

# A Starters Guide To Twitter – Part 1

## Sending Your First Tweet



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## What Is Twitter?

What is Twitter? Twitter is a micro blogging platform which would have to be one of the fastest growing websites on the internet today. It has extremely taken the internet by storm and there are estimated to be 10,000 new users per day on average who are signing up to participate in this internet revolution.

Like I said previously, Twitter is a micro blogging site where you can post updates. Each time you do an update you are limited to using 140 characters. Now this may seem small, however as you become more used to using Twitter you will be amazed at what you can put into 140 characters.

Now that said, Twitter is a whole lot more than just posting “micro” updates. What you make of Twitter is entirely up to you. In a sense it is described as being like one large worldwide chat room, but it again it depends on how you use this platform. It all boils down to how many people you follow. If you are following thousands of people then your “Tweetstream” (the updates you receive from people who you follow) then it will feel like a large chat room. If you are only following a couple of hundred people or less, then it will be a lot easier to keep up to date with who you are following.

One thing that Twitter is good for is meeting different people online, especially those that have similar interests to you. We will talk about this further as we make our way through this report.

## **How To Set Up Your Twitter Account**

Setting up your first account on Twitter is easy. As with a lot of activities you undertake on the internet, there are a few things that you need to make yourself aware of first. This can also apply to you if you already have an existing Twitter as well. If this is the case then you can use these tips to try and improve your current experience with Twitter.

The first thing to do if you don't have an account is go to the home page of Twitter at <http://twitter.com> . You will be asked to either login or register. If you don't have an account, then of course you will need to register. So let's go through the registration process and explain it all here. First of all click on the green "Sign Up Now" button as shown below.

### ***The Registration Screen***

The Twitter screen will ask you for your first name and last name and will then check this is entered correctly. A green tick will appear next to the box.

The next box asks you for a user name and this is where you need to give some thought to how you are going to represent yourself on Twitter. You should remember that you can set up more than one account on Twitter, but you will need to use a separate email address for each one.

Now this is where you will need to do a bit of thinking. The first account you register on Twitter should always be done in your own name if it's available to be used. Naturally, more common names like JohnSmith (with Twitter you cannot use spaces in user names) will already be taken by someone else. It is possible however, to use other variations of your own name such as John\_Smith, or John\_Smith14 for example. You can only use an underscore in a Twitter user name. Hyphens are not allowed to be used in a user name.

It isn't absolutely essential that you register your Twitter user name as your own name, but it is advisable to do so if you can, especially if your name is an unusual or original one. The last thing you want is someone else impersonating you on Twitter, or anywhere else on the internet for that matter.

If you want to register a your business name, then you can do this, but do make sure that you use your own name when you sign up so that you can be identified and connected with the name of your business you register. We will look at the ideas and reasons for operating under each type of registration (business and personal name) a bit later in this report.

So now we have put in our Full Name, User Name and the Password of your choice (make sure you keep this somewhere safe).

You now need to enter your email address. Email addresses are linked to your account and you can only use your email address once. For each account that you register with Twitter, you will need to use a different email address.

Now the last thing you need to do is to fill in the Captcha letters and then click on Create My Account.

The next screen will ask if you want to add any of your friends from the popular web based email programs. You can do this later if you wish.

At the next screen you will be presented with a short list of people who Twitter asks if you would like to follow. Choose some if you wish, but it isn't necessary. Most people prefer to find their own friends on Twitter.

When you click on Finish, you will then be taken to your very own Twitter account.

You are now logged in and ready to go!

## ***Changing and Updating Your Settings***

We are now going to fill out our settings and this is very important on Twitter. You will find the access to this at the top right of the screen, fourth link from the left.

On this page you will notice there are some tabs across the top. For now we will concentrate on the Account tab.

The information you entered on when signing up is already entered here, but it's now time to pad this out so that people can find you on Twitter and you also want to make yourself an interesting person to be followed. People will use the information which you enter here to make that decision. Much of what you enter is also searchable on Twitter and through various third party applications.

One thing to note is that you can change your user name at any time on this screen. You just have to enter your password to do so. Although it can be done, it can confuse your follower base, so I wouldn't recommend doing it on a weekly basis.

First of all change your time zone to your own and then move onto the one line bio.

## ***Completing Your Bio***

In this section you have 160 characters which you can use to “sell” yourself. Make sure you spend some time to come up with something good. Don't just enter a bunch of keywords as they will appear boring to people, even though they may get you found. Use keywords if you choose, but make sure your Bio starts with the words “I am” and then go on to give a brief description about yourself.

For example you might put:-

*I am a keen gardener and hiker who also has a passion for the outdoors, internet marketing and affiliate marketing who also loves social media.*

Now that description is only 143 characters, so you could still get some more keywords in your bio. No doubt you can see the keywords that are there which are gardener, hiker, internet marketing, affiliate marketing and social media. Using these terms in your bio will have you coming up in search results when people are looking for other individuals to follow who have similar interests to you. As you can see, it is worth taking some time to get your bio right.

### ***Completing the Remainder of this Section***

If you have a web site or blog enter it's address here, making sure you include the <http://> prefix to the beginning of the address. For example:-

Do not use [www.kelliesimon.com.au](http://www.kelliesimon.com.au) use <http://www.kelliesimon.com.au>

Your location (where you reside) is next and this is also important so that people can search and find other people who are located in the same area as them. This will also become important to you if you are going to be chasing rankings on Twitter. Users are ranked by their locations.

### ***Protecting Your Updates***

This is included if you want to have a private account and you have to approve followers. NEVER turn this on if you intend to use Twitter to meet new people.

You can now save your settings, but note here that there is also a link to delete your account should you ever wish to do so.

## **Devices**

You can enter your mobile phone number here if you want Twitter updates sent to your phone. I personally don't use this feature. I couldn't think of anything worse, particularly if you have a couple of thousand followers.

## **Notices**

You can have Twitter “nudge” you with a text to your mobile phone if you haven't posted an update in a 24 hour period. Again, I don't use this feature as it is more of a nuisance, but this is entirely up to you.

The Replies function is an interesting one and will determine what tweets you see that are prefixed (begin) with the @ symbol. This is how you are able to direct a tweet to a particular individual. There is an excellent help screen explanation on this topic, so it is advised to go there to make your decision.

The rest of the notices are pretty much self explanatory. Please note if you are new to Twitter then the Direct Messages feature is something that may require you to read up on in more detail to fully understand. If you are following someone and they are following you, a Direct Message can be sent but it won't appear in the Twitter timeline. In other words they are basically a private message between the two people. If you don't use Twitter that often then I suggest that you do accept to receive Twitter notifications via email so that when you get a Direct Message you can respond. If you are going to be using Twitter often then leave the notifications set to off. Why? As this will slowly start to clutter up your email inbox.

The same goes for the notifications you receive when you have a new follower. I personally leave this off as I check Twitter frequently and again, these only clog up my inbox.

### ***Picture Tab***

This is really important. When you open this page you will see the small avatar on the screen which is set to the default for Twitter. If you want to get new followers, then it is essential to put a photo of yourself in here. If you are your Twitter account for your business or company, then I recommend using your logo. Whatever type of picture you do decide to use, remember that it's purpose is so you can easily be identified within in the Tweetstream by your followers. The graphic is more often important than your name when people are scanning through Tweets and you want yours to stand out in a way.

### ***Design Tab***

Here is where you can change the background of your Twitter page from the default one. Twitter does provide you with a number of alternative backgrounds that you can select. You can even upload your own background. You are also able to change all the colours if you wish. Whatever you decide to do here, just change the background so you are not running the default. This shows that you have put in some time and effort in setting up your account.

A quick note worth mentioning here is that with the range of Twitter client applications that are available these days, a lot more people don't even look at your web page any more. But, it is one component of your presence on Twitter and it is worth doing well. A bit later I will show you places where you can get a more professional background than those that Twitter offer.

Ok, that's it for setting up your account. The last thing you do need to do now is send your first "Tweet". To do this simply click on the word "Home" at the top of the screen (right of the centre). Now you can type and send your first Tweet. Go on. Give it a go. Ok I'll get you started.

Type in something like “Hi. I've just joined Twitter and I'm looking forward to meeting a range of interesting people”. Type this in and click on the “Update” button.

Yay! You've just sent your first Tweet. That wasn't hard was it.

Twitter is a fantastic application whether you use it for business or pleasure. Give it a go and see what you think.

## **Coming Up In Part 2**

In part 2 of this report we will covering topics including:

- Twitter Client Applications
- Your Tweets
- Replies and Re-tweeting
- How To Gain Followers
- Backgrounds
- Advanced Twitter Tips

Happy Tweeting

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