# Gardening on Instagram this week: the standouts *start with a person and don't just stop*

> Of the 146 posts we read this week from 24 of the 26 gardening accounts on Instagram, 28 beat their own account's normal. In the videos we watched, the ones that did tend to put a person on screen in the first second and cut more, and fewer of them just stop at the end. Length and sound didn't set them apart.

**Gardening on Instagram**
26 accounts that post in the category

**146 posts this week**
20 Oct 2026 to 26 Oct 2026, each against its own account's normal

**24 videos watched**
12 that beat their normal, 12 normal ones

**October 27, 2026**
public counts only

THE SHORT VERSION

# This week's standouts *put a person up front and don't just stop*

**19%**

of the posts we read this week beat their own account's normal

1.5× or more the median of its account's earlier posts

**67%**

of the standout videos we watched show a person in the first second

of the normal videos we watched: 45% · read by AI

**42%**

of the standout videos we watched just stop at the end

of the normal videos we watched: 73% · read by AI

**15**

posts this week broke out, at 3× their normal or more

the biggest we watched: @plantsbydestiny420's grow-light plant room at 49.1×

01

## Be in the first frame

The standouts we watched tend to open on the gardener, like @garden_hhoe climbing onto the counter with a coffee under “How I start my day...” and @eliseniclo stepping into frame among her loofah vines.

See @garden_hhoe Instagram reel, 24 Oct 2026 (29.3×); @eliseniclo Instagram reel, 23 Oct 2026 (4.8×)

02

## Give the video an ending

The standouts we watched that don't just stop end in different ways: a punchline like @theboujeegreenhouse's “YES”, or the grown crop, like @reshgala's “Lush carpet of Cilantro is yours to enjoy!!”.

See @theboujeegreenhouse Instagram reel, 21 Oct 2026 (1.7×); @reshgala Instagram reel, 25 Oct 2026 (9.3×)

03

## A slow week for most

Of the posts we read this week, the median reached 0.82× its own account's normal: most fell short, which makes the standouts easier to see.

HOW THEY OPEN

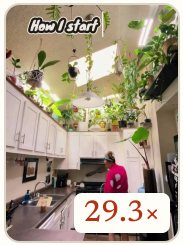
# Standouts open on *a person in the first second*

What a viewer sees in the first two seconds of the videos we watched, read by AI. The hooks vary; a plant or tool shown working opens 2 of the standouts we watched and none of the normal ones.

THE FIRST SECONDS READ BY AI

| OF THE VIDEOS WE WATCHED | BEAT THEIR NORMAL (12) | NORMAL (11) |
|---|---|---|
| Someone speaks in the first 5 seconds | 33% (4) | 27% (3) |
| Words on screen in the first 2 seconds | 50% (6) | 64% (7) |
| A person in the first second | 67% (8) | 45% (5) |
| Talks straight to camera | 25% (3) | 36% (4) |
| A product in the first 3 seconds | 50% (6) | 45% (5) |
| Words on screen most of the video | 50% (6) | 64% (7) |

Openings most used by the videos that beat their normal: trend or sound (3), bold claim or hot take (2), product in action (2).




### A person, a routine, one line

“How I start my day…” over her climbing up to check the plants above the kitchen.

@garden_hhoe Instagram reel, 24 Oct 2026 (29.3×)




### A promise the viewer can use this week

“5 Things to Plant Now for Christmas Dinner In Australia”, written over her as she crouches by the bed.

@heytherejenae Instagram reel, 23 Oct 2026 (16.0×)




### The viewer's problem, as a question

“Now, what if your property line is really tight and your yard is a highway for hungry” deer, before the juniper appears.

@bountifulgardensnj Instagram reel, 22 Oct 2026 (9.3×)

12 videos that beat their own account's normal and 11 near it, from this week (20 Oct 2026 to 26 Oct 2026). Each was read by an AI model from the video itself; with this many videos a difference is direction, not proof. Pictures are frames from each video's first seconds.

PACE, LENGTH AND FORMAT

# Standouts *cut more*; length and sound didn't set them apart

Pace is measured from the files of the videos we watched; length, format and sound cover every post we read this week.

### PACE, MEASURED FROM THE FILES

| MEDIAN OF THE VIDEOS WE WATCHED | BEAT (12) | NORMAL (11) |
|---|---|---|
| Length, seconds | 27.7 | 22.2 |
| Cuts a minute | 5.7 | 0.0 |
| First cut, seconds in | 4.8 | 4.1 |
| Videos with no cut at all | 33% (4) | 55% (6) |

### FORMAT, EVERY POST THIS WEEK

| FORMAT | POSTS | BEAT THEIR NORMAL |
|---|---|---|
| Instagram reels | 124 | 18% (22) |
| Instagram carousels | 17 | 24% (4) |
| Instagram photos | 5 | 40% (2) |

### LENGTH, EVERY VIDEO THIS WEEK

| LENGTH | VIDEOS | BEAT THEIR NORMAL |
|---|---|---|
| under 15 s | 34 | 15% (5) |
| 15–30 s | 32 | 22% (7) |
| 30–60 s | 29 | 14% (4) |
| 60 s or more | 29 | 21% (6) |

### SOUND, EVERY VIDEO THIS WEEK

| SOUND | VIDEOS | BEAT THEIR NORMAL |
|---|---|---|
| Its own sound | 76 | 18% (14) |
| A track or another account's sound | 48 | 17% (8) |

**More cuts in the standouts**

The standout videos we watched cut 5.7 times a minute at the median, and the normal videos we watched 0.0.

**Every length did about the same**

Of this week's reels we read, 15% of those under 15 seconds and 21% of those over a minute beat their normal.

**A track or their own sound: about the same**

Of this week's reels we read, 17% of those on a track or another account's sound and 18% of those with their own sound beat their normal: about the same.

Pace: length and cuts measured from each watched video's file (a cut = a scene change). Length, format and sound tables: every own, unpaid post this week with a normal (146 posts, 124 videos); "beat their normal" = 1.5× or more the median of up to 30 earlier posts of the same kind on that account. Length and sound are the platforms' own fields.

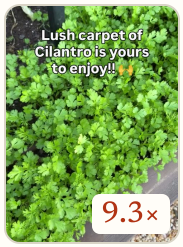
HOW THEY CLOSE

# Fewer standouts *just stop* at the end

How the videos we watched end, read by AI. The standouts that don't just stop end in different ways; the notes show three.

THE LAST SECONDS READ BY AI

| OF THE VIDEOS WE WATCHED | BEAT THEIR NORMAL (12) | NORMAL (11) |
|---|---|---|
| Ends: just stops | 42% (5) | 73% (8) |
| Ends: result or reveal | 17% (2) | 18% (2) |
| Ends: punchline or payoff | 17% (2) | 9% (1) |
| Ends: call to action | 8% (1) | 0% (0) |
| Ends: product or logo shot | 8% (1) | 0% (0) |
| Ends: cliffhanger or part 2 | 8% (1) | 0% (0) |
| Asks the viewer to do something | 8% (1) | 0% (0) |
| Words said in the last seconds | 33% (4) | 18% (2) |
| Words on screen at the end | 50% (6) | 55% (6) |




### The crop is the last frame

Three planting steps, then “Lush carpet of Cilantro is yours to enjoy!!” over the grown patch.

@reshgala Instagram reel, 25 Oct 2026 (9.3×)




### A line about what comes next

The cloves go in and she closes on “and come next summer around July we'll have our own homegrown garlic.”

@homesteadwithabby Instagram reel, 25 Oct 2026 (6.0×)




### A punchline to finish

Under “When I'm tired but social Media needs the alocasia Queen”, she strikes a pose with the plant and it ends on “YES”.

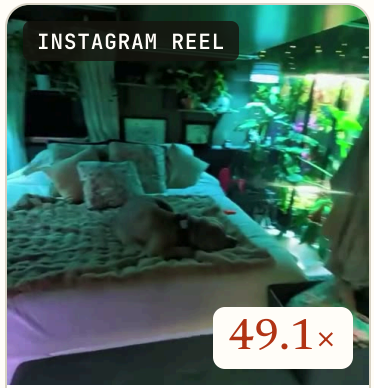
@theboujeegreenhouse Instagram reel, 21 Oct 2026 (1.7×)

Same videos as the openings slide. How each ends and what it asks the viewer to do (said or written in the video, not the caption) were read by an AI model. Pictures are frames from each video's last second.

THIS WEEK'S STANDOUTS

# This week's standouts: *plant rooms, crops and finished jobs*

Six videos we watched that beat their own account's normal, one an account.




**@plantsbydestiny420**

**112K** plays · normal 2.3K · 25 Oct 2026

A night tour of a bedroom full of plants under grow lights, set to a track.




**@garden_hhoe**

**67K** plays · normal 2.3K · 24 Oct 2026

A morning check on the plants above the kitchen, coffee in hand.




**@heytherejenae**

**55K** plays · normal 3.4K · 23 Oct 2026

Five crops to plant now for Christmas dinner, said to camera, ending on “Comment Christmas Below”.




**@iselinursery**

**97K** plays · normal 8.5K · 23 Oct 2026

A walk up to a weeping spruce at the nursery, named on screen at the end.




**@reshgala**

**263K** plays · normal 28K · 25 Oct 2026

Three steps for cilantro, shown in the bed, ending on the grown crop.




**@brentonrobertsgardendesi**

**35K** plays · normal 8.6K · 22 Oct 2026

Rosemary on a garden bank trimmed into rounded waves, the finished shape last.

Videos we watched, each 1.5× or more its own account's normal, likes public. Multiple = its plays (likes for Instagram photos and carousels) ÷ the median of up to 30 earlier posts of the same kind on that account. Posts under a week old are still gathering plays. Open each post from the HTML version.

THREE TO TRY THIS WEEK

# Three to try this week, each built from posts that beat their normal

Each idea repeats what the posts under it did. They show what worked for those accounts this week, not a promise for yours.

TRY 1

## Open on yourself, saying what you are about to do

Step into the first frame at the vine or the hedge and say what the video is about.




**19K** plays · normal 4K




**7.8K** plays · normal 832

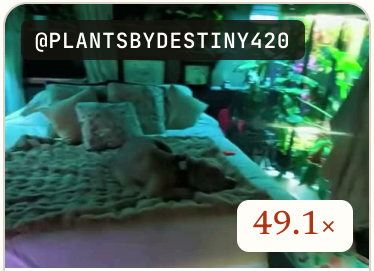
TRY 2

## Walk the viewer up to the plants

Move the camera slowly through the nursery or the plant room, and name the plant on screen if it is one to buy.




**97K** plays · normal 8.5K




**112K** plays · normal 2.3K

TRY 3

## Make one line the joke

Write the joke about plant life as one line and let the shot of the plants carry it.




**8K** plays · normal 4.8K




**8K** plays · normal 1.5K

HOW WE MEASURED

# Who we read, how each post was judged, and what we cannot see

**The accounts.** We found accounts posting under the category's own hashtags (Instagram #gardening #gardenlife #plantsofinstagram #vegetablegarden), and an AI model kept the ones whose posts are about gardening, in English, posting as themselves (no repost pages), with 2,000 followers or more: 26 accounts (21 creators or influencers, 3 brands, 2 shops or resellers). Every one is listed after the slides. 14 more were left out on a closer look at their own posts (not the category, or not in English); they are listed with the reason after the slides.

**The posts.** Each account's newest posts, read October 27, 2026. This week = 20 Oct 2026 to 26 Oct 2026: 146 own, unpaid posts with a normal. Set apart, because their reach is bought or belongs to someone else: 9 owned by a partner account. 30 posts under a day old wait for next week.

**Each post against its own account.** A post's normal = the median of up to 30 earlier posts of the same kind on that account (at least 8). It "beat its normal" at 1.5× and "broke out" at 3×. So a 5,000-follower account and a 5-million one are judged on the same footing. Plays for videos, likes for photos and carousels.

**The videos we watched.** Up to 18 that beat their normal (one an account, likes public, highest first) and up to 12 near their normal (one an account): 24 in all. 1 of them turned out to be off the category's topic or not in English and are left out of the comparison, which reads 12 that beat their normal against 11 normal ones. Length and cuts are measured from the files; the opening, the close and who is on screen were read by an AI model from each video.

**What we cannot see.** Reach, saves, watch time, follows and ad spend live in each account's own dashboards. Plays are not people. Paid boosts show only where the platform marks them. Posts under a week old are still gathering plays.