

Twitter Guide

What is Twitter?

Twitter is a real-time communication platform that allows you to quickly share thoughts, opinions, and interesting links with friends, family, and the general public. People write short updates, called *tweets*, of 140 characters or fewer. These messages are posted to your profile and are searchable on Twitter search.

Do I need anything special to use it?

All you need to use Twitter is an Internet connection or a mobile phone with Internet capability.

How do I start using Twitter?

1. Go to Twitter (<https://twitter.com>).
2. Sign up for a new account.
3. Complete your profile (upload a picture and include a short, descriptive bio).



What is a *handle*?

A user's Twitter handle is the username he or she has selected and the accompanying URL; for example, <https://twitter.com/aafpprez>.

How do I find my friends?

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. Once you've found your friends, click the *Follow* button to start receiving their tweets.



What does it mean to follow someone on Twitter?

Following someone means you will receive that person's Twitter updates. When you follow someone, every time he or she posts a new tweet, it will appear on your Twitter home page feed. New tweets are added to your home page as people post them, so you always get the tweets in real time.

How do I know who is following me?

Twitter sends you an email notification when someone new follows you, if you set up your email preferences to notify you when you have a new follower. The *Followers* link on your profile page will also tell you how many followers you have.

Should I choose public or protected tweets?

Your Twitter profile is set to public by default. Your followers and anyone else who comes across your updates in a search can read them. If you don't want strangers to read your updates, protect your profile to approve followers and keep your updates out of search. You can always change your mind later. When you protect your tweets, the following restrictions are put in place:

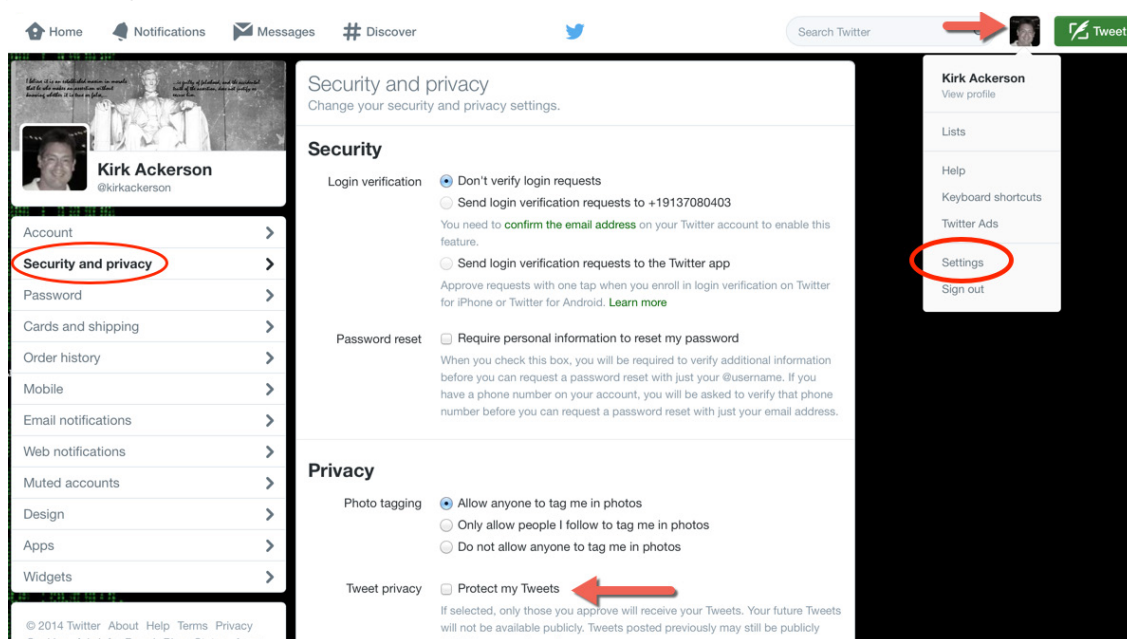
- People must request to follow you, and each follow request will require your approval.
- Your tweets will only be visible to users you've approved, meaning that other users will not be able to retweet your tweets.
- Protected tweets will not appear in Twitter search.
- @replies you send to people who aren't following you will not be seen by those users (because you have not given them permission to see your tweets).

What are @replies?

These are public messages sent from one person to another that begin with @username. Click the *Reply* button on another person's tweet to reply to it. People will only see others' @replies in their home timeline if they are following both the sender and recipient of the @reply.

How do I protect my tweets?

1. Log in to your Twitter account.
2. Visit your account settings page by clicking on the small profile icon on the right side of the screen.
3. Select *Settings* from the drop-down menu.
4. Select the *Security and privacy* tab on the left side of the screen.
5. Scroll down and check the box next to *Protect my tweets*.
6. Save your changes.



Can I block people from following me?

Yes. If you block someone, he or she won't be able to follow you or send you any messages. If your account is public, the person is still able to view it, but he or she won't appear on your followers list, and you won't be on his or her following list.

What is a Twitter list?

Twitter helps you organize people you follow by allowing you to create lists. When you click to view a list, you'll see a stream of tweets from all the users included in that group.

How do I create a list?

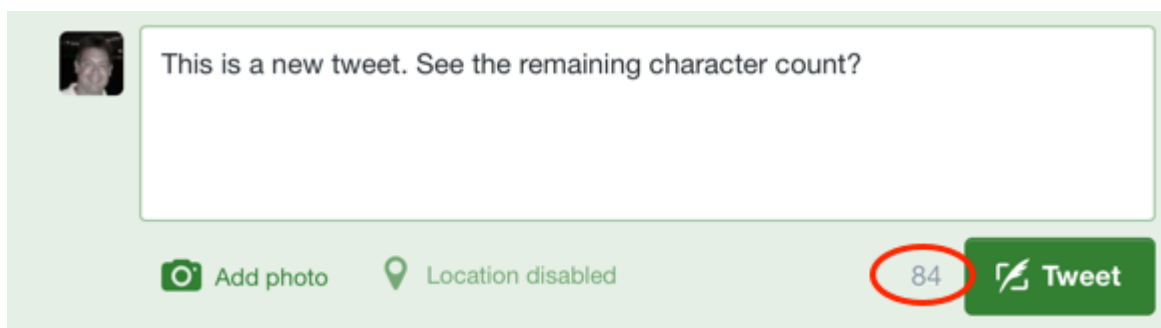
1. Visit the profile of the first user you would like to add to your list.
2. Click the gear icon to the left of the *Follow* button. This brings up a drop-down actions menu.
3. Select *Add or remove from lists*, then *Create a list*.
4. Enter a description for your list and choose *Public* or *Private*.
5. To verify that the user you wished to add has been successfully included in that list, click the person icon again and select *Add or remove from list*. A checkmark will be added next to lists in which that user is included.

How do I subscribe to/follow other people's lists?

Following a list is as simple as following any other Twitter user. Simply click on the *Lists* tab when viewing a profile, and select which list options you want to see. Click the *Subscribe* button to follow a list.

How do I send a tweet?

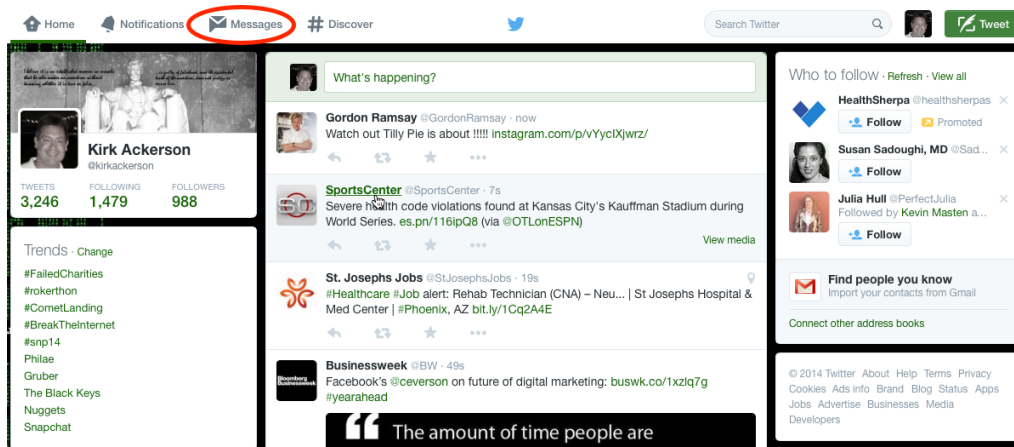
Tweets are restricted to 140 characters. As you type, the character counter will show you the number of characters remaining for use. Each space counts as one character, so pressing the space bar as you type adds additional characters. To send a new tweet, type your post in the *What's happening?* box. When you're finished, click the *Tweet* button.



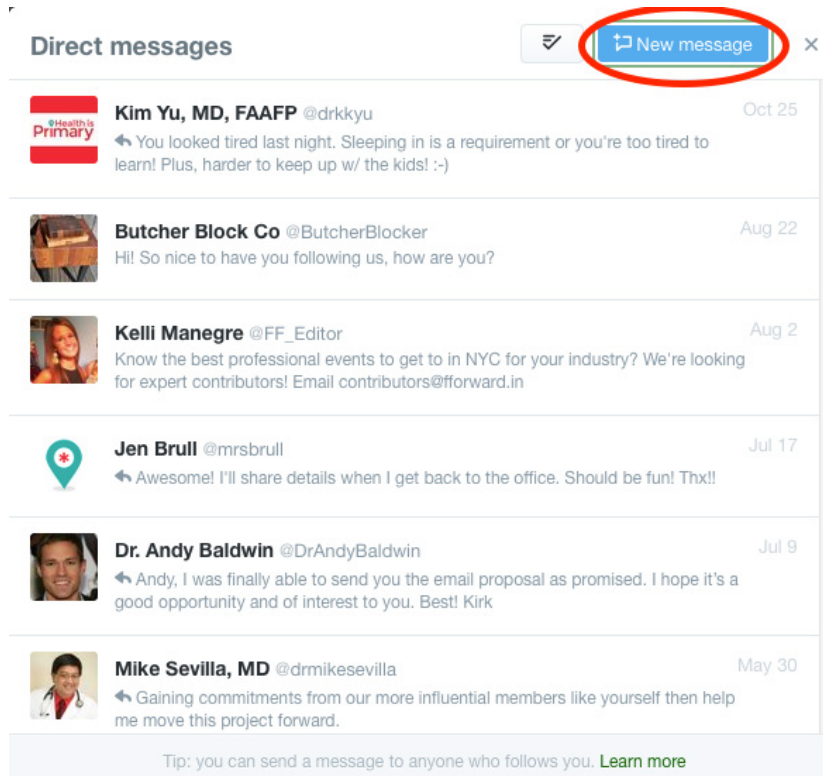
What are direct messages?

Direct messages are private messages sent from one Twitter user to another. You can only send a direct message to a person who you follow and who follows you. When you receive a direct message, it is saved in your direct message inbox.

1. Click on *Messages* in the navigation bar at the top of your home page.



2. You can view your direct messages from this page or select *New message* to create and send a new message.



Can I edit a tweet once I post it?

No. Once posted, you can't edit a tweet. You can delete a tweet by clicking the *More* icon (•••) and then *Delete Tweet*.



What does RT, or retweet, mean?

RT is short for *retweet*, and indicates a reposting of someone else's tweet. If you see a tweet that you want to share with your followers, simply retweet it.

When should I retweet?


It depends on whether the original tweet would provide value to your followers. If so, retweet. If your followers would not find value in the tweet, don't retweet because you may lose followers as your tweets no longer appeal to their interests. For example:

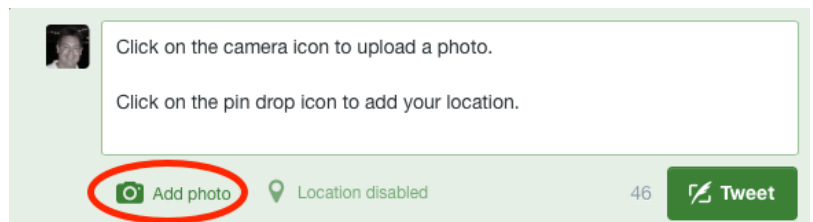
You typically tweet about health care issues. The AAFP president tweets about the RUC process. It would be good to retweet, because your followers are likely interested in this topic.

You typically tweet about the Kansas Jayhawks. The AAFP president tweets about the RUC process. Your followers would not know anything about the RUC and would find no value in the retweet. Worse, as it doesn't interest them, they may choose to unfollow you.



How do I post a picture to Twitter?

1. Type your Tweet into the box at the top of your Home timeline. If using an Android device, tap on *What's happening?* If using an iOS device, tap the *Tweet* icon. 
2. From the web, click *Add photo*. From a device, tap the camera icon to take a photo, or choose a photo from your gallery. You will see two small icons in the lower left corner: one for uploading an image (a camera) and one for adding your location (a pin drop). Click on the camera icon.
3. Once a photo is selected, you will see a thumbnail image (or file name) appear as an attachment. You can select up to four images to tweet at once. Note: Animated GIFs cannot be included in Tweets with multiple images.
 - a. Images can be up to 5MB; animated GIFs can be up to 3MB.
 - b. Only .GIF, .JPEG, and .PNG files can be uploaded.
 - c. Twitter automatically scales your image to fit.

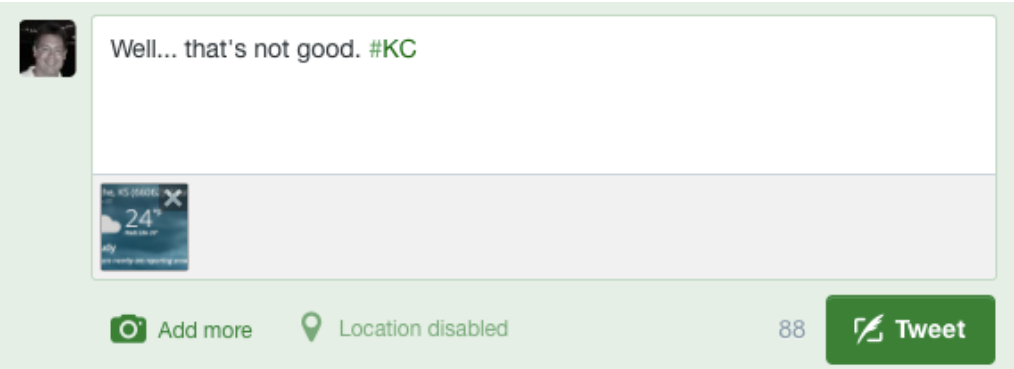


If you are tweeting from the Twitter for iOS or Twitter for Android app, you can enhance, apply a filter, and crop an image once you select it.

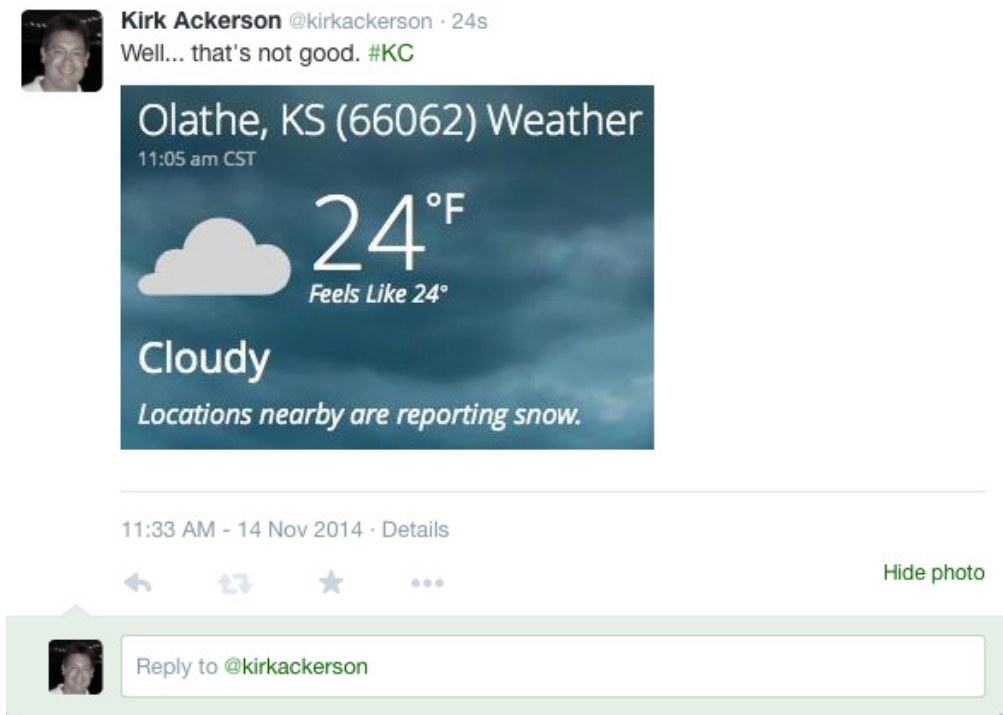
You can also tag people in a photo by selecting *Who's in this photo?*. Type in a full name or an @username and then tap *Done*. Note: Tags cannot be applied to animated GIFs.

4. Tap *Tweet* to post your message and photo(s). Your tweet's character count will update to reflect the uploaded photo(s). Note: You can also send photos in direct messages.

Note: To remove the image file you selected, click or tap the x on the image thumbnail (or next to the file name). To remove a tag, tap the tag and then the backspace or delete button. You can only do this before you tweet the photo. You can't remove tags from a photo once it is tweeted.



Once you've successfully tweeted, click on your tweet to see how it looks.



How do I include a link on Twitter?

Copy and paste the link into the tweet box. Twitter will shorten the link to 19 characters.

What are *hashtags* (“#” symbols)?

Hashtags are used to group or categorize tweets and allow topics to be searched and tracked more easily. Clicking on a hashtagged word (e.g., #word) in any message shows you all other tweets in that category. Hashtags are placed before a word (with no space between) and can be used anywhere in the tweet. It is preferable not to include more than three hashtags per post, if possible.

What are *favorites*?

Favorites, represented by a small star icon next to a tweet, are most commonly used when users like a tweet or wish to save it for later. To favorite a tweet, click on the star icon. It will then turn yellow, indicating that you've favorited the Tweet.

Safety: fake Twitter emails

Some users have received fake or suspicious emails that look like they were sent by Twitter. These emails may include malicious attachments, or links to spam or phishing websites. Twitter doesn't send emails with attachments and never requests your Twitter password by email. What you can do if you receive a fake email:

1. Forward the email to spoof@twitter.com.
2. Delete the email from your inbox.
3. Don't download any attachments from these emails.

Find out more about safety on Twitter's [Safety & Security page](#).

Resources

The majority of the content provided in this document comes directly from Twitter. Twitter remains the best source for information, not only as it relates to their service, but to product and feature enhancements as well. If you would like additional information, please visit <https://support.twitter.com/>.