



OPEN AND OPTIMIZE  
A TWITTER ACCOUNT

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## Open and optimize a Twitter account

Twitter is a great way to engage with customers in real time. Quick updates (with a limit of 140 characters) can help your customers build a bond with your business as you share your thoughts, successes, specials, discounts or other updates with them.

# How to start a Twitter account

## 1 Sign up

Creating a Twitter handle is free and easy.

- Go to [www.twitter.com](https://www.twitter.com) and fill out the sign-up form.
  - Choose a username (see step 2 for tips on picking a name).
  - Now you're ready to start Tweeting!
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## 2 Customize your account

There are a couple ways to create interest for your handle while showing off your business's individuality.

- Add a profile and header photo to make your Tweets as easily identifiable as your business. Your profile photo will appear next to every Tweet. This is a great place for your company logo if it's identifiable when small. Your header photo will display whenever someone views your page, so it's an opportunity to make a good impression.
  - Fill in the About section with a few short words about your business. Including keywords can help your business to appear in relevant search results on Twitter.
  - When picking a name, it's best to use your business's name if it's available. If not, try a combination of the name and location. Remember to keep it short to help save on character counts when people @reply you.
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## 3 Get Tweeting

Congrats! Your business is now officially on Twitter. Remember to keep your messages within the 140-character limit. Here are some of the things you can do on Twitter.

- Share relevant links, news, insights, photos and videos about your business. Links are automatically shortened when posted.
- Connect with your customers by following people who follow you.
- Thank people who Retweet your Tweets, mention your business or support your business in any way.
- Reply and Retweet when someone Tweets about your business.
- Use hashtags like #Fasteners to join and track conversations. It's generally a best practice to use no more than two per tweet.

- Post video on Twitter using Twitter’s smartphone app, **Vine**, which easily lets you shoot and upload 6-second video clips. Vine can be a fast, easy way to give your customers a look at what you’re up to.
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### Build a following

- Search for people you already know, using the search box at the top of the page. People are more likely to follow back if you follow them first.
- Invite people to follow your business on Twitter through your business’s Facebook page and website. You can even include a Twitter follow button on your site to make it easier.

#### To add a button to your site:

- Log in to your Twitter account
  - Go to [twitter.com/about/resources/buttons#follow](https://twitter.com/about/resources/buttons#follow)
  - Customize the Follow button to your liking with the available options
  - Copy and paste the code into the HTML of your website wherever you would like the button to appear
- Get involved in current Twitter discussions related to your business.
  - Encourage Retweeting from your staff, customers and friends. Consider offering incentives, such as discounts.
  - Host a Twitter Timeline on your website or blog. This allows your Twitter updates to be displayed in these places. [Learn more about customizing your Twitter timeline.](#)
  - See how you’re doing by periodically checking on numbers like how many followers, mentions and Retweets you have with Twitter’s analytics dashboard, which can be found at <https://analytics.twitter.com>.
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## Best practices for using Twitter

### Using hashtags

Hashtags are keywords or phrases with the # symbol in front of them. When you attach the # symbol to a word or phrase, you’re making it searchable. This allows you to easily follow discussions surrounding your business and appear in other discussions on the same topic. When creating a hashtag that you want others to pick up and use too, make sure it’s short and catchy. For example, if you sold oranges, you may want to try including the phrase #Oranges in your post. That way, if someone searched for oranges using that hashtag, your post would be shown to them along with any others. Hashtags cannot have spaces or special characters.

### Tweets and Messages

- @reply is when someone hits the “Reply” button on a Tweet. The resulting message will automatically start with @username (the person you’re replying to). Every time you receive an @reply, it appears in your Mentions Tab on the connect page. Replies are only visible to people who follow both your account and the recipient of the reply. Any Tweet beginning with the “@” symbol will register as a reply.
- Retweet lets you share something someone else has already Tweeted. Simply click on the Retweet button below the message.

- A picture can be added to your Tweet. Just click on the camera icon and follow the simple prompts. Tweets with pictures tend to see higher engagement.
  - Videos can be shared via Twitter by using Vine or a video-sharing site like YouTube. Vine is Twitter's app that lets you post quick 6-second videos from your smartphone.
  - Direct message is a private message you can send to one of your followers that only they can see. To send a direct message, click on the person icon on the top right.
  - Report spam by opening the user's profile and clicking on the cog icon – this will launch a drop-down that includes an option to block or report the person.
  - Trending topics identify subjects that are currently popular based on who you follow and your location. These are useful for seeing emerging topics, so you can follow the conversations.
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### **Do's and don'ts**

- **Do** limit your Tweets to under 10 per day to start. People should be aware of your business, without being annoyed by it. If you see a lot of positive interactions, consider increasing your frequency.
  - **Do** use an authentic voice. People are more open to messages that come from an individual as opposed to a corporation.
  - **Don't** send out all of your Tweets at the same time. Space them out throughout the day. You can schedule Tweets to appear at set times using TweetDeck or HootSuite.
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### **TweetDeck**

This Twitter application is designed to let you more efficiently utilize Twitter. It works like a dashboard with columns that you can tailor to the content you'd like to see. It's a great tool to see what people are saying about your business and the discussions going on about your industry or area—and to participate in those discussions.

[Learn more about TweetDeck here.](#)

### **Getting your account verified**

If you see a blue check-marked badge at the top right of a Twitter profile, you can be sure the account has been verified as authentic by Twitter. Twitter proactively verifies accounts of people and businesses with a high risk of being impersonated. You can't request a verification, but as a business, one thing you can do to show that your account is authentic is to simply link it to your business's official website.

### **Embedding a Tweet in your site**

Want to display a fully functional Tweet on your website or blog? It's easy. Click on Embed this Tweet at the bottom of the Tweet permalink page and follow the few short steps. In addition to messages, this embedded code will also allow you to display photos and videos.