

LINKEDIN GROUPS: PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE

LinkedIn Groups can be powerful spaces to share timely insights, spark conversations and stay connected with your sector. But not all groups function the same way. In this At a Glance, we explore the difference between public and private LinkedIn Groups, and how they can be used to support everything from community building to real-time collaboration.

PUBLIC GROUPS

Who can join: Anyone on LinkedIn can request to join or be added by a current member. Some public groups allow instant joining.

Visibility: Public groups appear in LinkedIn search results. The group name, description and member list are visible to anyone.

Content access: Only members can post or comment, but the group’s existence and focus are publicly viewable.

Best for

Public groups are ideal for open conversations around a shared topic, building broad-based communities or increasing visibility around an issue. They’re often used to complement virtual events, conferences or professional networks.

TIPS FOR MAKING THE MOST OF A PUBLIC GROUP

- ▶ Follow along with sector conversations even if you’re not ready to post
- ▶ Introduce yourself when you join to build connections
- ▶ Share events, insights and resources that inspire genuine discussion and carry valuable community appeal
- ▶ Use hashtags and @mentions to boost visibility and engagement
- ▶ Set your group notifications to “Highlights” or “All new posts” depending on your preference
- ▶ Review group rules or listed community expectations to support respectful, productive and meaningful conversations – these are often listed in the pinned post or the about section of a group

LINKEDIN GROUPS: PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE

PRIVATE GROUPS

Who can join: Membership is by invitation or request. Group managers approve who joins.

Visibility:

- Unlisted private groups **do not** appear in LinkedIn search results. The group name, content and member list are hidden from non-members. These are best for more close-knit, ongoing conversations between select, smaller communities.
- Listed private groups **do** appear in LinkedIn search results. Group membership is noted on members' profiles and LinkedIn users can see whether a connection is a member. These are best for devoted, ongoing conversations within smaller but more visible communities.

Content access: Only approved members can view posts, reply and engage in discussion.

Best for

Private groups are ideal for coordination and real-time collaboration among a defined group of stakeholders. They're useful for sharing sector updates, discussing in-progress work and creating a space for ongoing exchange — all within the platform you're already using to build your professional or organizational presence. Think of them like Slack or Microsoft Teams, but hosted directly on LinkedIn at no cost.

Bonus: the insights and conversations happening here can easily feed into your public-facing LinkedIn content.

TIPS FOR MAKING THE MOST OF A PRIVATE GROUP

- ▶ Use it to share early-stage updates, not just polished content
- ▶ Start new conversations as things come up instead of waiting for meetings
- ▶ Ask questions, share insights or respond with a simple reaction — all activity helps keep the group dynamic
- ▶ If you're a group manager, pin key resources or announcements so they stay easy to find
- ▶ Review group rules or listed community expectations to support respectful, productive and meaningful conversations – these are often listed in the pinned post or the about section of a group

LINKEDIN GROUPS: PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE

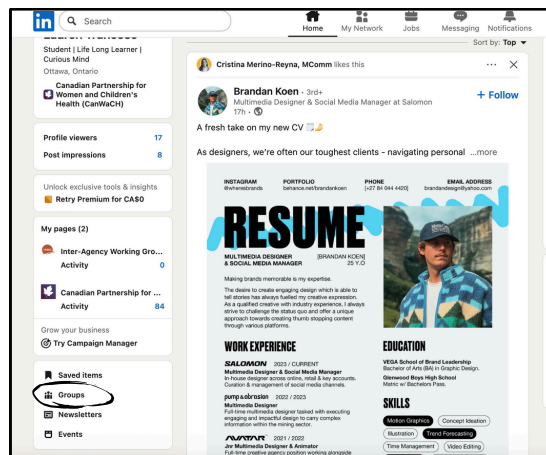
GETTING STARTED WITH LINKEDIN GROUPS

If you're joining a group:

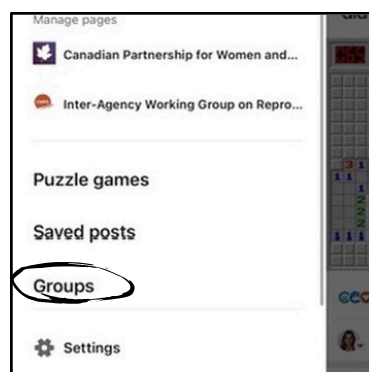
1. Click the direct link or invitation to the group
2. Select "Request to join" if prompted. You may be approved automatically or by the groups manager(s)
3. Once you've joined, you can view content, post updates, comment on discussions, or follow along quietly
4. Use @mentions to tag others in posts or comments
5. Adjust your notifications to fit how often you want to hear from the group

WHERE TO FIND YOUR GROUPS

On desktop: From the LinkedIn homepage, click "Groups" in the left-hand menu. If you don't see it, click "My Network" at the top, then select "Groups" in the left sidebar



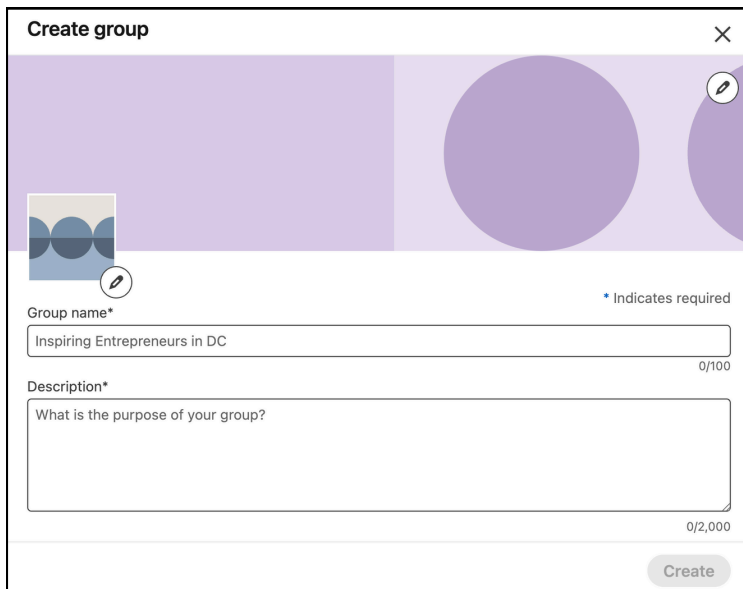
On mobile: Tap your profile photo > "Groups" under the "My LinkedIn" section



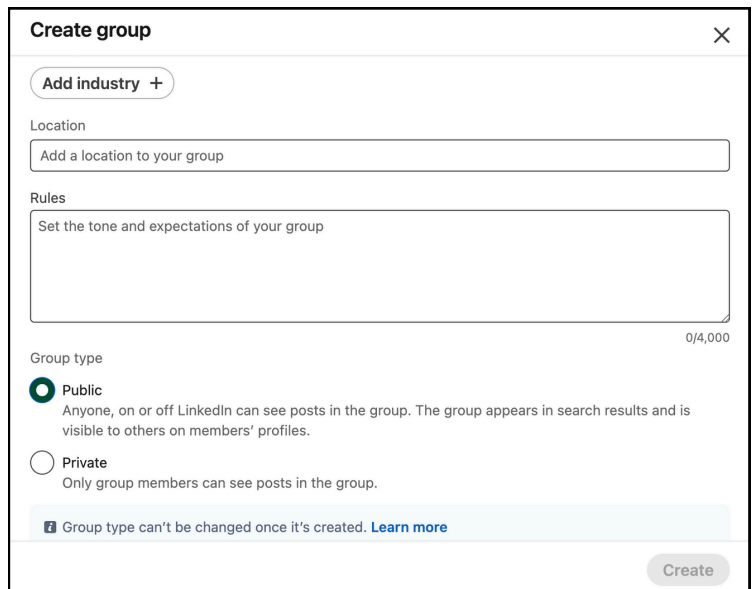
LINKEDIN GROUPS: PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE

IF YOU'RE CREATING A GROUP

1. Go to linkedin.com/groups
2. Click "Create group" in the top right corner
3. Add a name, description and group rules
4. Choose whether it's public or private
5. If private, choose between listed and unlisted to control discoverability
6. Upload a logo or image if desired
7. Start building group membership by inviting relevant connections or by sharing the group link



The screenshot shows the left portion of the LinkedIn 'Create group' form. It includes a header 'Create group' with a close button. Below is a large area for a group image/logo with a crop icon. A group name is entered: 'Inspiring Entrepreneurs in DC' (0/100). A description is entered: 'What is the purpose of your group?' (0/2,000). A 'Create' button is at the bottom right. A small note indicates '* Indicates required'.



The screenshot shows the right portion of the LinkedIn 'Create group' form. It includes a header 'Create group' with a close button. Below is an 'Add industry +' button. A location field is present with the placeholder 'Add a location to your group'. A rules text area is labeled 'Set the tone and expectations of your group' (0/4,000). Under 'Group type', the 'Public' option is selected, with a description: 'Anyone, on or off LinkedIn can see posts in the group. The group appears in search results and is visible to others on members' profiles.' The 'Private' option is also listed: 'Only group members can see posts in the group.' A note states: 'Group type can't be changed once it's created. [Learn more](#)'. A 'Create' button is at the bottom right.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



- [Features to maximize your organization's LinkedIn presence](#)
- [LinkedIn articles and newsletters](#)
- [Find and join a LinkedIn Group](#)