

Twitter Basics

What is Twitter?

Twitter is a platform where users share their thoughts, news, information and jokes in 140 characters of text or less. Users "follow" each other in order to see what information others are sharing and converse with specific people. It's an easy way to discover the latest news related to subjects you care about.

How it works:

Twitter contains information you will find valuable. Tweets from users you follow will show up on your home page – this is your “stream.” It’s like being delivered a newspaper with headlines you’ll always find interesting – you can discover news as it is happening; learn more about topics that are important to you; and hear from thought leaders in business, finance, healthcare, politics, and much more.

On Twitter, following someone is not necessarily an admission of friendship – just because you follow someone and can see what they tweet in your stream, doesn’t mean they are following you and can see what you tweet in their stream. But it affords interaction and conversation with others in short bursts.

There are certain words and jargon native to Twitter that you may have already heard. These terms and their abbreviations (in parentheses) are essential for understanding the network.

- **Tweet**: A 140-character message.
- **Retweet (RT)**: Re-sharing someone else’s tweet.
- **Stream**: The newsfeed of tweets you see on your homepage comprised of updates from users you follow.
- **Handle**: Your username.
 - Examples - @PeirceCollege, @Campus_Philly, @900amWURD.
- **Mention (@)**: A way to reference another user by his username in a tweet (e.g. @PeirceCollege). Users are notified when they are mentioned.
 - Example: @PeirceCollege tweets: Thanks @Campus_Philly for putting together a great online internship fair!
- **@reply**: Any update posted by clicking the **Reply** button on a Tweet. Any Tweet that is an @reply to you begins with your username and will show up in your **Mentions** tab on the **Connect** page. @Replies will always have "**in reply to @username**" listed at the bottom of the Tweet. If a Tweet doesn't have this, it's a mention.
- **Direct Message (DM)**: A private, 140-character message between two people. You may only DM a user who follows you.

- **Hashtag (#):** A way to denote a topic of conversation or participate in a larger linked discussion (e.g. #AmericanIdol, #Obama). A hashtag is a discovery tool that allows others to find your tweets, based on topics. You can also click on a hashtag to see all the tweets that mention it in real time — even from people you don't follow.

Twitter has a great [online glossary](#) that you can refer back to if you have vocab questions.

To create an account:

1. Go to www.Twitter.com and find the sign up box on the right.
2. Enter your **full name**, **email address**, and a **password**.
3. Click **Sign up for Twitter**.
4. On the next page, you can select a **username** — type your own or choose one that's suggested. Twitter will tell you if the username you want is available.
5. **Double-check** your name, email address, password, and username.
6. Click **Create my account**. You may be asked to complete a captcha to let them know that you're human.
7. Twitter will send a **confirmation email** to the address you entered on sign up, click the link in that email to confirm your email address and account.

First steps after you've created your account:

1. After signing up, use the Twitter wizard to follow 10 accounts, creating a customized stream of information on your homepage. Following means you'll get that user's Tweets on your Twitter homepage. You can unfollow anyone at any time. To find out how to follow news sources, friends, and more, read through [How to Follow People on Twitter](#).
2. Read this [Twitter 101 article](#).
3. Take the [Twitter Tour](#) to find out where things are on our website. Or, learn about using [Twitter on your mobile phone](#).

In support of the campaign to bring First Lady Michelle Obama to Peirce College's 2013 Commencement Ceremony, please follow the below steps to send her a tweet and encourage her to come speak:

1. **Sign in** to your Twitter account.
2. **Type your Tweet** into the box on the left side of your screen that says **Compose new Tweet...**
 - a. Tell the first lady why you want her to come to Peirce! Make sure your update is **fewer than 140 characters**. Your remaining characters show up as a number below the box.
 - b. Be sure to include the hashtag #BringFLOTUStoPeirce!**
 - c. If you're looking for a suggestion on what to say, here are some examples:
 - i. @FLOTUS Mrs. Obama, will you please speak at Peirce College's Commencement? Help us celebrate! #BringFLOTUStoPeirce!
 - ii. @FLOTUS Please join us at Peirce College's Commencement Ceremony on June 10! #BringFLOTUStoPeirce!
 - iii. @FLOTUS Please give the Commencement address at Peirce College's graduation on June 10! #BringFLOTUStoPeirce!
3. Click the Tweet button to **post the Tweet** to your profile.
4. You will immediately see your Tweet in the timeline on your homepage.

Works Cited

Smith, Brandon. "The Beginner's Guide to Twitter." 5 June 2012. *Mashable*. 27 Feb. 2013 <http://mashable.com/2012/06/05/twitter-for-beginners/>.

"Twitter Basics." *Twitter Help Center*. Twitter, n.d. Web. 28 Feb. 2013.

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