Educators
Guide to Twitter

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Twitter is a great way to find and share ideas about teaching and learning.

This guide is for all educators – whether you've been on Twitter for a while, or are just getting started.

We want to help you make the most of Twitter, and use it to connect with educators, lessons, ideas and experiences that can support you in the vital work you do.

> Twitter gives me wings to fly outside my small rural school community and helps me support the learners within it.
>
> ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER FROM PHILLIPSBURG, NJ

Educators use Twitter in many ways, including:

• Professional development and continuous learning. Twitter is a great tool to get ideas from other educators, and to stay connected to education and edtech conferences you can't attend in person.
• Connecting with families and school communities. Teachers and administrators can use Twitter to share classroom or school news – from homework and projects to back-to-school nights.
• Teaching digital literacy and citizenship, and preparing students to be safe and smart on Twitter and everywhere else online.

This guide highlights how you can use Twitter, and one of the best ways to tell you about #edu on Twitter is to let some of your colleagues share their experiences.
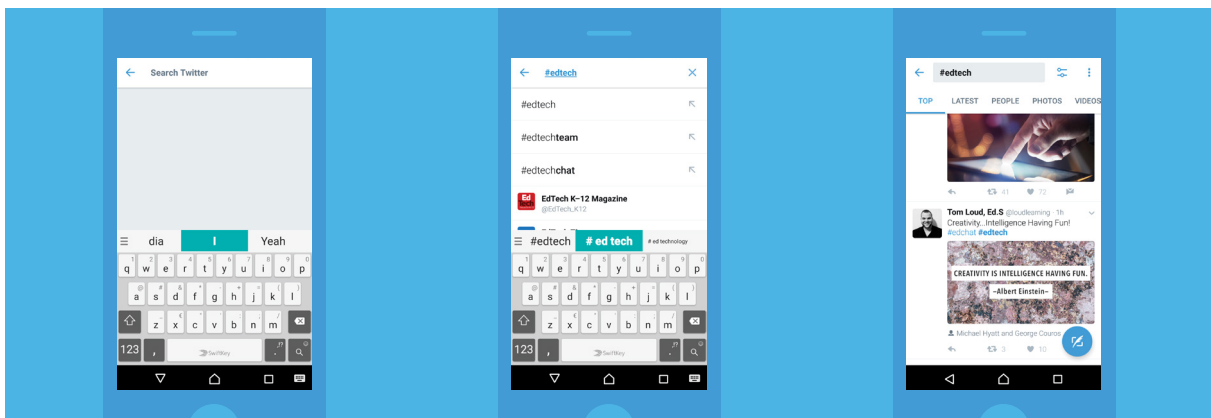
Hashtags

#hashtags are a great way to join a conversation — or to start one. Find out who's tweeting about issues that matter to you. Catch up on your favorite team. Discuss a recent event.

#hashtags are titles people can use to gather around an idea or topic. Here are a few #education hashtags on Twitter:

#edtech has conversations about how teachers and students are using technology to improve learning

#digcit highlights ideas and strategies for teaching digital citizenship, and helping kids and adults build an online world based on respect

#stem is a place for all things related to science, technology, engineering and math — and sometimes art

#esl brings you a variety of perspectives on learning English language
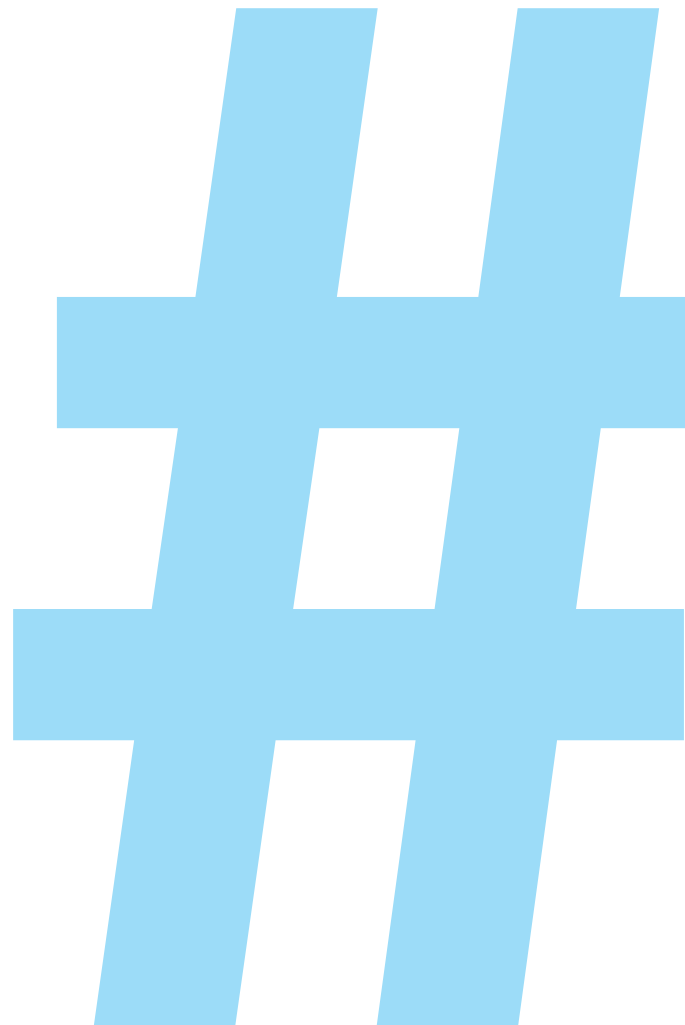
Your Twitter

Twitter is a place for sharing ideas and information, building communities, and finding new people and perspectives – from across town and around the world. As importantly, Twitter is **your** Twitter – you can personalize it around what you want to say, hear and share.

You decide who to follow on Twitter, based on people's, ideas, opinions, videos, or other things that interest you. Following people doesn't necessarily mean you agree with them or share their ideas. Some educators use Twitter to get different viewpoints – about teaching, technology, education policy, music, sports, anything. Others use Twitter to get perspectives on how issues are reported and discussed in other parts of the world.

One helpful step to connecting and sharing with other educators on Twitter is #hashtags. They're a great way to organize conversations that are happening online, and to choose discussions that can be most helpful to your lifelong learning. There are lots of examples in this guide. Take a look and decide which ones to follow and join.

> Twitter has been a wonderful way to connect across the globe for both my students and myself from the middle of the Pacific Ocean.
>
> 6TH GRADE TEACHER FROM AIEA, HAWAII

You can also decide to unfollow people. (When you unfollow, their Tweets will stop appearing in your timeline.) You might unfollow someone because they don't tweet about education issues as much as you expected they would, or because you don't agree, or because they tweet about a lot of other issues that don't matter to you. It's your Twitter feed, and it's your decision.

In addition, you can control how you're seen on Twitter. You can tweet using your real name, or with a pseudonym. Some people use pseudonyms to protect their identity, which may make them feel more free to express opinions, or to establish some space between their personal Tweets and their school or work. Some users create multiple accounts on Twitter, so they can tweet with different voices – for example, an account for sharing ideas with students and families, another to compare ideas with education colleagues, and another for hobbies.

The Basics

Setting up your profile
Your Twitter profile shows the world who you and your school are, moment by moment. Your profile is where you demonstrate what they can expect from your Tweets and why they should follow you.

Here are some tips for setting up your Twitter profile to best represent your values and your content.

Your username on Twitter is part of your identity on the platform
It will be displayed when people reply to your Tweets or add you to a conversation. The username is the one that begins with the "@" — it can be up to 15 characters in length. Your name display can be up to 20 characters in length.

Tips for growing your Twitter username recognition
Put your Twitter @username on your printed materials. Adding your Twitter @username to your materials is a great way to get wider exposure for the account. It also indicates that people can reach you directly through this channel — that you read and respond here.

Put Twitter on the school's website. Adding Twitter buttons to the website is a great way to gain wider distribution for your content and gain more followers.

You might also be mindful of when your audience will be online. For example, people are frequently on Twitter in the morning on their commute, at lunchtime, or in the evening when watching TV.

Biography
Your account bio must be 160 characters or fewer. We recommend that you include details about your school and its mission. Use keywords, account usernames, and hashtags, all discoverable through search, in the bio to connect with other conversations and accounts related to your school.

Photos
You can reinforce a message with imagery. When you're Tweeting, be sure to attach photos aplenty to engage other uses in your content.

> Myself and my school have begun our journey in blogging and Twitter as we understand the importance of international collaboration.
>
> TEACHER FROM YORKSHIRE, ENGLAND

How to find people to follow

Start by following people you know. Search for their names or their @usernames, or find them all instantly by importing your contacts from your email address book. Then search for your favorite sports teams, actors, local newspapers, writers, or schools. Lastly, search for accounts of people sending the type of Tweets you'd like to receive: breaking news, community leaders, and other accounts.

Finding a conversation is a great way to find people to follow as well. If you see an interesting hashtag, tap the conversation there, engage the community, and follow anyone with whom you would like to connect. Simply follow what interests you.

To post a Tweet: Select the compose Tweet icon in the top menu on the right. Compose your 140-character message and select Tweet. The Tweet will be posted to your profile.

To reply to another user:
1. Select the reply icon in a Tweet.
2. The @username of anyone mentioned in the Tweet you're replying to will already appear in your "Reply to" box.
3. If you want to add more @usernames, simply type the @username of the person you want to mention.
4. Compose your 140-character message and select Tweet.
5. The Tweet will be posted to your profile.
6. If you want this reply to appear in the timeline of your followers who don't follow the user you're mentioning, you need to add a punctuation mark to the beginning of your Tweet before you include their @username.

To mention another user:
1. Select the compose Tweet icon in the top menu on the right.
2. Compose your 140-character message and type the @username of the person you want to mention.
3. As you start typing a username, a list of potential matches will appear.
4. Once you've found the user you're looking for, select his/her @username and it will be populated in the Tweet.
5. If you want to add more @usernames, repeat steps 2 to 4.
6. Select Tweet and the Tweet will be posted to your profile.
7. If you want this reply to appear in the timeline of your followers who don't follow the user you're mentioning, you need to add a punctuation mark to the beginning of your Tweet before you include their @username.

To include a hashtag in your Tweet:

Select the # symbol and as you start typing, the list will narrow down to fewer results. You can choose to include one of these suggested hashtags or add your own hashtag text.

To include a photo or video in your Tweet:
You can take a photo or video in the moment or choose an existing one from your device.

1. Select the compose Tweet button and choose an existing image or video from your gallery or select the camera icon to shoot new material.
2. Once you have taken or selected your photo, you will have the option to apply a filter, add as sticker, and crop the image. Similarly, you can crop the video.
3. When you are finished, select Done; the photo/video will be attached to the Tweet. You can select up to four photos for a single Tweet.
4. You can tag people in your photo(s) by tapping Who's in this photo? Type in the full name or @username and then tap Done.

To include a GIF in your Tweet:
Add a GIF to your Tweet to better express the sentiment behind your message, to make a tough message easier to digest or just to add some levity to your content.

1. Select the compose Tweet button and then click the add GIF icon.
2. Choose a GIF from the extensive library available in the app. These GIFs are categorised by sentiment, making it easier for you to find the perfect GIF for the moment.

To include a Live broadcast in your Tweet:
Want to live stream what you're watching? It's easy to begin a live broadcast with a Tweet.

1. Select the compose Tweet button and go live by clicking the LIVE icon.
2. Then you'll be prompted to give a description of what you're about to broadcast.
3. Click "Go LIVE" and begin your broadcast!

I use Twitter to exchange ideas with other educators, find classes to connect my class with, and get involved as a virtual mentor. Watching classmates try new things, writing lessons in groups, and learning from virtual mentors via Twitter have been incredible experiences.

FOURTH GRADE TEACHER FROM NEW ORLEANS, LA

Twitter in the Classroom

There are myriad ways Twitter can be used in the classroom. To demonstrate this, we'll look at the case study of St Peter's, a primary school for students aged 4-12 in Ireland:

St Peter's is a Digital School of Distinction, an accreditation which primary schools can attain from the Irish Department of Education and Skills by demonstrating excellence in their approach to the integration of ICT in learning and teaching. The benefits of receiving this accreditation include access to an ICT support network, a toolkit to develop an ICT plan for every school, links with other schools in Ireland and external recognition through a nationally recognised award.

In St Peter's, they use Twitter to help the school and its students to communicate with the outside world.

Under supervision, the students are encouraged to use the school's account to Tweet at other schools, share their work and show off their achievements. They participate in online research projects with schools across the world, and have held Q&A sessions with experts to assist with this research. In this way, the students are offered a connection to sources they could not encounter if limited to the materials available within the classroom.

Another benefit of these connections is the global perspective it offers the students. No longer is their work and their school limited to a local, or even national audience; they're exposed to peers in lots of different countries and their work is enriched by this, not to mention their personal growth.

The school also uses Twitter to share good news with the local community. This gives the school another outlet to build a connection with its locality. Previously, a school might have been reliant on placing a story in the local newspaper, or distributing a newsletter among parents. Now, schools like St Peter's are using Twitter to amplify the voice of the school within the community. What's more, the community answers back - St Peter's has received support for its initiatives because of the network it's created.

Harnessing the utility of Twitter, the school uses it to communicate with parents. Be it to announce the end of term, a disruption due to weather, or a reminder about parent-teacher meetings, the school's Twitter account is akin to a noticeboard.

Ms Martina Sexton, a teacher in the school has found that the promotion of students' work on Twitter has "improved their confidence and sense of self-worth. It's our job to project a world full of opportunity and we find that our students are increasingly aware that anybody, no matter their importance, can be reached through a simple Tweet." As one of the students said, "the Tweets are our voice, capturing how we feel about life in St Peter's."
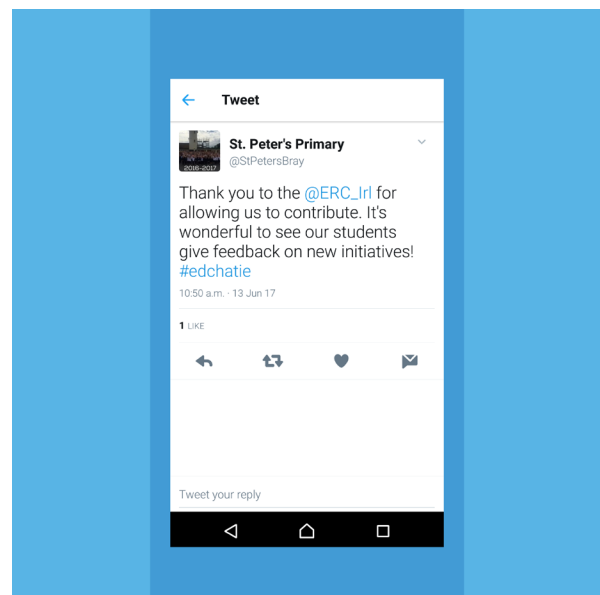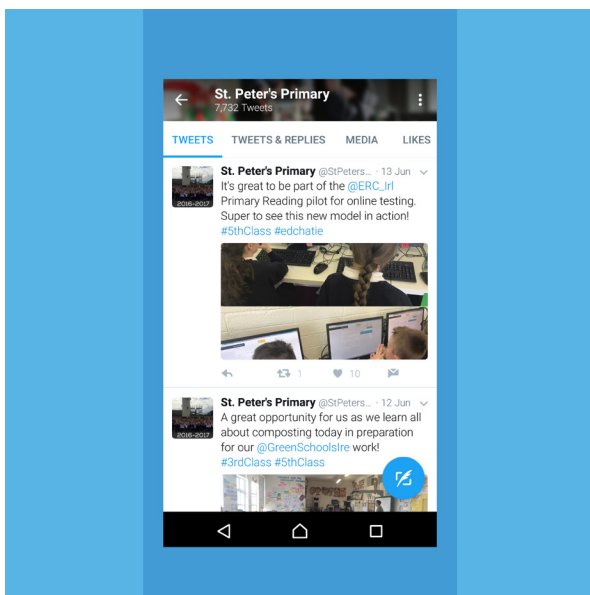
Digital Citizenship on Twitter

Some educators use Twitter to connect with their students, and you can use Twitter to teach about digital citizenship, freedom of expression, and respect.

Twitter chats and conversations on #stuvoice and other hashtags are great ways to follow students and hear their voices. This is another helpful step in digital literacy and citizenship education, because as your students see others speaking up, they'll feel encouraged to raise their voices as well. Remember, one of the first lessons of digital literacy is understanding that everyone is a speaker, and each of us brings our own values and perspectives to a conversation.

> Twitter keeps me ahead of the curve on trends in education and educational technology. When I have questions or ideas I need to understand from multiple perspectives, Twitter gives me access to all of the super-smart educators out there. I hope anyone who has doubts will jump in and see for themselves.
>
> TEACHER FROM AUSTIN, TX

Twitter is based on free expression. Which also means Twitter is a place where you – and your students – will encounter many different ideas and opinions. It's a great way to learn how other people view the world, and to help your students appreciate why it's important to respect other viewpoints – even if we don't agree.

Since hundreds of millions of people share ideas on Twitter, it's no surprise that we don't all agree. That's one of the benefits, because we can all learn from respectful disagreements and discussions. But sometimes, after you've listened to someone for a while, you may not want to hear them anymore. Their right to express themselves doesn't mean you're required to listen. If people on Twitter become annoying or negative, we have tools that can help you and your students:

Mute
Block
**Report**
Rules & Policies
Safety Tips

Mute

Just like in real life, sometimes you have friends or connections online who are usually inter-esting, and then become a bit annoying. If you want to keep following people, and just need to turn their volume down a little bit, or reduce the number of their tweets in your timeline, the **Mute** tool is helpful. Mute hides another person's Tweets so you won't have to hear their voice for a while. They won't know that you've muted them, so it's a good way to discretely step away from a discussion. You can unmute them later if you want.

In addition, we have new Mute tools to give you even more control over what you see — or don'ts see — on Twitter:

- Mute words, phrases, usernames, emojis, or hashtags from both your notifications and your home timeline, and for a specified period of time. You can decide how long you want to mute content: 24 hours, 7 days, 30 days, Forever. You have the choice to mute content from: Both notifications & timeline, From one or the other.
- Mute Conversation helps you stop receiving notifications related to a Tweet that you're a part of, without blocking anyone or removing the conversation from your Home Timeline. No one will know that you've muted a conversation, and you can jump back in later by unmuting the conversation.
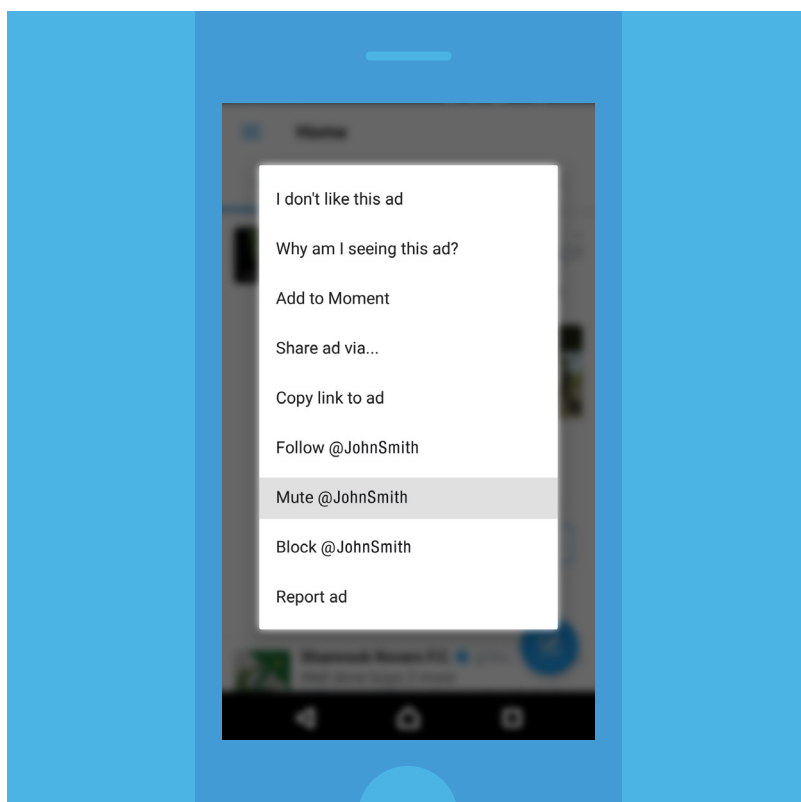
Block

Block is a feature that helps you control how you interact with other accounts on Twitter. This feature helps users in restricting specific accounts from contacting them, seeing their Tweets, and following them. Block means you won't see their tweets, and they won't be able to follow you, send you a Direct Message, or see you on Twitter at all. If they mention you, you won't see a notification.

Block
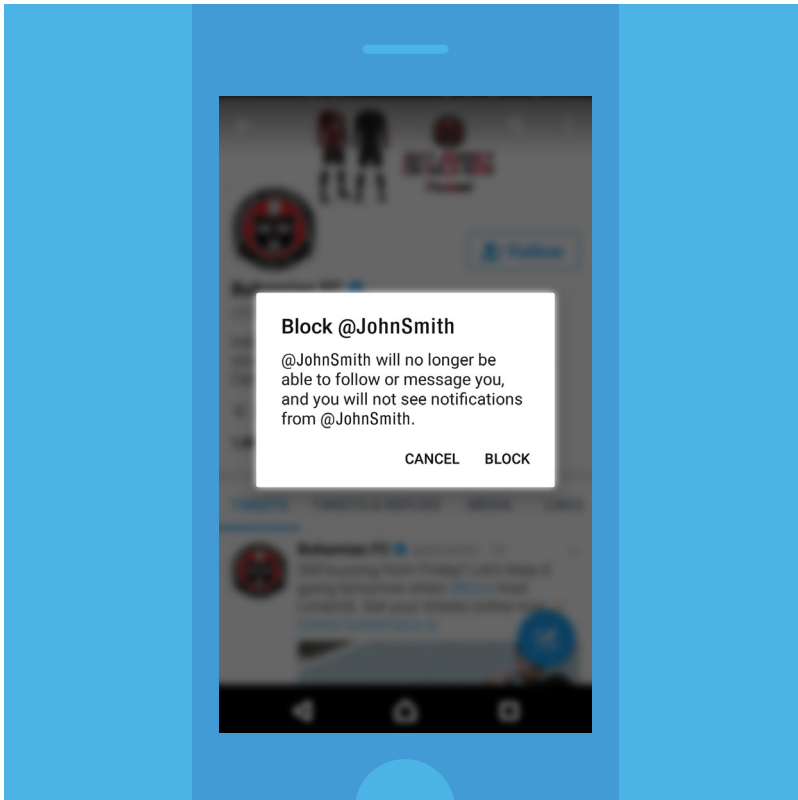
Report

When someone is abusive on Twitter, or violates Twitter Rules or Terms of Service, we want you to use the Report function. Reports go to the Twitter team, and enable us to investigate and address the problem. Reporting can help you, and it's also an important tool for improving the entire Twitter community. We rely on users to report serious cases of abuse, because you'll see them sooner. Reporting helps us make it a better platform for everyone. If you want to submit a report, you can do so in-app, as outlined below or you can visit our Help Centre at support.twitter.com.
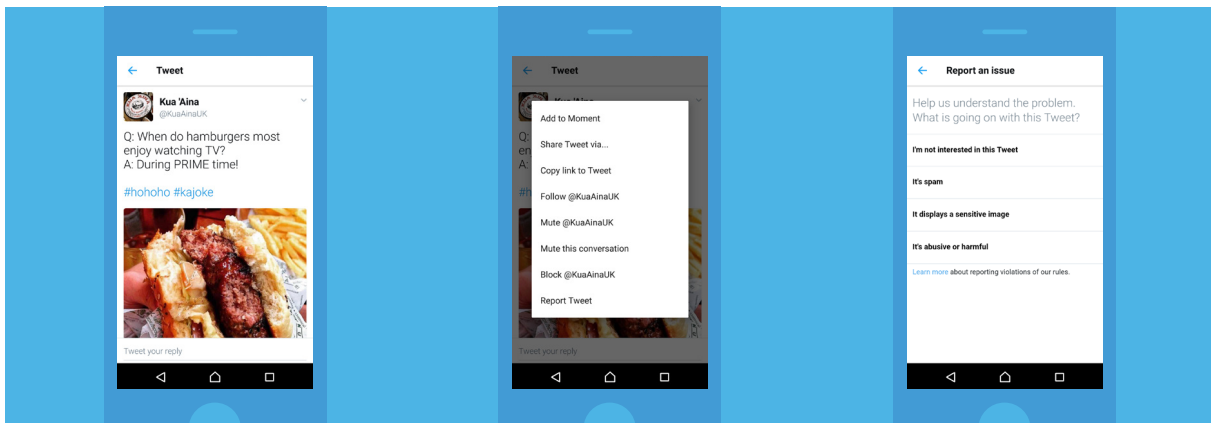
Twitter Rules

Maintaining the diversity and openness of the Twitter community is our responsibility, and so is creating a safe environment for every user. Online safety is fundamental on Twitter – it's an essential component of free expression, and important to all of us. In order to ensure that people feel safe expressing diverse opinions and beliefs, we do not tolerate behavior that crosses the line into abuse, including behavior that harasses, intimidates, or uses fear to silence another user's voice.

The Safety Center is a resource for anyone to learn about online safety, on Twitter and beyond. This resource is a result of our work with online safety experts who continuously help us to promote good digital citizenship. Educators are uniquely positioned to provide valuable guidance and insight for their students' conduct online. With a specific section for Educators, we've compiled some tips for you to share with your students about different situations they may encounter.

Here's a quick summary of some of our rules:

Violent threats (direct or indirect): A user may not make threats of violence or promote violence, including threatening or promoting terrorism.

Harassment: A user may not incite or engage in the targeted abuse or harassment of others. Some of the factors that we may consider when evaluating abusive behavior include:

• if a primary purpose of the reported account is to harass or send abusive messages to others;
• if the reported behavior is one-sided or includes threats;
• if the reported account is inciting others to harass another account; and
• if the reported account is sending harassing messages to an account from multiple accounts.

Hateful conduct: A user may not promote violence against or directly attack or threaten other people on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, religious affiliation, age, disability, or disease. We also do not allow accounts whose primary purpose is inciting harm towards others on the basis of these categories.

Multiple account abuse: Creating multiple accounts with overlapping uses or in order to evade the temporary or permanent suspension of a separate account is not allowed.

Private information: A user may not publish or post other people's private and confidential information, such as credit card numbers, street address, or Social Security/National Identity numbers, without their express authorization and permission. In addition, a user may not post intimate photos or videos that were taken or distributed without the subject's consent.

A user also has the option to protect their Twitter account. Once this option has been selected, the user must approve any new followers before those followers can see and interact with their Tweets. If the user wishes to make their Tweets publicly viewable again, they can do so in the same Settings menu.

Impersonation: A user may not impersonate others through the Twitter service in a manner that is intended to or does mislead, confuse, or deceive others.

Graphic content: A user may not use pornographic or excessively violent media in your profile image or header image. Twitter may allow some forms of graphic content in Tweets marked as sensitive media. When content crosses the line into gratuitous images of death, Twitter may ask that a user remove the content out of respect for the deceased.

Unlawful use: A user may not use our service for any unlawful purposes or in furtherance of illegal activities. International users agree to comply with all local laws regarding online conduct and acceptable content.

Check out the following hashtags to connect with other educators on Twitter

#education	#edtechchat	#flipclass	#dyslexia
#edchat	#edapp	#edadmin	#adhd
#edcamp	#ipadchat	#earlyed	#infolit
#educhat	#ellchat	#preschool	#literacy
#ntchat	#esl	#kedu	#profdev
#curriculum	#gtchat	#kinderchat	#commoncore
#k12	#spedchat	#elemchat	#ccss
#digcit	#sped	#hschat	#ccchat
#artsed	#counselors	#midleved	#stuvoice
#mathchat	#elearning	#highered	#students
#socialstudies	#librarians	#edreform	#studentsuccess
#scichat	#tlchat	#ptchat	#studentvoice
#langchat	#library	#parenting	#spanishteachers
#edtech	#stem	#bullying	

Other Popular Educational Hashtags