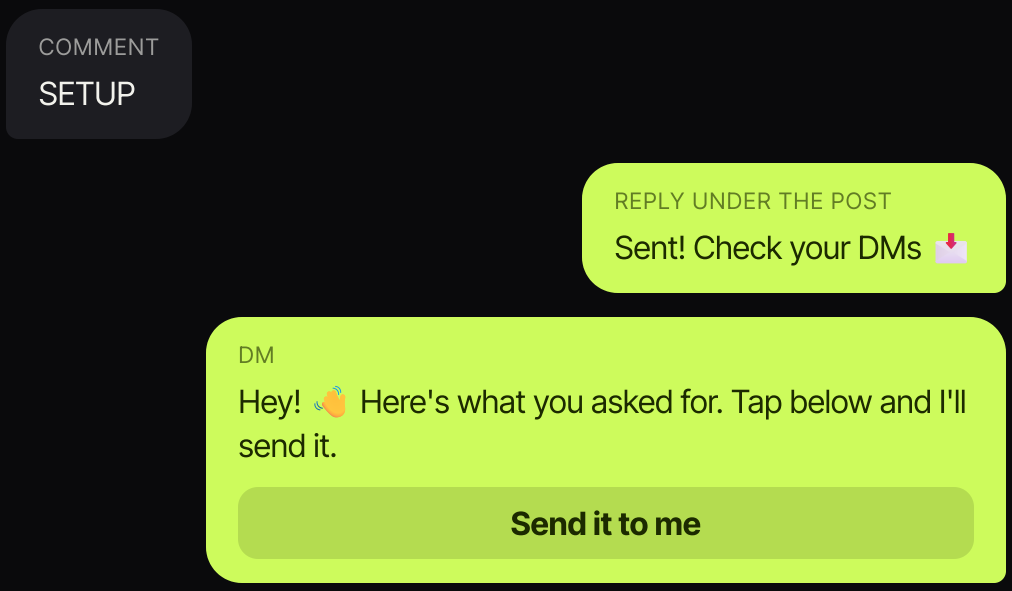
CTRLWONDER

My exact ManyChat setup: comment a word, get a DM.

The comment-to-DM trick, explained simply



The idea

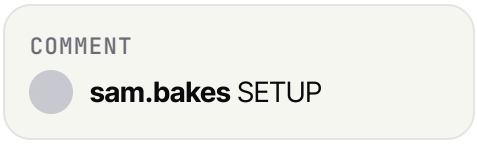
How it works in 30 seconds

You post a video and say "comment a word". Everyone who does gets a reply under their comment and a private message with your link. Automatically, day and night.

1

Someone comments your word

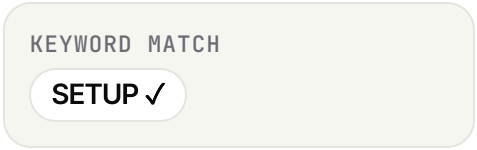
Under your Reel or post, they type the keyword you asked for.



2

ManyChat spots the keyword

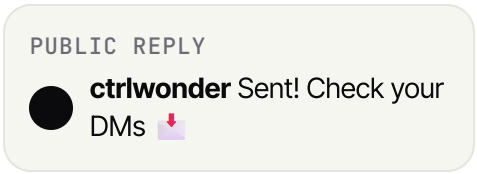
It's connected to your Instagram, so it sees new comments and checks them for your word.



3

It replies under the comment

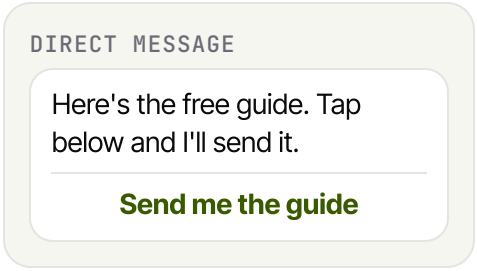
A short public reply, so the person (and everyone reading) knows it worked.



4

It sends a DM with a button

They tap the button, and the next message brings the link. That tap matters; page 7 explains why.



Before you start

What you need

- [ ] **An Instagram professional account** (Business or Creator). Personal accounts can't connect to ManyChat.[5] You can switch in the Instagram app's settings.
- [ ] **A ManyChat account** with your Instagram connected to it.[5]
- [ ] **One thing to send:** a link to a guide, a page, a booking form, a product.

Which ManyChat plan?

The comment-to-DM automation ("Comment to DM") is included on the **Free** plan, limited to 4 live automations.[1] Here is what the plans said when we checked:

Plan	Price	What matters here
Free	$0, no credit card	25 Active Contacts per month · up to 4 live automations · 1 user · a "Powered by Manychat" message appears the first time you message someone[1,2]
Essential	$14/mo, billed yearly ($168)	250 Active Contacts per month · unlimited custom automations · no ManyChat branding · 14-day free trial[1]
Pro	$29/mo, billed yearly ($348)	2,500 Active Contacts per month · advanced automations and AI · 14-day free trial[1]

An **Active Contact** is one person you message (or who messages you) through ManyChat in a month, however many messages you exchange. Prices from manychat.com/pricing on October 15, 2026; prices exclude tax and depend on your billing country. Plans change: check current plans before you choose.

> **Starting out?** The Free plan is enough to build and test this. If a Reel takes off, 25 people a month runs out fast, so look at the paid plans before you post a video that could go big. We couldn't confirm on ManyChat's own pages whether every option (such as "any post or reel") works on Free, so check in your account.

Our exact setup · shared with permission

The automation we actually run

It's ManyChat's ready-made Quick Automation **"Auto-DM links from comments"**. This is the one behind our free website playbook, word for word.

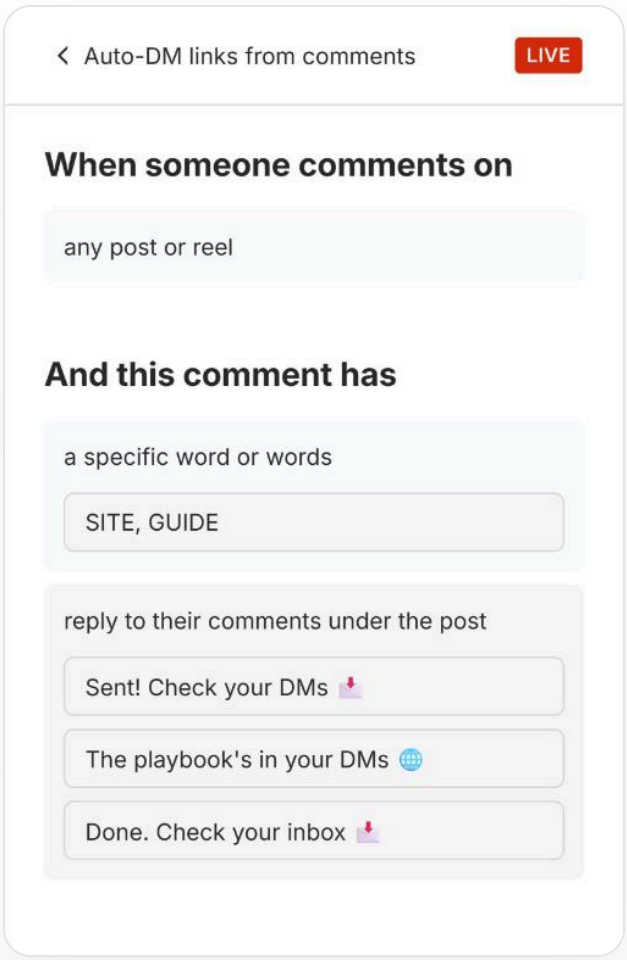
When someone comments on	any post or reel
And this comment has	a specific word or words: `SITE, GUIDE` One automation can listen for several words. Type them in one box, separated by commas.
Reply under the post	3 replies that rotate: “Sent! Check your DMs 📩” “The playbook's in your DMs 🌐” “Done. Check your inbox 📩”
They get an opening DM	“Hey! 👋 Here's the free playbook: how to build your business website with AI, host it free, and put it on your own domain 🌐 Tap below and I'll send it.” **Send me the playbook**
Then a DM with a link	“Here it is 👇 The free playbook: what it costs, every step, and how to get your site online for free. Want the exact prompts for each step? The kit is on the same page. What's your business? Reply and tell me.” **Open the playbook ↗**

Copy the structure, not the words: write your own replies and DMs in your own voice.

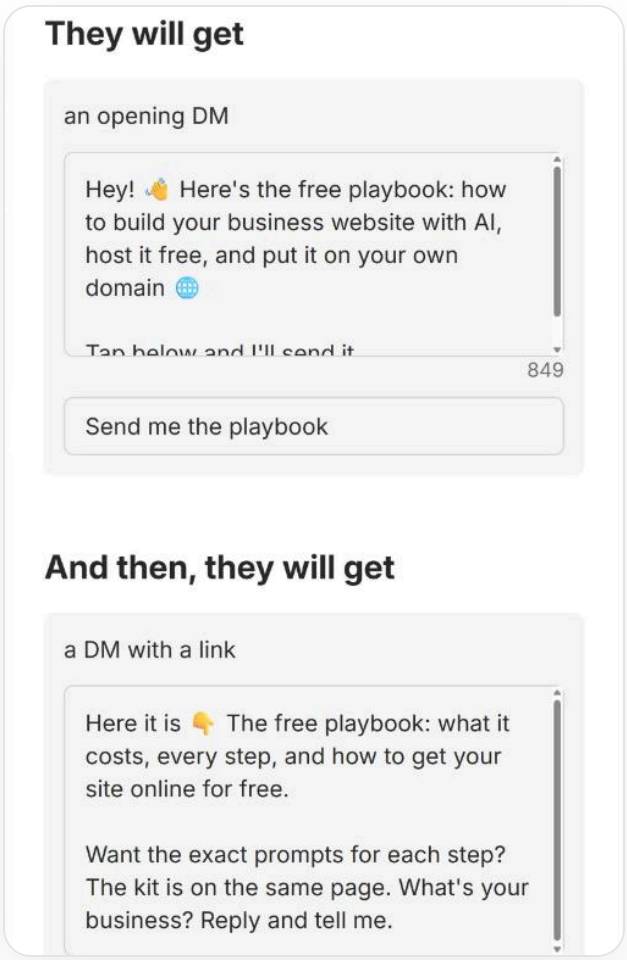
Our exact setup · the real screens

What it looks like inside ManyChat

Left: who triggers it and what we reply in public. Right: the two DMs. The red **LIVE** label means it's switched on.



Trigger, keywords and the 3 public replies



Opening DM with its button, then the DM with the link

Our live automation in ManyChat's builder

> **Notice what's not there:** no "follow me first" step and no email request. The template offers both as options;[3] we keep it to one tap and one link.

Your turn · from zero

Set it up yourself

1. **Go professional on Instagram**
   Switch to a Business or Creator account if you haven't.

2. **Sign up at manychat.com**
   Click **Get started**, choose Instagram, and sign up with Facebook or Google.[5]

3. **Connect Instagram**
   In ManyChat: **Settings** → **Instagram** → **Connect**. "Via Instagram" is the simplest; "Via Meta" is recommended and needs a Meta Business Portfolio.[5]

4. **Let ManyChat read your messages**
   In the Instagram app: **Settings and activity** → **Messages and story replies** → **Message controls** → **Connected tools**, turn on **Allow access to messages**.[6]

5. **Pick the template**
   Automations → **My Automations** → **+ New Automation** → **Auto-DM links from comments**.[3]

6. **Choose the post and your word**
   A specific post or reel, any post or reel, or your next one. Then type your keyword(s), separated by commas.[3]

7. **Write the public replies**
   Turn on replies under the post and write up to 3 versions; ManyChat rotates them.[3]

8. **Write the opening DM and its button**
   A friendly line plus a button like "Send me the guide". Leave the optional follow and email steps off for now.

9. **Write the DM with your link, then go live**
   A short message and a link button (up to 3 links), then **Go Live**, top right.[3]

10. **Test from a second account**
    Comment your word from another Instagram account. Checklist on page 7.

The small details

Why each piece matters

Several reply versions look human

The same reply 200 times in a row looks like a bot. ManyChat's own advice: vary your auto-replies and avoid very short or emoji-only ones, so Instagram doesn't flag them as spam.[4]

The button in the first DM is the key

Instagram lets a business send *one* private reply to a comment. Further messages are only allowed after the person responds.[7] Tapping your button counts as that response: it opts them in and opens a 24-hour window for your link.[3,4] A plain "open website" button doesn't count.[4]

One simple word

Short, easy to spell, tied to your video. Avoid words people say anyway. Add common typos as extra keywords.[10]

Test first, then announce

Put the word in your video and caption only after a test DM has arrived. A broken automation on a busy Reel means a lot of disappointed people.

Your test checklist

- [ ] The automation shows **LIVE** in ManyChat
- [ ] From a **second** Instagram account, comment your word on the post
- [ ] The public reply appears under the comment
- [ ] The opening DM arrives (check **Message requests** too); tap the button
- [ ] The link DM arrives, and the link opens the right page on a phone

Stay on the right side of Instagram

Rules that keep your account safe

ManyChat says comment-to-DM is allowed when it runs through Meta's official API, which ManyChat uses.[10] These three habits keep you on the safe side.

1 Don't make the link depend on a follow

Meta's spam rules list "like/share-gating": requiring likes, shares, follows or other engagement to access content.[8] ManyChat offers an optional "ask to follow" step;[3] we leave it off.

2 Only message people who asked

Use a keyword rather than "any comment", keep it to the promised link, and don't follow up with sales pitches nobody requested.

3 Respect the time limits

The private reply must go out within 7 days of the comment. After someone responds, you have 24 hours to message them.[7,9]

> **In plain words:** they comment, you send one message, they tap, you send the link. Everything else waits until they talk to you again.

If something's off

The DM didn't arrive?

Go down this list in order, and test again after each fix.

Check	Why
Is the automation live?	Drafts and stopped automations don't run. Look for Go Live / LIVE.[3]
Did you comment from the connected account?	Test from a different account. Per a ManyChat Community answer, your own comments won't trigger it.[11]
Did that account already comment there?	It only fires on a person's *first* comment under a post; a repeat won't trigger it again (an Instagram limit).[4] Use a fresh account or another post.
Is the keyword in the comment?	Check spelling, and add common typos as extra words.[10]
Did it land in Message requests?	If the person doesn't follow you, the DM goes to their requests folder, not the main inbox.[7]
Is message access on?	Turn on "Allow access to messages" in Instagram (page 6, step 4), then in ManyChat use **Help → Refresh permissions**.[6]
Opening DM came, link didn't?	The link only comes after they tap the button.[3]
Can't go live, or it stopped?	Messages with buttons max out at 640 characters.[6] Also check your plan's live-automation and contact limits.[2]
Two automations on all posts?	If neither uses keywords, only the oldest one runs.[4] Give each its own word.

CTRLWONDER

That's the whole trick. Now go build yours.

More experiments with AI tools, tested and explained simply:

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Not sponsored by ManyChat. No affiliate link. Screens, plans and prices change; everything here was checked on October 15, 2026.

SOURCES (CHECKED OCTOBER 15, 2026)

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2. ManyChat Help, "Free plan" (updated Aug 27, 2026). help.manychat.com/hc/en-us/articles/25800197498652
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