

<https://support.twitter.com/groups/50-welcome-to-twitter/topics/203-faqs/articles/13920-new-user-faqs#>

## **What is Twitter?**

Twitter is a service for friends, family, and coworkers to communicate and stay connected through the exchange of quick, frequent messages. People write short updates, often called "Tweets" of 140 characters or fewer. These messages are posted to your profile, sent to your [followers](#), and are searchable on Twitter search. Learn more about [how to use Twitter](#).

## **Do I need anything special to use it?**

All you need to use Twitter is an internet connection or a mobile phone. [Join us here!](#) Once you're in, begin finding and following accounts whose Tweets interest you. We'll recommend great accounts once you're signed up.

## **What's a Tweet?**

A Tweet is any message posted to Twitter, and all are 140 characters or less. Once you've signed up, just type your first Tweet in the update box (shown below). We'll even count the characters for you! Click the **Tweet** button to post the update to your profile. If you'd like to learn more about how to tweet, please read [this article](#).

## **Why 140 characters?**

We like to keep it short and sweet! It also just so happens that 140 characters is the perfect length for sending status updates via text message. The standard text message length in most places is 160 characters per message. We reserve 20 characters for people's names, and the other 140 are all yours!

## **How do I find people to follow?**

When you create an account, you can [search for people](#) by name or user name, [import friends](#) from other networks, or [invite friends via email](#). You can also follow some of the people [we've suggested](#).

## **What does it mean to follow someone on Twitter?**

[Following](#) someone means you've chosen to subscribe to their Twitter updates. When you follow someone, every time they post a new message, it will appear on your Twitter home page. Read more [here](#).

## **How do I know who I'm following?**

After you click the 'Follow' button on someone's profile, you're following them. See a list of people you're following by clicking on the [following](#) link on your profile page or on your home page's sidebar.

## **How do I know who is following me?**

Twitter sends you an email when someone new follows you. Set up your [email preferences](#) to notify you when you have a new follower. The [Followers](#) link on your profile page or home page's sidebar will also tell you who is following you.

## **What are follow limits?**

Twitter has follow and update limits for stability and abuse control. You can read more about this [here](#).

## **Who reads my updates?**

Your followers read your Tweets. If your Tweets are public, anyone who runs a search for a keyword in your Tweet may be able to see that message. Your Tweets are public by default; if you're hesitant to have people you may not know read your updates, [protect your Tweets](#) to approve followers and keep your updates out of search.

## **How can I send updates to Twitter?**

Read our article about [how to post a Tweet](#). You can tweet from twitter.com, from your phone, or from an application.

## **Can I put my Twitter updates on my blog?**

Yes! Put a [Twitter widget](#) on your blog or website – anywhere that accepts Javascript or HTML.

## **What are @replies?**

If a message begins with @username, meaning it was directed to another user, it is an [@reply](#). Click the Reply button on another person's Tweet to reply to it. Please note that if your Tweets are protected, users who are not following you will not see your @replies or mentions. Read more [here](#).

## **What are direct messages?**

[Direct messages](#) are personal messages sent from one Twitter account to another; they do not appear in public for anyone else to read. You can only send a direct message to a person who follows you. Read more [here](#).

## **What is the difference between an @reply and a direct message?**

An [@reply](#) is a public message sent regardless of follow-ship. Anyone can view it (if your Tweets are public). A [direct message](#) can only be sent by someone you follow, and can only be seen by the sender and intended recipient.

## **Can I edit a Tweet once I've posted it?**

No. Once a Tweet has been posted, it can't be changed. You can delete a Tweet by clicking the trash icon on the right end of it.

## **What's a Retweet (RT)?**

A [retweet](#) is a re-posting of someone else's Tweet. Read more [here](#).

## **Why can't I see all my Tweets? Are they lost?**

We store all your Tweets. You can click the **Me** tab to view up to 3200 of your most recent Tweets in your profile timeline. To view more, you can [download your Twitter Archive](#) and browse a snapshot of your Twitter information, starting with your first Tweet.

## **How do I post a picture to Twitter?**

Uploading and sharing images on Twitter.com is easy! You can find step-by-step instructions and more FAQ [here](#).

## **How do I report spam?**

We have a whole article about [how to report spam on Twitter](#). Please read it. We encourage you to always block any spammers you find.

## **Why are accounts suspended?**

Accounts are suspended for Terms of Service violations or spam investigation. Read more about this [here](#).

## **Where can I find out more information about Twitter's Terms of Service?**

Twitter's [Terms of Service](#) is posted on the website, and the [Twitter Rules](#) are posted in the Help Center.

## **How do I submit a complaint about copyright, impersonation, trademark, or other Terms of Service issues?**

Review our [Terms of Service section](#) to find out what constitutes a violation, and how to go about fixing a related problem.

## **How do I know who is following me?**

The [followers](#) link on your profile page or home page will show you how many followers you have and who they are. By default, Twitter sends you an email to let you know when someone new follows you. Set up your [email preferences](#) to notify you when you have a new follower or to turn these notifications off.

## **How do I get followers? Can I ask someone to follow me?**

There is no way to send a request for other users to follow you on Twitter. Though some users send an @reply to others asking them to follow, this is not a good way to gain followers.

**Avoid third party applications that promise to get you many followers** – these usually break our terms of service and can get your account [suspended](#).

The best way to gain friends and fans on Twitter is to engage with people, follow others whose Tweets are interesting or meaningful to you, and be an active part of the Twitter community by reading and posting high-quality information.

## **Can I restrict who follows me, or sees my updates?**

Yes: you can protect your Tweets (or un-protect them). [Click here](#) to learn how. Protecting your Tweets means anyone who wants to follow you must submit a request for your approval. Only followers you approve can see your protected Tweets and your Tweets will not appear in search engines.

## **How do I approve followers?**

If you have [protected your Tweets](#), you can approve followers from your account home page. [Click here](#) to learn how.

## **Once I start following someone, can I stop?**

Yes! You can unfollow other accounts at any time. [Click here](#) to learn how. Twitter does not send a notification when you unfollow someone. If you have requested to follow someone whose Tweets are protected, then change your mind, you can click **cancel** to undo your follow request. (The cancel button appears on their profile in the same place you clicked the follow button.)

## **How do I make a particular follower stop following me?**

[Block that user](#). They will not be able to follow you or request to follow you unless you unblock them.

## **Is following the same as friend-ing someone on other social networks?**

No. Following on Twitter isn't mutual. Someone who thinks you're interesting can follow you, and you don't have to approve it or follow them back. If you want to approve who follows your Tweets, [protect your Tweets](#). The same rules apply – you can approve followers, but you don't have to follow them back.

## **I don't want a particular person to follow me. What should I do?**

[Block that user](#) from following you. They won't be able to follow you and you will see a blocked button when you visit their profile. To unblock a user you've blocked, visit that user's profile and click the block button on the right-hand side. [Read more](#). Your Tweets won't appear in their timeline, but they will still be able to see your Tweets by visiting your profile page (if your Tweets are public).

## **I have a follower who posts spam or porn. Help!**

- To learn how to report spam on Twitter, [click here](#).
- To learn how to report inappropriate content, [click here](#).

## How to start using Twitter:

If you remember one thing after perusing this page, it should be this: **reading Tweets and discovering new information whenever you check in on your Twitter timeline is where you'll find the most value on Twitter.** Some people find it useful to contribute their own Tweets, but the real magic of Twitter lies in absorbing real-time information that matters to you.

### 1. DISCOVER SOURCES: Find and follow others

It's best to begin your journey by finding and [following](#) other interesting Twitter accounts. Look for businesses you love, public service accounts, people you know, celebrities, or news sources you read. ([Click here](#) for help finding interesting accounts.) **Tip:** One great way to find more interesting accounts is see who those you know or admire are following.

### 2. CHECK YOUR TIMELINE: See what's happening

Messages from those you follow will show up in a readable stream on your Twitter homepage, called your "[Timeline](#)." Once you've followed a few people, news outlets, organizations, or accounts of your interest, you'll have a new page of information to read each time you log in. Click links in others' Tweets to view articles, images or videos they've linked to. Click hashtagged keywords (#) to view all Tweets about that topic.

### 3. TAKE IT WITH YOU: Connect your mobile

One of the best things about Twitter is that it's portable. Connect your account to your [mobile phone](#) or download a Twitter application to begin reading Tweets on the go. Now you can get updates about traffic problems in the middle of your commute, find out what the players are saying while you're at the game, or catch up on the buzz about an event you're about to attend. **Tip:** Using Twitter [via SMS](#) allows you to pick and choose which updates you want from those you follow, so you can get mobile updates from the accounts that matter most to your life on-the-go.

## How to start tweeting:

Many users find it fun or exciting to contribute their own content to Twitter (we call this "tweeting"). If you're one of them, here are some good ways to get started posting your own Tweets. People who are interested in what you have to say may follow you and they'll see all the Tweets you share with them.

### 1. BUILD A VOICE: Retweet, reply, react

Use existing information (other people's Tweets) on Twitter to find your own voice and show others what you care about. [Retweet](#) messages you've found and love, or [@reply](#) with your reaction to a Tweet you find interesting. **Tip:** If you're a new user, others are more likely to find your messages if they are Retweets or @replies.

### 2. MENTION: Include others in your content

Once you're ready to begin authoring your own messages, consider [mentioning](#) other users by their Twitter username (preceded by the @ sign) in your Tweets. This can help you think of what to write, will draw more eyes to your message, and can even start a new conversation. Try posting a message mentioning a celebrity or person you admire – they often respond to fans. You'll see their response on your Mentions tab. **Tip:** Can't think of anything to write? You don't have to. The real magic lies in reading content from sources you follow on Twitter.

### 3. GET FANCY: Explore advanced features

As you become more engaged on Twitter, others will begin to find and follow you. Once you're familiar with Twitter basics, consider exploring the site's more advanced features: [lists](#), [direct messages](#), and [favorites](#). Learn how to include [images](#) or videos in your Tweets, or consider connecting your Twitter

account to your your [blog](#), [Facebook](#), or [website](#). **Tip:** The best way to gain followers on Twitter is to regularly engage and contribute in a meaningful way.

## Tips and Tricks:

### Need help finding interesting accounts?

Click [Discover](#) at the top of your Twitter page. You can find and follow other accounts in these four ways: 1) [browse accounts by category](#), 2) browse accounts that [we think might be of interest to you](#) 3) [import your address book](#) contacts to find out which friends are already on Twitter, 4) search one-by-one for people or groups of interest.

### Need help using Twitter on your mobile phone?

By linking your Twitter account to your mobile phone number, you can receive and write Tweets via text message. Learn how to get started by [clicking here](#). Or, visit our [Mobile Help](#) section of articles.

### Confused by our lingo?

Check out the [Twitter Glossary](#) containing definitions for a ton of Twitter terms used on our website.

### Want help setting up your Twitter profile?

[Click here](#) to learn about adding a profile image, bio, and more to customize your Twitter profile!

### Using Twitter for your business?

[Click here](#) for our guide for Businesses.

## Activity and notifications

### What is the Notifications tab?

- This tab offers a simple way to see how others on Twitter are interacting with you.
- Just click on **Notifications** on the Notifications page, and you'll be able to see which of your Tweets have been favorited, plus the latest retweets (of your Tweets), Tweets directed to you (@replies and mentions), and your new followers.
- If you'd only like to see your @replies and mentions, click on the **Mentions** tab on the Notifications page.

### What is the Activity tab?

- The **Activity** tab is found on the Discover page.
- It provides a rich new source of discovery by highlighting the latest favorites, retweets, and follows from the people you follow on Twitter — all in one place.

### Where can I see which of my Tweets have been retweeted?

- If someone else retweets one of your Tweets, you will see a notification of that retweet in your **Notifications**.

### My Tweets are protected - will people be able to see the actions I take?

- If your Tweets are protected, only your approved followers will see your retweets and favorites in their Activity tab.
- Only approved followers will be able to see your follow activity. Similarly, only your approved

followers will be able to see if others follow you or if they retweet or favorite one of your Tweets.

### **How can I only see actions taken on my Tweets from users I follow?**

- You can filter your **Notifications** or **Mentions** tab from the Notifications page on twitter.com by clicking on **People you follow**. You will only see actions taken by users you follow.
- To see all actions taken, even from users you don't follow, click on **All**.

### **Why don't I see all actions taken on my Tweets?**

- You may not see all follow actions from users who follow a large number of accounts.
- In addition, you will not see the follow activity of accounts you follow that have protected Tweets.
- Retweets will appear in your Activity timeline when they've been retweeted by two or more accounts that you follow.

<https://support.twitter.com/groups/54-mobile-apps/topics/223-android/articles/168930-getting-started-with-twitter-for-android#>

[Using mobile.twitter.com on a smartphone or tablet](#)