of settings.



This may look different for each printer/computer combo, but the basic info is the same.

Open the print settings menu, and locate the **presets** box.

From there, select **photo paper**. This will set your printer to the highest quality output for prints.

Make sure you select the kind of paper you are printing on. The dialog box will have options for glossy, matte, or plain paper.

For more information about printer settings, [check out this article](#).

STEP 9: GET CRAFTY:

Trim your photos and attach them to your cards in any way you like.

Use photo corners to slide in pics, or glue 'em down if you're feeling a bit more permanent!

Embellish your cards in your own crafty style. Stamps, pens, glitter and fairy dust- anything goes!



TAKE IT FURTHER



- [Use instagrams as envelope liners.](#)
- Make your Instagrams into lovely 4"x8" cards from our friends at [Cheergram](#).
- Send photo cards that [double as ornaments](#).

Thanks to Photojojo fan **Sarah Mason** for her inspiring request!