

# TWITTER BASICS

## 1. Set up your profile

The first thing you need to do is to set up that profile. See that bar on top of your twitter page? Click Settings and start filling up your profile. The notable areas in here are URL, bio, picture and design. Put up a link to your site or blog in here along with a brief description. Upload a picture to differentiate yourself from the others and then tweak your Twitter design. Like any other social networking site, it is important to completely express what you are or what you stand for in your profile.

## 2. Follow people with similar interests

Now that you have a profile, start following people. You can find these people in Twitter directories. I use Twellow and JustTweeIt. These sites can introduce you to Twitter users that have the same interest as yours. Follow these people and observe their tweets. You may also try following who these people follow but read up their descriptions and visit their blogs to make sure you're still on the right niche. Being on the right niche will make it easy for you to build a community with a similar interest.

## 3. Get into the conversation

So now that you are following people, you will now see some tweets on your board. Read up on what the people your following are up to and reply if it interests you. For example, a person narrates how he is going to conduct a meeting. You may then reply with ideas. When someone asks a question, don't hesitate to answer if you know it. Don't be afraid to interact.

## 4. Don't spam

Spam is the cause of many unfollows on Twitter. There is a character limit for a reason. Do not send repeated messages to people. Do not constantly direct message (DM) them with links.

## 5. Update daily

Alright so you're blending in the community. Now update daily if possible. I know some Twitter users who unfollow because of inactivity. Reply to people and update people with what's going on with your life. Soon you'll be recognized and you'll get some follows.

## 6. Find the latest buzz and contribute

Now it's your time to contribute. Find a topic that will interest your niche and tweet it. Since you have established relationships with your followers (through replies), you will get more attention. It's a nice strategy to always append "please retweet" at the end of your tweet. There will be some people who will be so interested that they will retweet. There are others who will reply to you about the link you tweeted.

But you are not a “nobody” anymore. You are not just talking to yourself. People are now responding to your tweets.

### **7. Help other people out**

The famous saying “Do unto others what you want others to do unto you” holds here. Before you can receive retweets, you must help others first by retweeting their messages. Help the people in your niche. One day you’ll be surprised on how eager they are to help you back.

### **8. Create relationships**

Now it’s time to create constant connections. Soon you will find that some users are more active than others. You will get to talk with the same group of people at the same time every night. But don’t get bored. Interact with these people and create relationships. Ask how they are doing and try to touch on their interests.

### **9. Integrate Twitter with other social networks**

Have a blog? Then post to Twitter when you have a post that will interest your niche. Have a Facebook profile? Then ask people to add you. Twitter is really a vital part of web 2.0. It can serve as the core. It can let you build relationships that can branch out to other social networks.

### **10. Establish relationships even outside Twitter**

Have a lot of friends on Twitter? Then take it to another level. Ask for their messenger and talk to these people on a more intimate level. Call them through Skype or even arrange a meet-up. Twitter can create real relationships.

Congratulations! You are now an official member of the Twitter community. You talk, act, think and breathe like us. Perhaps you find yourself spending every five minutes updating Twitter on what you are doing. But I guess I’ll save Twitter addiction for next time.

# CHARACTER LIMITS (140)

HOW TO CREATE SHORTER WEB ADDRESSES (URL)

## bit.ly

The easiest way to make long links short, share and track them

## tiny URL

Are you sick of posting URLs in emails only to have it break when sent causing the recipient to have to cut and paste it back together? Then you've come to the right place. By entering in a URL in the text field below, we will create a tiny URL that ***will not break in email postings*** and ***never expires***.

### An example

Turn this URL:

[http://www.amazon.com/Kindle-Wireless-Reading-Display-Globally/dp/B003FSUDM4/ref=amb\\_link\\_353259562\\_2?pf\\_rd\\_m=ATVPDKIK\\_X0DER&pf\\_rd\\_s=center-10&pf\\_rd\\_r=11EYKTN682A79T370AM3&pf\\_rd\\_t=201&pf\\_rd\\_p=1270985982&pf\\_rd\\_i=B002Y27P3M](http://www.amazon.com/Kindle-Wireless-Reading-Display-Globally/dp/B003FSUDM4/ref=amb_link_353259562_2?pf_rd_m=ATVPDKIK_X0DER&pf_rd_s=center-10&pf_rd_r=11EYKTN682A79T370AM3&pf_rd_t=201&pf_rd_p=1270985982&pf_rd_i=B002Y27P3M)

into this TinyURL:

<http://tinyurl.com/KindleWireless>

Which one would you rather cut and paste into your browser? That's the power of TinyURL!

### OTHER TIPS

- use multiple tweets
- use instant messaging shortcuts
- Credit Sources - RT@original
- follow relevancy

by Mark Fulton (follow him [@DotSauce](#)) from [TweetSocial Twitter Community](#).

I always seem to get a warm-fuzzy feeling when I use up all 140 characters in a concise descriptive tweet. Here are some tips for making the most of those few characters you get to use.

**1) Use shorthand codes.** BRB, LOL, RT, TY, etc. Some may call it tech speak or leet speak. Acronyms and abbreviations for commonly used words and phrases. Check out this list of popular [Twitter shorthands](#) and if you like to use more colorful shorthand there is also a [NSFW shorthand list](#). That's Not-Safe-For-Work for you shorthand beginners.

**2) Be clear and concise.** Make sure you are not being redundant. Remove any words that might be irrelevant to what you are trying to convey.

**3) Use URL shortening.** This one is pretty obvious and is even built in to Twitter. However, there are some URL shortening services that can save you a few more characters than TinyURL. I use [IS.GD](#) and another popular one is [XR.COM](#) which even allows you to customize the URL.

**4) Use special symbol characters.** You may not know it, but Twitter accepts more than just normal characters. You can actually create hearts, stars, smilies and other symbols that can represent words or ideas in just 1 character. TheNextWeb has created a great tool called [TwitterKeys](#) which allows you to have all these symbols at your fingertips.

**5) Use labels.** Labeling your tweet has some cool benefits. A label is like a tag at the beginning of your tweet. Your followers will know exactly what you are sharing right away and they may even increase your chances of being re-tweeted. Here are some examples... (Reading:, Stumbling:, Digging:, etc.)

**6) Be simple.** This is a writing tip from [Copyblogger](#), "...simple words work better than big ones. Write 'get' instead of 'procure.' Write 'use' rather than 'utilize.' Use the longer words only if your meaning is so precise there is no simpler word to use."

# RETWEETS

Retweeting is an integral part of the Twitter experience. The retweet (or “RT”) allows Twitter users to share the best links, tweets, and gems they find from others using the service. But for beginners, it’s not immediately obvious what retweets are, or what tools to use to make retweeting easier.

This HOW TO article not only covers the basics of retweeting, but also highlights some of the best web and mobile-based tools for retweeting and tracking RTs in real-time. If you’re a Twitter beginner, we hope you find it useful; if you’re a more advanced user, we hope you’ll share it with friends who are just starting out.

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## 1. What is Retweeting and How to Retweet

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RT @mashable 10 Most Extraordinary  
Twitter Updates <http://bit.ly/v4F52>



*about 5 hours ago from web*



**mjdicker**  
Melia Dicker

Retweeting is how Twitter users share interesting tweets from the people they are following. They copy and paste the original tweet and send it out. To give credit to the original person, users usually put “RT” plus the originator’s username at the beginning of the tweet. Here’s an example:

- The Twitter user @benparr tweets: *I just heard that Apple is releasing new iPods in July!*
- You retweet by posting *RT @benparr I just heard that Apple is releasing new iPods in July!*

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## 2. How to Track Retweets

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138  
tweets

**HOW TO: Get the Most Out of Gmail Labs**

MASHABLE.COM - [More...](#) - 2 hours ago

retweet **Tags:** gmailgmail googlegoogle lately mashable reviews tear

430  
tweets

**HOWTO: Remove StalkDaily.com Auto-Tweets | Twittercism**

TWITTERCISM.COM - [More...](#) - 3 hours ago

retweet **Tags:** fix infected profile stalkdaily twitter virus

102  
tweets

**Slashdot | Paid Shilling Comes to Twitter**

NEWS.SLASHDOT.ORG - An anonymous reader alerts us that an outfit called Magpie is paying Twitter users to tout advertisers' products. Marshall Kirkpatrick of ReadWriteWeb... [More...](#) - 3 hours ago

[Kevin\\_Connolly](#) **Tags:** alerts anonymous called magpie outfit reader

Once you've gotten used to retweeting and seen some excellent retweets in your Twitter stream, you may want to track retweets on a larger scale. The most popular retweets tend to reflect the favorite articles and most important stories of the entire Twitter community. This can be great if you want to find important articles, read useful blog posts, or are looking to track emerging trends.

Here are some of the best web-based tools for tracking retweets:

**Retweetradar:** Retweetradar [[@retweetradar](#)] is a web tool for tracking the most retweeted and trending content on Twitter. It provides a tag cloud to see the most popular content from today, yesterday, and even what's popular right now.

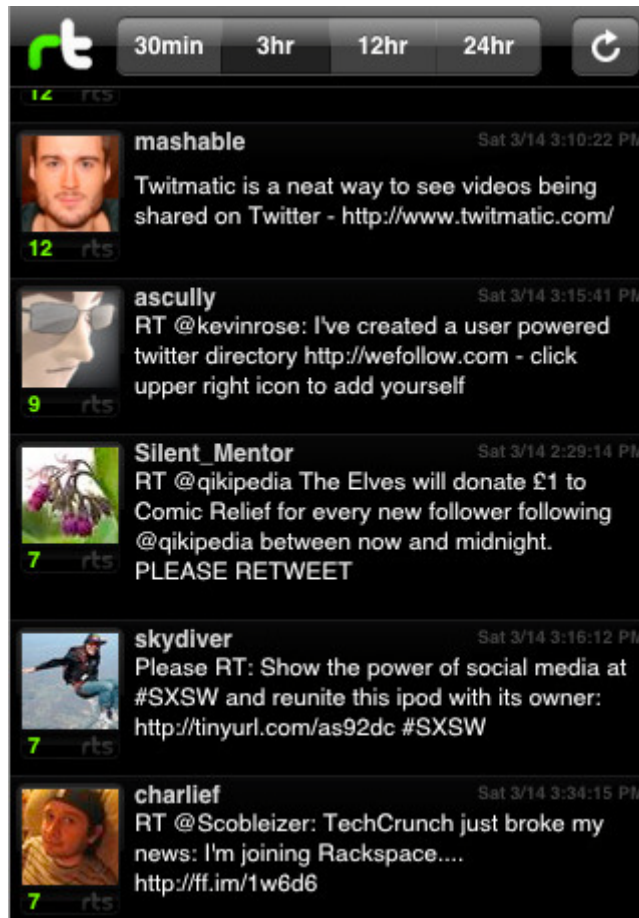
**Retweetist:** Retweetist [[@retweetist](#)] is a tool that tracks the most popular links being retweeted on Twitter, just like Tweetmeme. Retweetist doesn't stop there, however – it also lists the most retweeted accounts on Twitter.

**Tweetmeme:** Tweetmeme [[@tweetmeme](#)] is an authority when it comes to retweeted URLs and stories. Tweetmeme tracks the most popular links on Twitter. Once a link receives enough retweets, it appears on the front page of Tweetmeme. Tweetmeme can also be broken down by categories (i.e. sports, entertainment, technology).

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## 3. Tracking Retweets with Mobile Phones

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One of the coolest aspects of Twitter is that it's easy to use on-the-go. Tweets can be sent from any mobile phone via text, the mobile web, or iPhone and smartphone applications.

If you need to track retweets while on the move, here are some of the best mobile tools for tracking retweets:

**Retweet iPhone App [iTunes link]:** The Retweet iPhone app, which we [recently reviewed](#), is a great app for tracking the most popular retweeted URLs on Twitter. It costs \$0.99.

**Tweetmeme Mobile:** If you're not an iPhone owner, you're in luck – Tweetmeme has a mobile version at [m.tweetmeme.com](http://m.tweetmeme.com). Bookmark it so you can see the most popular retweets from anywhere!

**Tweetie  [iTunes Link]:** The most popular Twitter iPhone App includes a section for viewing top Twitter trends and searching for retweets.

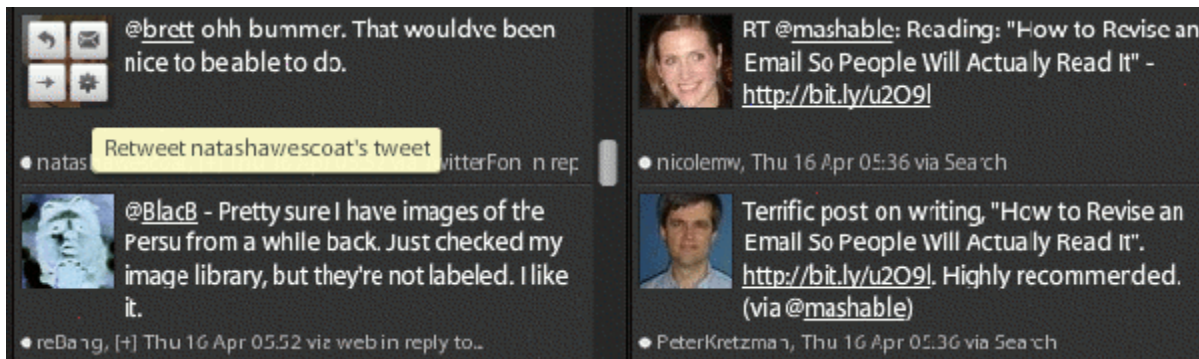
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## 4. How to Retweet with just Two Clicks

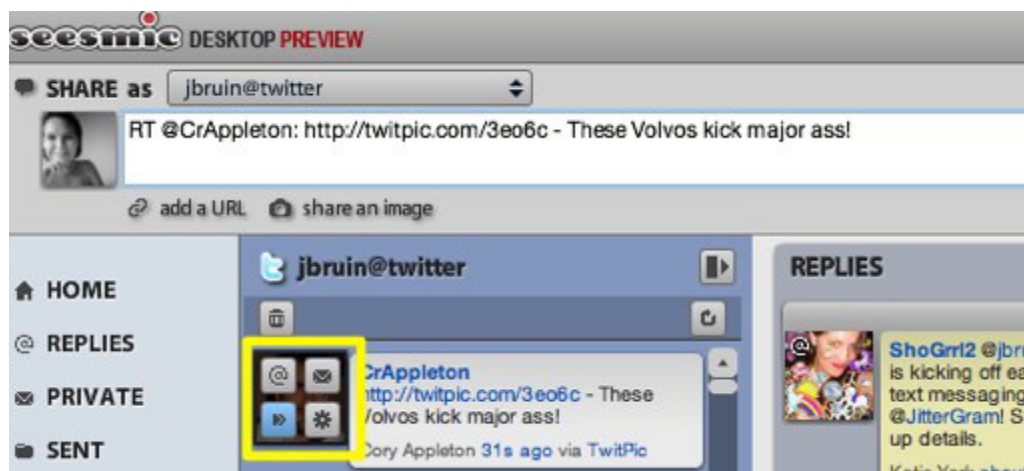
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Another cool aspect about Twitter are the great applications people build to make using Twitter easy. There are desktop and web applications that can show you all of your Twitter friends and tweets in one place.

The coolest part? Some of these applications make retweeting as simple as **two clicks**: one to create the retweet, and one to post it to Twitter. No copy and paste required! Here are some of the best applications for two-click retweeting:



**Tweetdeck:** Tweetdeck is a very popular application for running Twitter on your desktop. It has many features, but one of its best is its one-click retweeting feature – hovering over a profile picture provides the easy option for retweeting anyone’s tweets – just click the bottom left icon.



**Seesmic Desktop:** Seesmic Desktop is another great desktop application for Twitter. Formerly known as **Twhirl**, it also helps users read, reply, and send tweets from the desktop. Just hover over the profile picture and click the bottom-left bottom to retweet any post.



**mashable** Pete Cashmore *Apr 15, 07:56 PM*

Is Social the Future of Online Ads? - <http://bit.ly/wcgvh>



RT @mashable Is Social the Future of Online Ads?  
- <http://bit.ly/wcgvh>


cancel 70 Post

[Is Social the Future of Online Ads?](#) [mashable.com]

**Tweetree:** Tweetree is a web-based Twitter application that helps organize Twitter using conversation trees, so you can see an entire Twitter conversation on one page. Tweetree has an easy-to-use retweet feature at the right hand side of any tweet. [TwitZap](#) is another web-based Twitter application that has a similar one-click retweet feature.

# TWITTER BACKGROUNDS

Since the early days of Twitter, users have had the ability to upload their own background images. From photos of cute kittens to jaw-dropping mosaics, the Twitter background has been a key medium for self-expression, personal branding, and personal fulfillment.

If you're new to Twitter , or just never took the time to create your own Twitter background, this HOW TO guide is for you. This guide goes step-by-step into the rationale for creating a personalized Twitter background, takes a look at some amazing Twitter designers, and provides a list of useful Twitter design tools and resources. Your artistic juices shall soon be flowing.

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## Why create a custom Twitter background?

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Some of you might ask: is creating a custom Twitter background worth the effort? While this is a valid question, and the final answer is up to you, there are a range of benefits to making your backdrop your own. Both the creative and the brand-conscious can (and have) benefited from unique background designs.

Here are a couple reasons for why you might want to build your own:

- 1. Personalization and expression:** It's a chance to express yourself and who you are. Are you an artist, a musician, a blogger, or a cook? Do you love Macs or the beach? A new backdrop can really help people understand who you are.
  - 2. Contact info:** It's an easy way to add additional information you can plug into your 160 character bio.
  - 3. Personal branding:** Having your contact information, your face, or additional bio information within your background is a common practice. It helps potential followers understand what you do and why you are someone people should follow. Check out [HOW TO: Build Your Personal Brand on Twitter](#) for more.
  - 4. Artistic creativity:** Twitter is a great opportunity to push the limits of your talents.
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# Some great examples of custom Twitter background designs

If you're looking for some inspiration for your Twitter background, look no further. These are some of the most unique, most inspiring, and best-branded Twitter backgrounds around. There's not enough time or room to showcase the thousands of great backgrounds that exist on Twitter, so be sure to check out [somecomprehensive lists](#) and discover some on your own.

And remember: you don't have to spend an obscene amount of time to make a great background. It's all about making a background that's perfect for you, not for anyone else.

[Doug Cone \(@nullvariable\)](#): Doug, a web designer and consultant, brilliantly integrates his face with his brand and contact information in this spacey theme.



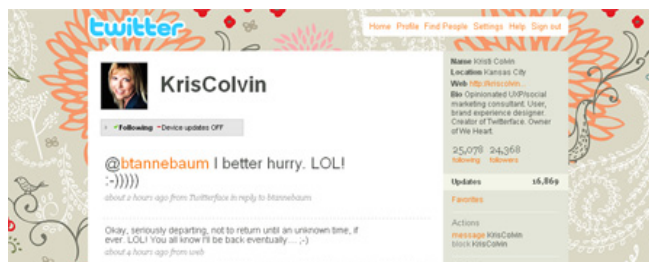
[CoolTweets \(@cooltweets\)](#): CoolTweets, which collects, well, the coolest tweets on the web, gets an A for its simple and clean layout. Perfect for many brands.



[Justine Ezerai \(@ijustine\)](#): The popular new media star has a balanced theme that perfectly reflects her brand.



[Kristi Colvin \(@kriscolvin\)](#): Kristi, a favorite tweeter of mine, opted to create a beautiful mosaic of color and life. I could stare at it all day.



[Loic Le Meur \(@loic\)](#): No, it's not that Loic's background is the most amazing, most complex, or most visually appealing image in the world. It's that his background reflects who he is – a smiling, personal, fun-loving guy...who also happened to found [Seismic](#). You just have to love the picture of him kitesurfing, too.



There are literally *hundreds* of great Twitter feedback backgrounds. Part of the fun is discovering on your own.

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## Creating your own background: the basic requirements

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Now that you understand the reasons for creating a background and you're feeling inspired, there are a couple of things you need to know about custom Twitter backgrounds.

First, you need to know how to actually *change* your background. This is a simple process: just go to settings, then design, and then click "change background image." You can now browse your computer and add any image you'd like, so long as it's under 800k in size.

Next, the actual dimensions. This is important because improperly-sized images can be covered up by your Twitter profile or can start to tile, which often leads to an undesired effect. In most circumstances, you want your background to be large enough not to tile. To achieve this, the *total image size* should be around 1600px wide by 1200px tall. This encompasses almost all screen resolutions.

If you build a left-hand column, popular on many Twitter backgrounds, make sure that it's small enough not to be covered up by the central Twitter content – many designers suggest smaller than 200px or 235px. For more information on dimensions, check out [Croncast](#) and their numbers.

In the end, building your ideal background often requires trial-and-error. But if you're not a designer, that's not a problem – there are tools to help.


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## 7 helpful Twitter background resources


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What would a Twitter resource guide be without some useful Twitter apps? Not only do many of these tools provide pre-designed backgrounds, but many can also automatically update your background, provide detailed information and FAQs, and even fully-functional image editors. Here are a few of the best:

1. [MyTweetSpace](#): MyTweetSpace is one of the simplest ways to create a Twitter background with minimal effort. It allows users to create badges, add graphics, play with text, and more to create elegant backgrounds and left-hand text columns. You can even log in with Twitter and MyTweetSpace will automatically update your background.
2. [TwitterBacks](#): This website provides a set of templates perfect for creating your ideal Twitter background. The templates come in PSD (Photoshop) form. In fact, [my Twitter account](#) utilizes a TwitterBack template as the basis for my design. Can you guess which one?
3. [TweetStyle](#): TweetStyle offers free background templates, custom Twitter backgrounds, and a few useful blog posts on the subject of the backdrop.
4. [Free Twitter Designer](#): This handy little app provides an easy-to-use image editor to help you create a professional-looking theme.

5. [TwitBacks](#) : This is another tool for creating backgrounds. This one specializes in left-hand column-based backgrounds.

6. [TwitterGallery](#): TwitterGallery is a directory of themes based on color and category. You can even click the “install” button under any theme, log into Twitter, and *poof!*...your background is ready.

7. [Peekr](#) : If you stumble across a great Twitter background and want to take a quick look at it in its pure form, the Peekr bookmarklet is the way to go. Click on the bookmarklet once to show only the background, and press it again to bring everything back to normal.

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## Start customizing and share your background

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With this knowledge and these tools at your disposal, there is no reason you can't build a killer backdrop for your Twitter account within minutes. So what are you waiting for? Try out some different designs, and **be sure to share your artistic flair with the rest of us** by linking to your newly-designed Twitter account in the comments.

# VIDEOS

<http://www.twitip.com/introduction-to-twitter-video/>