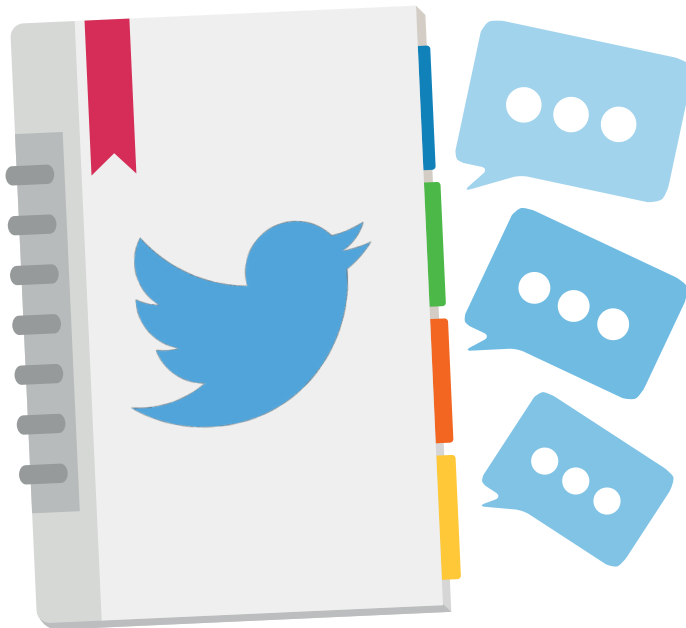


A Guide to Using Twitter





How can I use Twitter as an author?

Twitter is an extremely simple, yet powerful, tool for engaging directly with your readership. It's a great way of sharing information quickly, and is less intrusive than other social media networks, enabling you to strike a good balance between being professional and personal. The following are some basic guidelines and best practices for growing your audience and engendering the right kind of relationship with them.

'It pays to be an early bird'

The best time to set up any social media account is prior to publication, so that you already have an established audience to talk to during the main promotional period for your publication. By setting up your Twitter account a good few months before your publication is released, you'll have enough time to develop a community of interested followers and to engage with other like-minded people. Having this time to establish your social media presence is crucial.

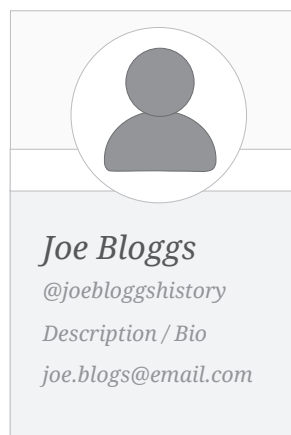


Best practices

Set up your account

Setting up an account is very easy by simply following Twitter's helpful suggestions <https://support.twitter.com/articles/100990-signing-up-with-twitter>.

Take care to pick an account name (or 'handle') that is descriptive, clever, and easily searchable (for example, by your name or field). Bear in mind that what means something to you may read merely as a string of letters and numbers to others and, thus, will make you very hard to find.



Your Twitter handle will then be @'nameofyourchoice'.

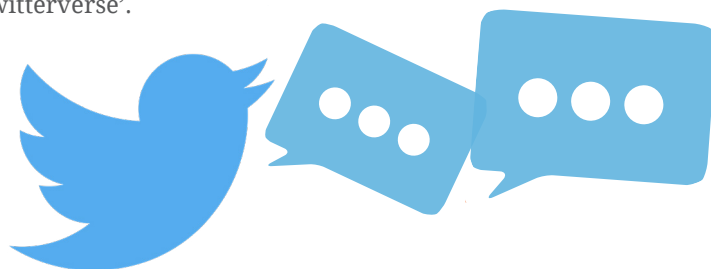
It's also a good idea to add a name, profile picture, and short description about yourself and your interests to set up your profile. This helps your audience get to know you, and will also help them to feel like they're connecting with you on a personal level.

2

Follow, follow, follow

Once you've set up your Twitter account, the best way to start is to seek out other writers, scholars or bloggers whom you may already know or trust. Once you start following one or two accounts, Twitter helpfully suggests other like-minded people to follow.

Think about your interests and search for these on Twitter. For example, are you interested in 19th Century British Poetry, Ancient Rome or Kantian Philosophy? Would you like to engage with a community about Actuarial Science, Climate Change or Wireless Communications? We guarantee that there are others out there already tweeting on the subject who you can converse with. Finding – and following – are the quickest ways for you to immerse yourself into the 'Twitterverse'.



Finding and following the related Cambridge University Press Twitter accounts for your subject area, and research interests, is another easy way of keeping on top of news and building a fanbase (we'll also follow back and 'retweet' your account to help boost your posts).



Here is just a short list of some of the accounts we have on Twitter (if you can't find what you're looking for, try contacting your dedicated Marketing Executive who should be able to send you a link to the right account):

@CambridgeUP

Cambridge University Press Twitter – Head Office account:
[<https://twitter.com/CambridgeUP>]

@CUPAcademic

Cambridge University Press Twitter - Cambridge Academic account:
[<https://twitter.com/CUPAcademic>]

@CambridgeCore

Cambridge University Press Twitter - Cambridge Core account:
[<https://twitter.com/CambridgeCore>]

3

Engage

- Once you've started following a decent number of accounts, feel free to **start joining in on the conversation**. If you're following people who are interested in specific topics in your field, then this is your chance to make yourself known by offering your take on any such topic.
- Engage in conversations and share your thoughts by posting and answering questions for the people you follow, and who follow you.
- Tweets have a character limit of **280 characters**, which doesn't give you much room to play with, so try to keep your tweets pithy, clever, and original so that others will be interested in what you have to say.
- **Remember:** Twitter is not an outlet for an essay, but rather it is an outlet for a brief, engaging sentence on the topic at hand which inspires followers to dig deeper.
- Try to keep your account active by tweeting most days, or, at the very least, **once a week**. Active accounts keep your posts at the top of other people's news feeds and this is a sure way of building more followers and **increasing your network**.

4

Master the art of the #hashtag

Hashtags enable you to quickly engage with a community on a trending topic, and they also enable you to filter search results within Twitter itself. Try searching for relevant hashtags in your subject area, such as #climatology or #shakespeare, and then use these hashtags in your own tweets to engage with these communities.



5

Link out to additional content to engage your followers

The tweets that receive the most traffic are those that offer more content – be it a photo, link, video or quote – so use those 280 characters wisely to say something interesting to your followers. Taking photos of events that you’re attending or the work that you’re doing is an easy way of keeping your account active and engaging.

Given the 280 character limit on tweets, one of Twitter’s greatest strengths is the ability to quickly publicise links (articles, blog posts, news items, etc.). Often the most followed and re-tweeted accounts are those that prove themselves to be a good source of news on a subject of interest.

To ensure that you don’t encroach too much on **that 140 character** limit, we’d also recommend shortening the links you tweet. All you need to do is to copy the original link that you want to post, visit a website that shortens URLs (such as **Ow.ly**: <http://ow.ly/url/shorten-url>) and paste the link. The website will then provide you with a shortened link for you to tweet; the link will still drive traffic to the same destination but will take up much less of your 280 characters.

6

Organise your lists

To the uninitiated, Twitter can seem like a million voices all talking at once. And, in a sense, it is, but don't let this intimidate you. There are a number of free services which helpfully organise the people you follow into helpful lists or streams. '**Hootsuite**' [<https://hootsuite.com/>] and '**Tweetdeck**' [<https://about.twitter.com/products/tweetdeck>] are two examples of such services.



Both of these services can also help you with your scheduling – so if you're going away for a period of time we'd recommend using either Hootsuite or Tweetdeck to keep your account active. By registering with one of these, you'll be able to schedule tweets for specific times and dates without having to log into Twitter every day.

7

Mind your tone

Twitter is certainly a good way to publicise your own work but do be wary of overdoing it. Using social media is not about trying to sound like a salesman but, instead, it's more about engaging with like-minded people, building a community and making yourself well-known as a great source of information in a particular subject area.

If this is done effectively, it will naturally result in more people being interested in, and potentially buying, your publication.

The town hall nature of Twitter makes it easy to get into heated debates on 'hot-button' issues. Debate is good, but it's important to remain civil and respectful (even when your debate partner may not be doing so).

Don't forget to be yourself:

Using social media effectively helps to make you and your work more discoverable online, and this will gradually help you to build up a loyal fan base. Ultimately, readers want to connect with authors, so don't be scared to show your personality. Adopt a personal, yet semi-professional tone, and you'll soon develop an audience of interested followers.

8

Keep in touch:

If you set up a Twitter account of your own, please then let your dedicated Marketing Executive know! We'll also share your tweets and link to your Twitter account in our own online activity, as part of an integrated social media campaign for your publication.



Notes

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 [cambridge.org/authorhub](https://www.cambridge.org/authorhub)



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