

Policies

Content

Ads must meet creative guidelines as defined by the ad format and provide a high-quality, engaging, and positive customer experience. Content should be relevant and enrich the shopping journey. Ads and ad elements must adhere to the following policies. These policies are subject to change at any time without notice.

Instacart ads should create a positive experience for consumers, helping them find items they'll enjoy. Instacart reviews all ads to ensure the content, products, and other details contribute to this goal. As a result, Instacart prohibits ads that violate our guidelines. We may also restrict certain ads to ensure that they reach an appropriate audience. For more information, review these guidelines in more detail.

ADA compliance

Our ADA compliance policy is meant to make Instacart accessible for all our users, including those with screen readers. All images and videos must have their associated alt-text fields filled out. The alt-text field must contain the name(s) or brand(s) of the product(s) advertised, and must clearly describe, or be directly related to, in plain language, the associated image. This includes call-to-actions (CTAs) and fine print. In practical terms, this means the alt-text field must contain all text displayed in the image or video (excluding text on logos) and should generally describe what's going on.

Adult products, sexual and reproductive health, nudity, and adult content

Prohibited products include, but are not limited to, sex toys, sexual enhancement supplements or creams, fetish accessories, products or imagery representing genitals, breasts, or buttocks, and any claims of increased sexual performance or enhancement.

Adult products cannot use behavioral targeting. Ad groups containing sexual and reproductive health products such as condoms, contraceptives, or personal care items meeting the adult products policy can only use keyword targeting.

Advertising sexual and reproductive health products such as condoms, contraceptives, or personal care items that comply with the adult products policy is allowed but restricted based on relevance. No ads may serve display imagery representing genitals, breasts, or buttocks, or contain any claims of increased sexual performance or enhancement. No ads may explicitly feature nudity, explicit or implicit sexual activity, overt sexual imagery or descriptions, excessive focus on body parts such as breasts, genitals, buttocks, or excessive skin.

Alcohol and unacceptable alcohol content

Ad content cannot feature alcohol in the context of—

- Excessive drinking (ex. mentions of “getting wasted” or “being hungover” is prohibited)
- Underage drinking
- Intoxicated individuals
- Claims of improved social, mental, or athletic performance

These ads cannot claim improved social, mental, or athletic performance.

Alcohol advertising placements, audiences, and targeting must comply with all applicable laws and are subject to contract restrictions. Ads that feature alcohol or alcoholic UPCs—even if alcohol products are

not advertised in the campaign—may be subject to serving restrictions.

Brand agnosticism

Instacart is a brand-agnostic platform that is designed to give users choice regarding where they shop and not favor any one retailer over another. This means that on the IC App, an advertiser can't run a campaign targeted at the virtual storefront of a specific retailer.

Content quality

The use of Instacart's name or branding elements (logo, color scheme, etc) is only allowed with express permission from Instacart. If you have express permission to use Instacart's name or branding elements (logo, color scheme, etc) it must be in accordance with Instacart's [external trademark guidelines](#).

Any ad featuring low-quality audio or visual content is prohibited. Low quality is determined at Instacart's sole discretion and includes, but isn't limited to—

- Static or moving images that are blurry, low resolution, or incorrectly oriented
- Static or moving images that contain text with grammar or spelling errors (unless an intentional part of advertising), strobing, excessive repetition, jump scares, and misleading or confusing actions
- Audio that spikes, crackles, is garbled, or is otherwise unclear

Ads featuring excessively busy assets may confuse or disorient users. Ads can't feature an inconsistent or excessive amount of text, sizes, fonts, or illegible text. Video subtitles can't be embedded in the video. Instead, subtitles must be uploaded as a separate file.

Ads must clearly display what is being sold and by whom. This means branding should be obvious and prominent, and products should be displayed in use, in their original packaging, or both. Ads must feature only authorized products. This means that branding elements for products or merchants not officially part of the campaign (excluding co-branded campaigns) can't be featured.

- Eligible terms for CTAs—
 - Shop
 - Shop now
 - Buy now
 - Shop savings
 - Shop <insert brand name>
- Ineligible terms for CTAs —
 - Shop new
 - Shop featured
 - Shop recommended
 - Shop favorites
 - Shop sales
 - Shop popular
 - Buy it again
 - Use of the word Add (ex. "Add to Cart" isn't approved)
 - Use of any Instacart departments without the inclusion of a brand name (ex. "Shop Snacks" isn't approved but "Shop Amy's Snacks" is approved)

- Use of a fulfillment time or date (ex. "Get it today" isn't approved)

We don't allow badging, buttons, or stylistic motifs in ad content that are intended to mimic features of the Instacart platform. No claims may be made regarding Instacart's service, product, or platform.

Counterfeit products

We don't allow counterfeit goods in ads, including products that copy or substantially mimic trademarks or logos of known brands without authorization, ad content that is intended to mislead consumers about the authenticity of a product, and products marketed as replicas or imitations of the original product.

Disallowed goods

We don't allow products to be advertised on Instacart that we suspect may be unsafe or may create compliance concerns.

Double serving

We don't allow the same ad (defined as the same UPC or substantially similar graphics appearing in multiple ads) to serve on the same page. Instacart reserves the right to take ads down that violate this policy.

Healthcare services

We don't allow ad content that includes the promotion of online pharmacies, CTAs for clinical trials, or any claims or advice that could be unsafe, unreliable, or easily abused by the customer. We allow ads for over-the-counter drugs and medical devices as long as they don't violate the above statement and are in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Illegal or recreational drugs

We don't allow illegal or recreational drugs in ads, which include products, paraphernalia intended for consumption or storage, and any ad content depicting, alluding to, or referencing illegal or recreational drug use.

Illegal products

We don't allow the marketing or sale of illegal products or products intended to enable the procurement of illegal products.

Inappropriate content

We don't allow inappropriate content in ads, which includes profane, vulgar, hateful, violent, derogatory, disparaging, shocking, or any other content which is otherwise not appropriate as determined by the Instacart platform in its sole discretion.

Incorrect products

Ads cannot feature branding from products or brands that are not an official part of the campaign. Ads can only feature retailer branding when the ad concerns the retailer's own private label products.

Irrelevant targeting

The products associated with the advertisement along with the targeting criteria are expected to create a cohesive experience for the customer. Any potential mismatch between the products in the ad and expected consumer experiences based on targeting criteria will be flagged and restricted in its serving.

Instacart reserves the right to limit the display of ads based on relevance considerations as solely determined by the Instacart platform to ensure a cohesive customer experience.

Medical devices

We don't allow the marketing and sale of any regulated medical devices (Class III).

Mismatched products

Products featured in the ad content and products included in the landing page should provide a cohesive experience for users (ex. a banner ad showing household cleaning products and a landing page mostly consisting of food and beverage isn't approved). Any ad found with a mismatch between ad content and products on the landing page may be denied.

Misspelled, malformed, or disallowed text

Text cannot appear misspelled, replace letters with symbols, include excessive symbols or punctuation, or use improper grammar. Call to action (CTA) text must follow content guidelines.

Off-platform linking

Ads can include SMS short code texting campaigns, as long as Instacart doesn't deem them inappropriate. Ads can't include QR codes or URLs in any text field or image asset.

Prescription drugs

We don't allow the marketing of prescription drugs for either humans or animals.

Profanity

The use of profanity on Instacart is prohibited, which is determined at the sole discretion of Instacart. Profanity includes, but isn't limited to, swear words of a derogatory, scatological, or sexual nature, and simple substitutions or abbreviations for these words. Light profanity in a product's or brand's name may be allowed.

Retailer policy

Retailers may only advertise their private-label products, and only retailers may advertise their private-label products.

Tobacco

Prohibited tobacco and related products in ads include, but aren't limited to, tobacco products, related paraphernalia (including vaping devices and vape cartridges), products that mimic tobacco use, and other nicotine products (excluding certain nicotine replacement therapy products). This policy applies to imagery containing use or intended use of these products.

Trade groups

Trade groups and other non-brand organizations must clearly state their name and place their logo in all creative assets on all ad and ad-adjacent formats. If brand trademarks or images are included in ads, then our co-marketing terms automatically apply, and the advertiser is representing they have the legal permissions to display any copyrighted material.

Unacceptable badging

Badging, buttons, or stylistic motifs in ad content cannot mimic features of the Instacart platform. Ad format guidelines may provide examples of unacceptable terms or phrases.

Unauthorized use of third-party rights

Prohibited ads include those which violate, misappropriate, or infringe upon a third party right, including unauthorized use of copyrighted or trademarked material.

Weapons and explosives

Prohibited weapons and their accessories in ads include but aren't limited to firearms, projectiles, products intended to cause harm such as tasers or pepper spray, knives and bladed weapons intended for violent use, ammunition, firearm accessories, explosives, and sale of fireworks.

Weight loss products

We don't allow weight loss products in ads, which include weight loss supplements, fat burners, appetite suppressants, any products worn or applied to the body intended to lose weight, any imagery or text that denigrates a body type or weight characteristic, any before and after imagery featuring weight loss, and any direct or indirect claims of weight loss.

Asset reviews

Our team reviews all assets and campaigns to verify that they adhere to our Ad Policies and requirements. Campaign review decisions are available in Ads Manager and through email.

Ad groups that violate these guidelines will be denied.

- Illegal products or services
- Weapons, ammunition, or explosives
- Adult products or content
- Illegal or recreational drugs and paraphernalia
- Unacceptable business practices and scams
- Tobacco and related products
- Weight loss products or services
- Healthcare products
 - Rx drugs for humans/pets, online pharmacies, class 3 medical devices, clinical trial recruitment, unsafe products or advice
- Misinformation / unacceptable business practices
- Profane, vulgar, disparaging, divisive, or shocking content
- Ads that violate, misappropriate, or infringe upon a third party right

Restricted ads

Ad groups that violate these guidelines may be served to a limited audience. In some cases, audience restrictions may lead to ads that are approved, but will not be served.