Twitter is a micro-blogging site that allows users to create and post ‘tweets’ of up to 140 characters.

Tweets can be read by people who ‘follow’ the original tweeter, or followers of #hashtags that are connected to tweets.

The service allows users to connect and engage in dialogue with global communities that congregate and follow #s. People who tend to follow #s share similar interests such as research or sports, politics and the list goes on.

There are a variety of ways people can use Twitter, for example, following global trends and current affairs, research, keeping in contact with friends and colleagues, or even reaching out to potential job opportunities.

Follow instructions on the right to sign up and gain a more concrete understanding of the service.

**Signing up to Twitter**

**Step 1**

Goto [Twitter.com](http://Twitter.com) and click ‘Sign up for Twitter’

**Step 2**

Enter your details and click ‘Create my account’.

NB: It is possible to create more than one account in Twitter. This may come in handy if you would like to remain anonymous.

**Step 3**

Go to the inbox of the email address you registered and confirm the Twitter email (check your spam box if not in your inbox), and volia

NB: Your username cannot be changed. Furthermore it is how you will be known and reached by the wider community. Please choose and appropriate name that you are comfortable with people using.

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This quick guide was created and up to date October, 2013. Changes made to the web 2.0 service since this date have not been accounted for. The guide was made on behalf of the Learning and Teaching Centre Macquarie University as part of a Faculty Partnership Program.
The Twitter Username and Tweets

To compose a 'tweet' you will need to click on the top right hand corner of the screen. Once you click the icon, a text box will appear for you to compose your tweet. Once you have typed what you want to say, click 'tweet' to send it out to the world to read.

The Username you gave yourself is the main way people will communicate with you. People communicate with you by entering your username in a tweet and clicking send. It is possible for someone to send one tweet to multiple people simply by adding more usernames. Twitter recognises users by using the @ symbol before the username. Therefore, you need to @someone in order to tweet to them. For example:

Here is a Tweet. It will go to noone as I have not sent it to anyone. But anyone who follows me will see it.

Here is another Tweet. It will go to @darth as I put @darth into the tweet. All my followers will also see it.

Here is another Tweet. It will go to @darth and @Strooper, as I put @darth and @Strooper into the tweet. All my followers will also see it.

In this example, Darth and the Stormtrooper are not necessarily my followers. They could be industry leaders, researchers, potential employers, or people I want to connect with my followers.

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The Twitter #hashtag and Tweets

The #hashtag is a versatile way of communicating with online communities. It allows users to reach out and share information with communities. Alternatively, #hashtags can be used to tap into rich sources of information fueled by dialogue between other community members. There are thousands of online communities that use #hashtags as a means of keeping in contact. For example, #auspol is a #hashtag for Australian political discussion. The challenge is discovering the appropriate #hashtag that interests you.

Using the #hashtag

When you know of #hashtags with strong community followings, you can add them into your tweets to share and connect with people. Like @s, you can add multiple #hashtags into tweets so that your message is spread further across what is known as the 'twittersphere'. For example:

Hey #everyone, check out this tweet...
#everyone, did you know you can add short links in tweets? bit.ly/T4QVjF

Going to the beach tomorrow #funfunfun
Staying home over the weekend to study #funfunfun

Yo! iOS 7 is making me sick and dizzy #funfunfun

In the wise words of Rebecca Black, gotta get down on #friday
About to leave for the weekend. Gotta love #friday

Have you seen the bad lip read on Game of Thrones? bit.ly/19PxGpa -#doit
@Strooper You should take on @Darth -#doit #starwars #Doit - that's right - #doit!

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Twitter Management tools

Twitter is fast paced. There is no need to follow everyone or everything. In addition, it is impossible to track everything. Try to be in the moment at the moment. However, there maybe some people or #hashtags you want to give that extra attention. To do this you can use tools like Tweetdeck or Hootsuite. These tools let you manage twitter streams in a way that is efficient and convenient for you.

Tweetdeck and Hootsuite allow you to feed streams of content into columns like so.

The best way to figure these tools out is to experiment. That way you can set up what you follow and what priority and order in which content is displayed.

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