

## The Complete (But Short) Guide To Getting Started On Twitter

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There are countless would-be Twitter users out there. Those who know that their prospects, customers, partners and more are also on Twitter, but who really aren't sure how to get started.

Those same would-be Twitter users don't have the time or patience to read through most "How To Twitter" guides. They want something fast, straightforward, but complete.

This guide is for them.

Following are seven simple but specific steps to get started with a new Twitter account.

## 1. Prepare

Before doing anything, make sure an audience you care about is active on Twitter. Do you know how they use it? What information they share about themselves and with each other?

What are your objectives with Twitter? Is it to build your personal brand? To find new business opportunities? To build awareness and thought leadership for your business? A mix of these?

Now think about how your approach, personality and content might combine these two things into the type of content you create and curate moving forward. Yes, you could get more formal and start with an editorial calendar or similar, but this guide's reader doesn't have time for that. Let's get started.

## 2. Set Up

Create your Twitter account. Choose a handle that reflects you, what you want to portray to your followers, and what they might be interested in following back. You can include your name, your company name, and/or combine that with something you care about and will tweet a lot about. Twitter will give you some suggestions of alternatives too if the specific handle you want is gone.

Many would-be Twitter users get stuck at this stage. Pick something you're generally OK with and keep moving. You're not going to get 1,000 followers in the next couple days, and you can always go back and change your handle anytime.

Now complete your profile with a photo, short bio and URL. Choose a photo, again, based on the nature of the content you'll likely tweet and what you want your audience to think about you. Formal headshots and casual shots are all fair game. Keep your bio tight, and embed as many keywords as you can relevant to what you'll cover. Many would-be followers will search Twitter bios for clues that you might be interesting.

Finally, include a URL to your company site, a blog, even your LinkedIn profile page. If a follower wanted to learn more about you or your company, where would you send them first? Use that URL.

## 3. Getting The Ball Rolling

Don't worry about followers yet. Stay invisible on Twitter, at least for a few days, until you get the hang of the content side. Besides, you'll want a handful of tweets already in your account before you start inviting others, so they not only see you're active but also can gauge the relevance of your content to them.

Now, seriously, start posting stuff. Don't worry about frequency or consistency. Don't worry too much about your voice or a "theme" or anything like that. Just get started. What you naturally tweet in the next few days (or first 20 tweets, which-

ever comes first) is likely the natural style that best reflects you and will keep you engaged. If a particular style doesn't fit you, and you're forcing it, you won't stick with it.

Keep posting naturally until you feel comfortable with your voice, and the type of content you're posting.

## 4. Add A Few Followers

Start with people you know well—close friends, family, colleagues. Trusted folks who will not only help promote your early content but also give you feedback if they see something that just doesn't seem like you. Most if not all of these folks will immediately follow you back.

Beyond your close circle, find others in your professional network that are also on Twitter and follow them. LinkedIn has a great tool that makes this fast and easy, particularly among people already in your LinkedIn network. Eventually, you can use any of a handful of tools to follow others outside of your network who tweet about things of interest to you.

## 5. Manage Activity And Access

Twitter allows you to create Lists of subsets of your users that have things in common. I, for example, have separate lists for B2B sales and marketing experts, clients, Twitter friends in the Seattle area, etc. I most often watch and interact with these specific lists, even though I follow far more.

Several free tools including HootSuite and Tweetdeck make filtering these lists easy.

HootSuite and Tweetdeck also make it easy to send new tweets, retweet content from others, respond, schedule new posts in the future, and so on.

## 6. Find Ongoing Content To Tweet

Look around you, right now, and I bet you find a constant source of content to potentially tweet. This starts with newsletters you read, blogs you read, articles sent to you by colleagues. How about reflections on things you see or that happen to you during the day. Photos and videos. Comments about a game you're watching. Part of your 15 minutes a day can include scanning these sources and finding content that you want to share with others.

## 7. Start A Daily/Weekly Routine

Eventually, staying active on Twitter will become a habit you don't have to think about. Until then, consider putting something on your calendar 2–3 times a week to ensure you get something up. Try a morning routine that includes a visit to Twitter.com or your HootSuite account.

That's pretty much it. You can make it more complicated. But if you start with that, you won't get started. Good luck, and let me know how it goes!



## More Information About Us

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### About Matt Heinz

Matt Heinz is the Founder and President of Heinz Marketing Inc. Matt brings more than 12 years of marketing, business development and sales experience from a variety of organizations, vertical industries and company sizes. His career has focused on delivering measurable results for his employers and clients in the way of greater sales, revenue growth, product success and customer loyalty.

### About Heinz Marketing

Heinz Marketing is a Seattle marketing agency focused on sales acceleration. Heinz Marketing helps clients achieve sustained sales success by growing revenue from existing customers and cost effectively identifying and winning new customers.

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