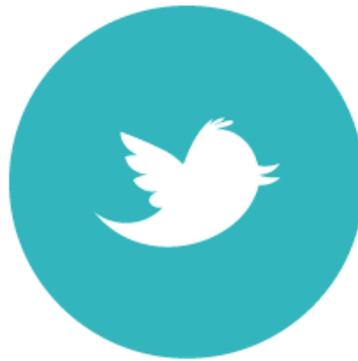


Doors Open Days

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Social Media Guides



Guide to Twitter

Twitter (<http://twitter.com>) is a social media platform which allows you to post short, regular updates which can be shared with your followers and other Twitter users. Twitter is best for text-based updates and sharing links, and is also great for interacting with other users. This guide will give you an introduction to using Twitter. Topics covered:

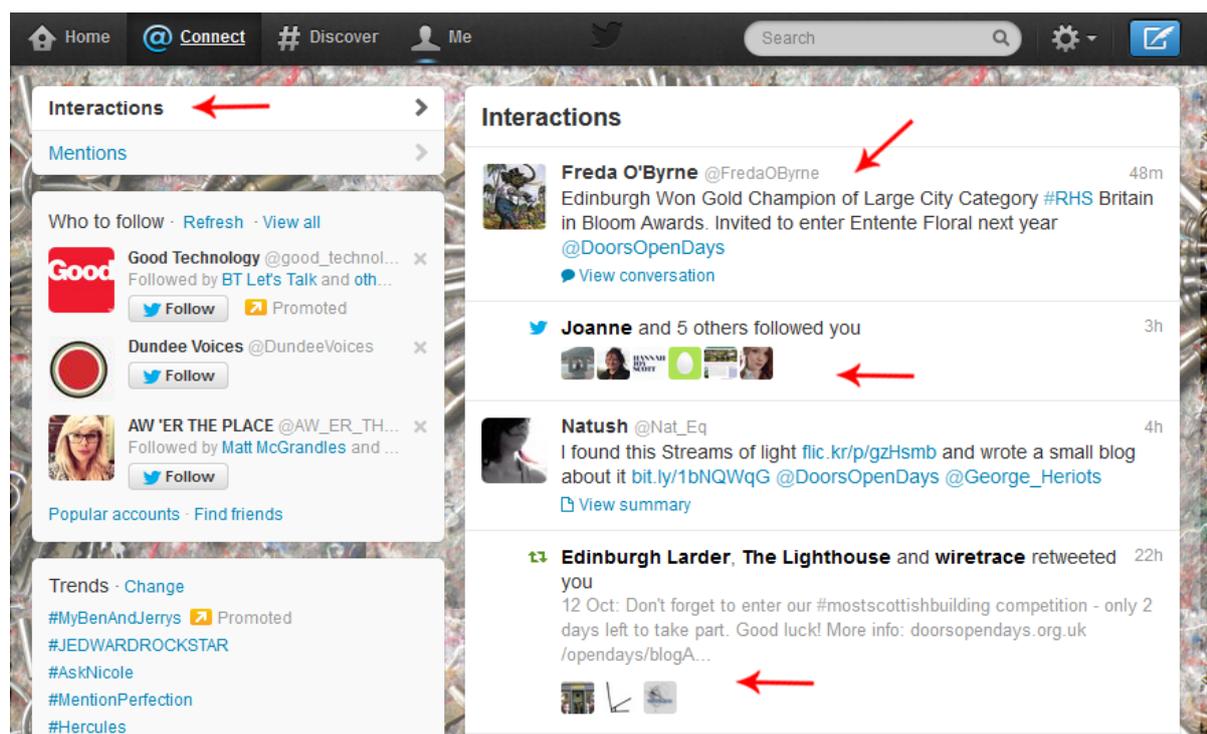
- [Getting Started](#)
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Getting Started

Begin by following some relevant users e.g. local businesses or organisations similar to yourself. To follow a user, click on their profile page and select the “Follow” button. Their updates will then appear in your **Home Feed** (click on the Home button in the top menu bar to view this). Updates from users you follow, as well as your own updates, will appear in this feed where it says **Tweets**. You will also see your basic profile information which gives you a quick snapshot of how many tweets you have, how many people are following you etc.



Next to the Home button is the **Connect** button. This feed shows all your interactions, and lets you see when another user has sent you a tweet, mentioned you in a tweet, retweeted or favourited one of your tweets, or followed you.



The next button is the **Discover** feed. This shows you some tweets which may be relevant to you, based on who you already follow, your location etc. Here you can find tweets which may be of interest to you and your followers, or suggestions of new users to follow. You can also use the **Search** bar at the top to search for a particular user, topic or hashtag.

The final button is **Me**, and this shows your own profile page. This shows all your tweets as well as information about who you follow, your favourite tweets etc. You can also edit your profile information here by clicking the “Edit Profile” button and adding in information about your organisation, a profile picture etc.

On the right hand side of the top menu bar, there is also a button for **Direct Messages** (private messages from other users), the **Settings** button (where you can edit your settings, profile information etc.) and a shortcut to **Compose Tweets**.

Writing Posts

Once you have familiarised yourself with the various pages and feeds, return to the Home page to begin writing your tweets. To the left of the main feed, you will see some of your basic profile information and a box which says “Compose new Tweet...” – click inside the box to begin typing.

Twitter updates have a character limit of **140 characters**. Any updates which are longer than this will NOT be published. The number underneath the Compose box shows how many characters you have left. It is a good idea to keep updates short and to the point so you can fit all the relevant information you need within the 140 characters.

Be sure to include a link to your website or blog (or another website if it is relevant to your tweet) where users can find out more information about the topic. Not only will this encourage users to visit your website, but it also means you can expand on discussions which would not fit within the short 140 character limit.

It is also a good idea to include **hashtags** within your tweets. Hashtags are like labels which allow you to group together tweets about a certain topic. Any users can search for a particular hashtag, and they will be able to see any tweets (from any users) labelled with this particular hashtag. If you are organising a particular event, it is good to come up with a hashtag which you and your followers can use so everyone can easily keep up to date with all tweets on the topic. For example, Doors Open Days 2013 used the hashtag **#DOD13** and encouraged other users to add this to their tweets about Doors Open Days. Keep your hashtags short and easy to remember so they will fit within character limits.

You can also **Mention** other users in your tweets by adding in their @username. This means they will receive a notification of your tweet so will easily be able to read it and retweet it if it is also relevant to their followers. For example, you might want to tweet something like “Have you booked your tickets to visit us as part of @DoorsOpenDays yet?”. This makes it easy for us to retweet your tweet to our followers. Note: if the @username appears as the first character/word of your tweet (e.g. “@DoorsOpenDays was great this year!”) it will only be seen by people who follow both your Twitter and the Doors Open Days Twitter accounts. If the @username appears after the first character of your tweet (e.g. “We thought @DoorsOpenDays was great this year!”) it will be seen by all of your followers. To get around this, you can simply add an extra character in front of the @username so all followers can see the tweet (e.g. “. @DoorsOpenDays was great this year!”)

Once you’re happy with your tweet, click the **Tweet** button to publish it.

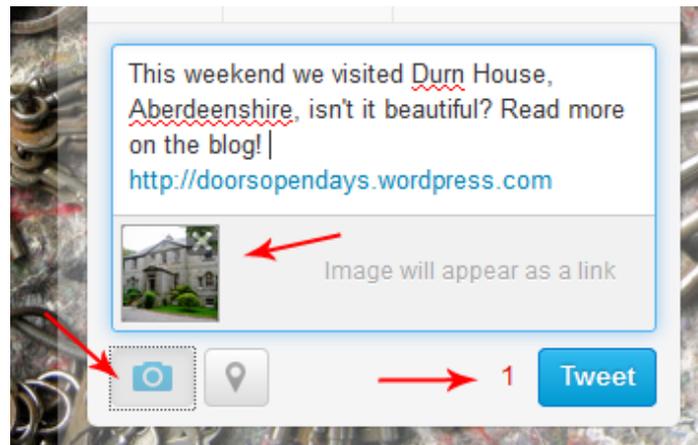


The tweet will now appear on your profile page, as well as in the Home feed. This means anyone who follows you will be able to read it.



Adding Media to Posts

To add photos to a tweet, click on the camera icon underneath the Compose box. This will let you choose a photo from your computer and upload it within your tweet. A preview of your image will be shown (it will appear larger once published). The photo will appear as a link in your tweet, and when users click on the link or “Expand” your tweet they will be able to see the photo. This means that the link to the photo will use up some of your character limit – usually around 23 characters. Be sure to check your tweet is still within the character limit before publishing.



As mentioned in the previous section, it is a good idea to include links in your tweets whenever possible. To add a link, simply copy and paste the URL into the Compose box and it will automatically appear as a clickable link once the tweet is published.

Retweeting, Favouriting and Replying

One of the most important features of Twitter is being able to share updates and interact with other users. **Retweeting** allows you to share another user's tweet on your own timeline which means your followers (who were not already following the original user) will be able to see the tweet and reply to it, retweet it or follow the user themselves. To retweet something, however over a tweet in your Home or Connect feed and click the **Retweet** button. The button will turn green and this means the tweet has been successfully posted to your feed.



Other users can retweet your tweets in the same way, and notifications of people who have retweeted you will appear in your Connect feed.

You can also **Favourite** tweets in the same way – click the Favourite star button and it will turn yellow to indicate it has been successfully favourited. These tweets will be saved in your favourites (which you can access at the top left of your profile page) but will not be posted to your timeline. This is good for saving important information which you may wish to refer back to later, but don't necessarily think is relevant to all of your followers. Other users can favourite your tweets in the same way.

If a user sends you a tweet which you want to respond to, you can **Reply** to a tweet. Hover over the tweet and click the Reply button. The tweet will expand and a "Reply to @username" box will appear. After their @username, type your response and click the Tweet button. The tweet will then be published to your timeline and the user will receive a notification. The tweet will also appear in the Home feed of any users who follow both of you. You can include multiple @usernames if the tweet is a conversation mentioning several users. The same character limits apply.

The image shows a screenshot of a Twitter post. At the top, the user's profile picture and name 'Natush @Nat_Eq' are visible, along with a '4h' timestamp. The main text of the tweet reads: 'I found this Streams of light flic.kr/p/gzHsmb and wrote a small blog about it bit.ly/1bNQWqG @DoorsOpenDays @George_Heriotics'. Below the text are interaction options: 'Hide summary', 'Reply', 'Retweeted', 'Favorite', and 'More'. A red arrow points to the 'Reply' button. The tweet includes a Tumblr link with the title 'Of horror mansions, Harry Potter, and curious minds' and a short paragraph of text. To the right of the text is a small image showing an ornate building entrance. Below the tweet, there is a section for '1 RETWEET' with a small profile picture. The timestamp '12:34 PM - 13 Oct 13' and 'Details' are shown, along with a 'Flag media' option. A red arrow points to the 'Details' link. Below the tweet is a reply box containing the text '@Nat_Eq @George_Heriotics Fantastic blog post, thanks very much for sharing!'. At the bottom of the reply box are icons for adding photos and locations, and a 'Tweet' button with the number '66' next to it.

General Tips

Make sure your tone of voice is quite chatty and informal on Twitter. Keep things professional and relevant, but ensure you come across as friendly, approachable and engaging. Try to use proper spelling and grammar as much as possible, but some abbreviations and informal language is fine. Use common sense to determine what is appropriate for your audience – avoid swearing or talking about your personal life!

Try to include a “call to action” in all your tweets to make sure your followers engage with your updates. Ask them questions which will prompt replies, encourage them to subscribe to your mailing list/visit your website/enter your competition etc. Make sure tweets ask your followers to “do” something, rather than just being a statement.

Engage with other users as much as possible. Retweet tweets which would be relevant and interesting to your followers, and try to reply to all tweets which users have sent you. Encourage your followers to share your tweets with their followers by Retweeting, so your updates can reach people who may not already be following you yet. If you are tweeting about a particular organisation, remember to add in their @username so there is a higher chance they’ll spot your tweet and be able to engage with it.

Make the most of hashtags by including them in your tweets, and encourage your followers to use your hashtags too so you can easily keep up to date with their tweets. If you have a particular event coming up, be sure to let your followers know about the hashtag beforehand so they can include it in their tweets. Try to keep hashtags short and easy to remember so people are more likely to be able to include them in their tweets.