How to Use Twitter

Twitter is a free, online service that enables you to broadcast short messages to your friends or "followers." It also lets you specify which Twitter users you want to follow so you can read their messages, all in one place. Twitter is useful for close-knit groups. If you follow your friends, and they follow each other, you can quickly communicate group-related items.

Twitter is designed to work on a mobile phone as well as on a computer. All Twitter messages are limited to 140 characters, so each message can be sent as a single text message (SMS). You can't say much in 140 characters. This challenges you to think of the most precise way to send an update.

Create Your Account


2. Click on Get Started – Join!

   Note: There are buttons at the top of the page for What?, Why?, and How? that contain useful information about Twitter. You may also want to click on the Watch a Video! button at the top of the page to watch a short video about Twitter.

3. Enter your information into the fields provided. For the best results, use your real name when signing up; otherwise your friends won't be able to find you easily. Try to keep your Username short and useful. It will appear as part of your URL for Twitter.

4. Twitter will search your email address book for contact if you are using a popular email client. Twitter will be unable to search your university email account address book. You should skip this step until you have filled out your profile information and uploaded a photo. Otherwise your friends may not know who you are.

5. It is helpful to upload a picture. Click on the Profile link at the top of the page. Next to your user name, click on Add a Photo. Click the Browse button and locate an image on your computer. Then click Save.

   Note: You may only upload image files with the JPG, GIF, or PNG extension and they must be 700k or smaller.

6. Click on the Account tab. Here you can change your full name, your username, email address and time zone. You may add a URL for more information about you if you like. You may enter a one-line bio. It must be fewer than 160 characters. If you select the "Protect my updates" checkbox, people won't be able to read your updates unless you authorize them to follow you on Twitter.

7. You may change your password at any time on the Password tab.
8. Click on the **Devices** tab. Here you may enter your mobile phone number and send and receive updates from your phone. Enter your phone number and click the **Save** button to set up your phone.

9. The **Notices** tab offers several ways you can be updated from Twitter. Make your choices and click on the **Save** button.

   *Note: You may want to allow Twitter to send you an email when someone starts following you or when you receive a direct message. This will prompt you to come to Twitter and also follow a new friend or respond to a direct message. Direct messages are updates that only you will be able to see. They are not included in the public area of Twitter.*

10. On the **Design** tab you can choose a background image for your Twitter page and change the design to your liking.

**Find Your Friends**

1. Once your profile is complete and looks the way you would like it to, click on **Find People** at the top of the page. You have several choices for finding friends:

   - You may search for users on Twitter by clicking on the **Find on Twitter** tab. Type in a first and last name to try and find friends that are already using Twitter.
   - You may allow Twitter to search through your email address books for different email accounts to locate friends who are using Twitter. Click on the **Find on other networks** tab. Simply add your email address and password for each account you have and click **Continue** to use this option.

   - You may invite others by email if you have an email address for them. Click on the **Invite by email** tab, then enter one or several email addresses, separated by commas. Click the **Invite** button to continue.

   - You may immediately make an update on Twitter by typing an answer to the question “What are you doing?” in the field provided and clicking on the **update** button.

   - Twitter will also suggest certain Twitter users to you also on the **Suggested Users** tab.

2. Click on the **Home** link at the top of the page when you are finished adding friends. You may click on the **Find People** link at the top of the page if you would like to add more friends later.
Post Your Tweets

You are now able to create your first update. Things to remember:

- You only have 140 characters. Make your words count.
- Updates are referred to as “tweets”.
- When tweeting, answer the question: What are you doing?
- If you are responding to someone else’s tweet, place the “@” sign before their username, then type your response. This shows up as a response on that user’s “@” response list.
- If your tweet is concerning something specific, place a hash mark before the word (e.g. #uis). This ties all tweets about that subject together for Twitter users.
- If you are simply re-posting an update someone else made, this is called a Re-Tweet. Type the letters RT, then place the “@” sign before the username of the person you are re-tweeting from, then the message.

There are many different plug-ins for the Firefox browser that allow you to have a side bar containing Twitter information, so you don’t always have to return to the site. Also, setting up your mobile phone allows you to view or post to Twitter from anywhere.