

## Twitter Tutorial



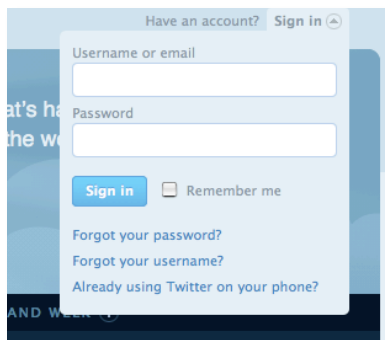
Twitter isn't just a cute way for keeping in instant touch with *friends on mobile phones* anymore. It has ramped up quickly to be the search engine of choice for some with its **human driven results**.

Businesses can form **instant direct relationships** with their customer bases simply by signing up and using the service regularly, and according to the models Twitter is trying out, they will soon be able to advertise to the Twitter community as well.

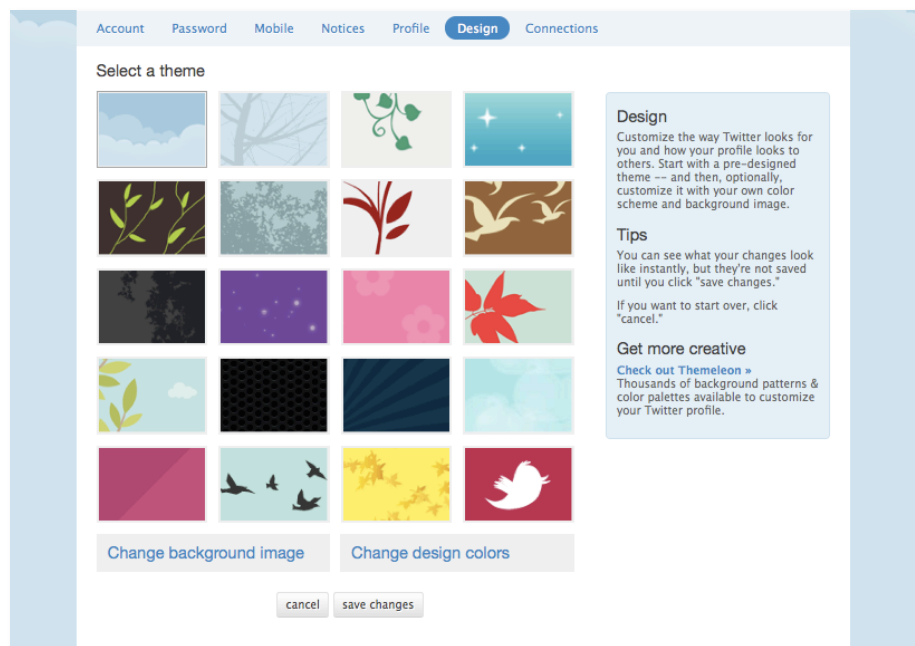
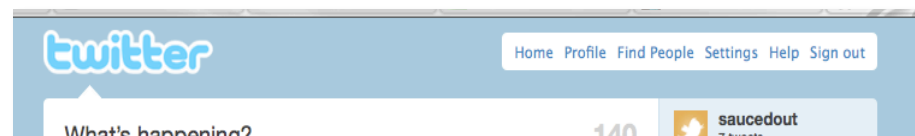
## Twitter Basics

To sign up for Twitter, go to [twitter.com](http://twitter.com) and click on "**Sign up now**". Fill out the information and now you have your own Twitter account.

If you already have an account, login at the top right hand side.



Then, set up your profile. Now you can now change your background that Twitter has given you to choose from. You can change these in your "**Settings**", the link for which is located above your picture on your profile page in the top bar next to the **Sign Out** link. Be sure to include **your website** and *information about yourself* since Twitter people actually want to know these things.

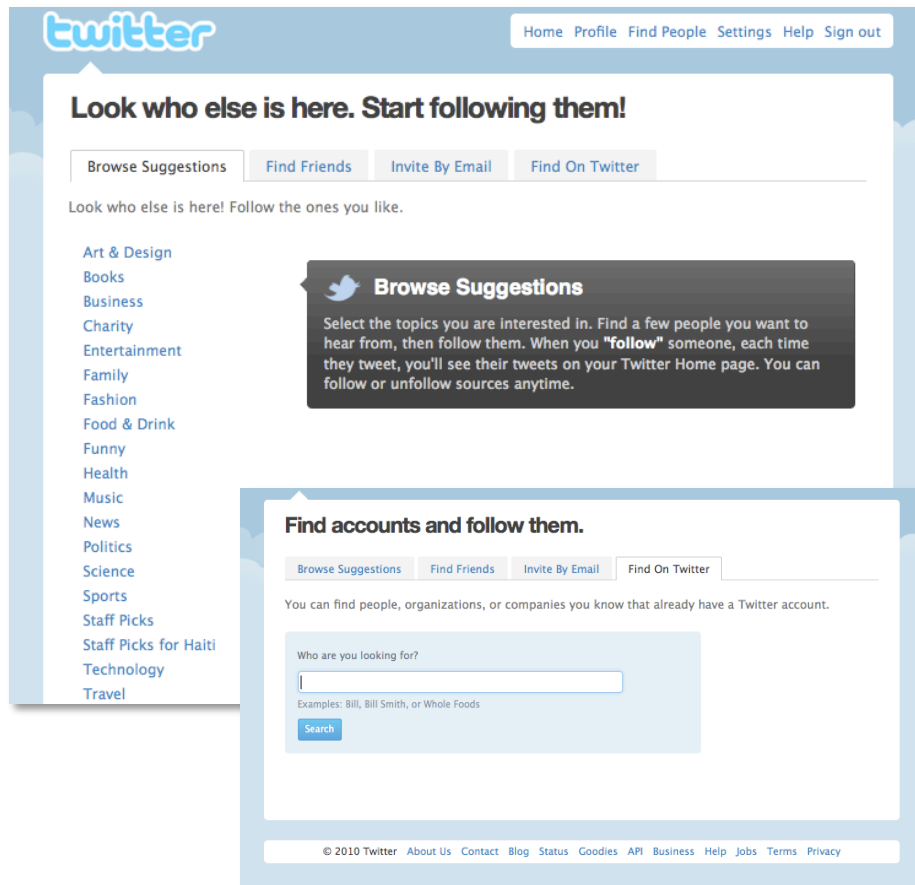


You'll also want to **upload a current photo** of yourself. If you are running your account as a business, you should use your logo instead.



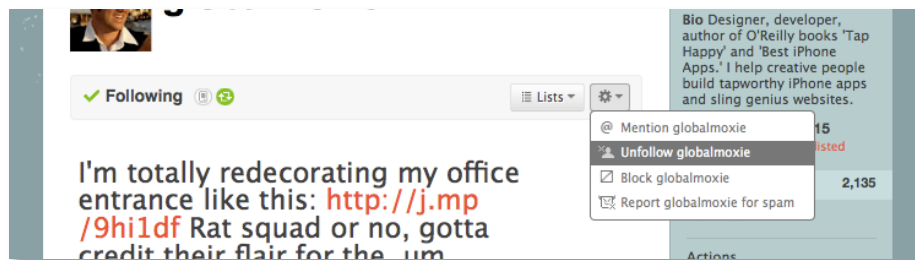
In the top **Find People** link, this is where you build your network. Here Twitter will allow you to import e-mail lists, contacts from instant messaging services, and you can find your friends on their search engine.

The best way to build a list of interesting people is to go to the Twitter search engine at [search.twitter.com](http://search.twitter.com) and plug in *your* interests. This will then spit tons of people back out at you that you can choose to follow. Twitter will also give you some suggestions for people to follow.

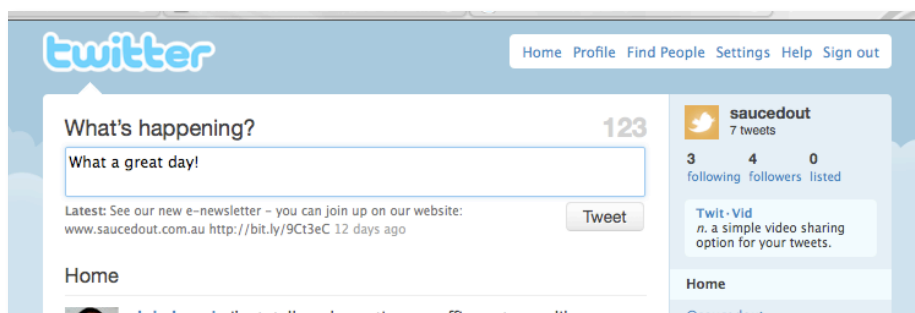


**“Following”** someone is the same thing as adding them as a Facebook friend, except that they don’t see your updates unless they choose to follow you as well. Generally the best way to get followers is to add people based on your interests, as most people will follow you once you start following them.

Once you start following someone, their updates, or **“Tweets”**, will appear in your timeline, or your Twitter feed. If you find someone is getting on your nerves with too many senseless Tweets, go ahead and remove them by going to their profile page on the Twitter site; Click the clog dropdown arrow beside **“Following”** just below the top of their profile page and then click **“Unfollow person”**.



To post your messages, or **“Tweets”**, go to your profile page and type your tweet into the box provided.



## Other Helpful Information

Twitter was built to accommodate being updated from phones. The origin of the 140-character limit is the 160-character limit for SMS, which leaves some space for a name in addition to a 140-character message. There are a series of commands that can only be used via mobile phone that are explained in our glossary.

In order to enable updates from your phone, first check with your mobile provider to make sure that you have a plan that allows you to update Twitter via text message at a reasonable cost. While Twitter doesn't charge, the standard text messaging rates from your provider still apply, so be careful.

### How to get more followers

The first quest of a new Twitter user is to add followers who are **interested in the same topics** as they are. Once you've exhausted your personal and professional contacts, where do you go from there? The way most people take is the one described above, where you search Twitter for your interests and add people based on those interests.

### Give Your Followers Value

Answer questions that your followers have if you know the answer. Share helpful tips for your industry that don't have to do with your followers buying your product. Always give your followers something that they can take away from the conversation and use. They will recommend you to your friends and you will generate tweets that will encourage new people to follow you.

### Tweet in Peak Times

Peak times are basically during the day throughout the workweek. If you want to account for time differences in North America, aim for morning to early afternoon.

### Tweet Regularly

Tweet often, but only if you have something of value to say. You should aim for a few tweets a day. **Do not install a bot program to Tweet for you** – your followers will figure it out and unfollow you. If you are taking off for a few days use a service like [TweetLater](#) to schedule your tweets.

### Leverage your Other Online Properties

If you have something of value to offer online, like a blog or a website, share updates that you make to it or new postings that you have written. If you complete a new website for a client, share it with your followers to get some great real time feedback and make them feel like they are part of the process.

### Obey the Law of Reciprocity

Retweet other user's tweets when you **think they are relevant** or you can help them out. Do unto others as you would have done to you and you'll be a *valued member of the community*.

### Tweet Accomplishments Sparingly

If you went live with a new site or posted an article on a blog, that is exactly what Twitter is for. If you have over twenty new posts a day on your site, tweet only the more interesting ones.

### Tweet Really Interesting Stuff Only

If you read an article that completely rocks your world, tweet it. If articles are rocking your world a number of times a day, pick only the few that rock your world the most.

## Don't Tweet Confidential Stuff

Tell someone that you'll go "off-Twitter" if you need to talk about something that you don't want the world to know about. Remember that your tweets are searchable unless you have locked your account. Even then, it isn't a good idea as we all know privacy is never guaranteed online.

## Locking Your Profile

You can "lock" your profile so that only friends can see your updates by scrolling down to the bottom of your "Settings" tab on the Twitter website and clicking the box beside "Protect My Updates". This may **deprive you of followers** who would have otherwise followed you based on keywords in your posts and isn't advised for general use. You would only want this if you wanted to use Twitter, but need to avoid public communication for a specific reason. Even celebrities have public profiles on Twitter.

## Direct Message

This stands for direct message, which is the Twitter equivalent to e-mail. You may only send direct messages to those following you. To do so, click on "Direct Message" on their profile and type out your message, again only up to 140 characters. Automatic direct messages can be set up to thank someone for following you using a free service such as [TweetLater](#). Keep in mind that you cannot send Direct Messages to people that are not following you, even if you are following them. This is Twitter's built-in spam protection.

## Replies

Tweet starts with @username, meant to be in reply to a tweet made by @username

## Mention

tweet has @username somewhere in the tweet (not a reply, the @username appears at the start for a reply)