



Twitter How-to

Follow the LTC: twitter.com/ualtc

What is Twitter?

“Twitter is a service for friends, family, and co-workers to communicate and stay connected through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: What are you doing?” Posts in Twitter are called *tweets*. You can talk about what you’re spreading on your toast or what your cat is doing. Or, you can *tweet* about things that colleagues or students will want to read.

Twitter is called *micro-blogging* because it is like a blog, you type what you are doing, reading, thinking, watching, hearing, studying, etc. But because you only get 140 characters in which to express yourself, your tweets are short bursts of information.

Twitter uses RSS feeds, like blogs and other news feeds. Because it emphasizes real-time broadcasts, it has rapidly become popular with mass media organizations like NPR, CNN, Fox, and ESPN. Also, there are downloadable applications for iPhones, Blackberries, and other mobile devices that enable you to subscribe to Twitter accounts and post to your own.

How do I get an account?

Go to <http://twitter.com/> and click on Get Started -- Join! Complete “Join the Conversation” to create an account.

Now that I have an account, what do I do?

Your tweets can’t be longer than 140 characters. As you compose your tweet you can see how many characters you have left.

Follow the LTC! Log in, go to <http://twitter.com/ualtc> and click on Follow.

Find other people on Twitter

Log in and in the upper navigation bar click on Find People. Enter someone’s username, a firstname or a lastname, [e.g., Bruce, Colleen, Shaq, StephenColbert]

Search for Twitter usernames that are **not** people, like the LTC. Go to <http://search.twitter.com/> and enter a username, [e.g., ualtc, azpress, uanews]

Can I make links like I do on a webpage?

Because Twitter is web-based, you can include hyperlinks by entering the full URL. However, many URLs are so long that they use up many of those 140 characters. A solution is tinyurl.com, a service that takes long URLs and creates an alias URL. For example, this URL

<http://googlesystem.blogspot.com/2009/06/google-to-launch-microblogging-search.html> is 83 characters long. But after TinyURL, it is shortened to only 25 characters.

How can I include images and video?

You can't embed images or upload videos to Twitter, but there are free services that enable you to upload an image or video and put a URL in your tweet. Followers click the link and it opens in their browser. yfrog.com is a popular one. livepage.apple.com

Are there any instructional uses?

- As a classroom response system - ask a question and have students respond using wireless Internet via laptops and mobile devices
- For students to ask questions of the professor
- Facilitate discussions among whole classes or groups in a class
- Collaboration - students can develop virtual study groups, share resources, and receive/provide support to each other
- Discussing course reading - students record their impressions and questions to allow their fellow classmates to give their input

More ideas:

- "100 Serious Twitter Tips for Academics" <http://tinyurl.com/mu2hd5> by Jill Gordon appears in the blog **Best Colleges Online**. The post correctly points out that Twitter "has grown into a powerful tool for business, communication, and education" and offers 100 tips on getting started, Twitter etiquette, strategies, ideas for instructors, benefits for students, tips for the class, assignments using Twitter, suggestions for people and things to track on Twitter, Twitter tools, Twitter tools for use in academia, and finding people in academia to follow.
- Twitter.edu: <http://twitteredu.blogspot.com/> Resources for using a micro-blog application in an academic setting is Elaine Edwards of Kansas State's blog devoted to using Twitter in higher ed. It's current and includes posts titled "Tech Tips for Educators," "Suggested K-State Twitter Guidelines," and "Examples of Twitter Usage from other Universities."
- Steve Wheeler's "Teaching with Twitter" on his *Learning with 'e's* blog <http://tinyurl.com/8b6mej>. Wheeler identified ten uses of Twitter for education.
- David Parry, a professor at the University of Texas at Dallas, outlined many "Ways to use Twitter in Academia" on the blog *AcademHack*. <http://tinyurl.com/25u2cx>.

- "Teaching with Twitter - an open source teaching resource - part 1" appears in the Australian blog gatewatching: researching citizen journalism, March 8th, 2009 <http://tinyurl.com/ycedmpp>

Should my department or program Twitter?

Absolutely! You can attract a following among current and prospective students, alumni and community members with Twitter. A rule-of-thumb is three tweets a day. You can promote student successes, faculty accomplishments, and news and events. It's easy and takes only seconds. Once you do this, be sure to include your Twitter site in print documents, webpages, and email messages.

Are there professional uses?

Of course, but you already knew that. Find someone tweeting who has similar interests. Use Twitter's Find People page to search by name. When you find someone to follow, look to see who they are following and who is following them. If you attend a webinar, tweet points that the speaker is making.

What are these symbols for that I see in people's tweets?

The hashtag # is a good one. It is used to bring all the tweets that have been posted on a topic in one place. If you read a post that includes #Indonesia tsunami, click it. You will go to a Twitter page with everyone's post who included that hashtag. See this page in the Twitter help resources for more information. <http://tinyurl.com/mkx227>

Another that you see used a lot are @replies and mentions. On Twitter's support page you read: "People say lots of things on Twitter, and sometimes you want to say something back. ... You can start a tweet with @username and it will appear in the person's replies tab."

Are there 3rd party software apps to use with Twitter?

Twitter downloads <http://twitter.com/downloads> is the place to find it.

There are many free applications to use with Twitter. Tweetdeck and Twhirl seem to be among the most popular to use on your desktop and laptop computers. There are plug-ins, like Twitterfox for the Firefox browser. If you have a Facebook account you know there is a status box. You can have Twitter update your Facebook status through a Facebook app, and TwitterGadget works with iGoogle and GMail.

Who at the UA is using Twitter? [followed by Twitter *username*]

Yes, there are others. Tell us who at ulearningtechs@gmail.com

UA - Institutional

U of Arizona *UofA*

Admissions *UofArizona*
Alumni Office *UAAA*
Arizona Cancer Center *AZCancerCenter*
Arizona Public Media *azpublicmedia*
Athletics Department *AZATHLETICS*
BIO5 Institute *bio5*
Center for English as a Second Language *UofA_CESL*
College of Education *UACOE*
College of Pharmacy *UAPharmacy*
Department of Geology *UAgeology*
Early Outreach *uaeao*
High-Resolution Imaging Science Experiment on board the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter *HiRISE*
Institutional Repository *ualibir*
Libraries *ualibraries*
Office of Technology Transfer *ArizonaOTT*
Parking & Transportation Services *UAPTS*
Police Department *UofAZPolice*
Press *azpress*
SALT (Students with Learning and Attention Challenges) *saltcenter*
School of Journalism *uajschool*
School of Media Art *UA_MediaArts*
Steele Center *SteeleCenter*

UA-Organizational

Arizona Daily Wildcat *WildcatOpinions*
Arizona Volleyball *ArizonaVBall*
GallagherTheater *UAGallagher*
Gymnastics *AzGymCats*
Solar Decathlon *UASolarD*
Wilbur T. Wildcat *wilbur_wildcat*

Professional

Htay Hla, IT director at the College of Public Health *hhla*
Matt Stoner, Instructional Designer Integrative Medicine *gmstoner*
Melody Buckner *Melody236*
Michael Griffith, director, application development group *mgriffith*
Stuart Glogoff *sglogoff*

Where can i find a directory of colleges and universities tweeting?

"Twitter Fan Wiki" <http://twitter.pbworks.com/> is an actual Twitter site that was "set this up as a place to post cool ideas, uses and feature requests for Twitter. Share anything you've found that you think the Twitter community might be interested in!" This site also has a directory of higher ed Twitter sites <http://twitter.pbworks.com/Universities>.

Can you show any examples of it being used well?

twitter.com/skrug: author of one of the best books on web design, **Don't Make Me Think**, tweets about usability and web design

twitter.com/National_Ag_Lib: notice how the tweets are show but include URLs to full information

twitter.com/stealingsand: is a web designer who tweets about good and bad designs, new websites she finds that provide free resources for web design, and a lot of personal things.

Links, links, links ...

Resources when using Twitter

<http://yfrog.com/> yfrog shares images and videos on Twitter

<http://12seconds.tv/> records 12 seconds of video that uploads to your Twitter account.

<http://tinyurl.com/> takes a long URL and shortens it

<http://bit.ly/> "shorten, share and track your links"

Articles, webpages & blog entries about Twitter

"100 Professors You Should Follow and Learn from on Twitter," *Associate Degree 2009*. last accessed June 15, 2009. (<http://associatedegree.org/category/personal-learning/>)

eduStyle *Social Sites - Twitter [scroll down the page]* last accessed June 15, 2009. (http://www.edustyle.net/gallery_other.php)

Johnson, Steven, "How Twitter Will Change the Way We Live," **Time.com**, Jun. 05, 2009. last accessed June 15, 2009. (<http://tinyurl.com/qtvneh>)

Miners, Zach. "Tweeting Your Way to Better Grades," **U.S. News & World Report**, June 15, 2009. last accessed June 19, 2009 (<http://tinyurl.com/ktpb4>)

Twitter Tools <http://justtweetit.com/twitter-tools/> Tools for browsers, desktops, developers, Linux, Macs, Wordpress,

Wheeler, Steve, "Teaching with Twitter." Weblog entry. Learning with 'e's. January 2, 2009. last accessed October 2, 2009 (<http://tinyurl.com/8b6mej>).

Zandt, Deanna, "Why Twitter, anyways?" Weblog entry. deanna zandt. March 2, 2009. last accessed June 15, 2009. (<http://www.deannazandt.com/2009/03/02/why-twitter-anyways/>).

Zandt, Deanna, "A non-fanatical beginner's guide to Twitter." Weblog entry. deanna zandt. Feb. 26, 2009. last accessed June 15, 2009. (<http://www.deannazandt.com/>)

2009/02/26/a-non-fanatical-beginners-guide-to-twitter/).

[The following information is intended as an aid to finding apps for your mobile devices. Please evaluate any app you are considering for your mobile device before downloading/purchasing.]

Mobile device apps -- iPhone and iPod Touch

Go in the iTunes Store's App Store, do a power search for the Title/Description Twitter. Some are free, others cost from \$0.99 to \$3.99. Click the icon to read the app's description and see Customer Ratings/Reviews. You may also visit Twitter Fan Wiki's Mobile Apps page <http://twitter.pbworks.com/Mobile-Apps> . This is a wiki which means it is developed based on the *wisdom of mobs*. Check out the Sidebar on the right hand side of the page for more information about using Twitter.

Mobile device apps -- Blackberry (you can Google the different products to read reviews)

Twitterberry <http://www.orangatame.com/products/twitterberry/>

Twibble <http://crackberry.com/twibble-new-java-twitter-app> download link at bottom of this page (also said to work with the Nokia S60)

TweetGenius <http://www.thetweetgenius.com/>

Other devices and apps

Tiny Twitter <http://www.tinytwitter.com/> described to work with "ANY Java enabled phone (that's a bunch & includes the Blackberry) and ANY Windows Mobile Pocket PC or Smartphone"

Fring <http://www.fring.com/> works with Nokia Smartphones. In March 2009 announced New Twitter 2.0 for fring <http://www.fring.com/blog/?p=896>

Gravity <http://mobileways.de/products/gravity/gravity/> "Gravity is the first fully-featured and native Twitter client for the S60 platform. It supports multiple accounts, Twitter Search, Laconica, posting of pictures via MobyPicture & TwitPic and wraps everything into a gorgeous looking interface."