

## Glossary: General Terms

**@:** The @ sign is used to call out usernames in Tweets: "Hello @twitter!" People will use your @username to mention you in Tweets, send you a message or link to your profile.

**@username:** A username is how you're identified on Twitter, and is always preceded immediately by the @ symbol. For instance, Katy Perry is @katyperry.

**#:** See "hashtag."

**Alerts (n.):** Twitter Alerts enable public safety agencies to inform people during emergencies by highlighting critical time-sensitive content with notifications and a unique look.

**Bio:** Your bio is a short (up to 160 characters) personal description that appears in your profile that serves to characterize your persona on Twitter.

**Block (v.):** If you block a Twitter user, that account will be unable to follow you or add you to their Twitter lists, and you will not receive a notification if they mention you in a Tweet.

**Bug:** An internal error in our site code and functionality. We find and fix them all the time (nobody's perfect). If you see one, point it out to @Support by sending us a message.

**Cashtag:** A cashtag is a company ticker symbol preceded by the U.S. dollar sign, e.g. \$TWTR. When you click on a cashtag, you'll see other Tweets mentioning that same ticker symbol.

**Deactivation:** If you deactivate your account, it goes into a queue for permanent deletion from Twitter in 30 days. You may reactivate your account within the 30 day grace period.

**Direct Messages (n., v.):** Direct Messages are private messages sent from one Twitter user to another Twitter users. You can use Direct Messages for one-on-one private conversations, or between groups of users.

**Discover (n.):** This feature surfaces personalized content tailored to your interests.

**Favorite (n.):** Favoriting a Tweet indicates that you liked a specific Tweet. You can find all of your favorite Tweets by clicking on the favorites link on your profile page.

**Favorite (v.):** Tap the star icon to favorite a Tweet and the author will see that you liked it.

**Follow (v.):** Subscribing to a Twitter account is called "following." To start following, click the Follow button next to the user name or on their profile page to see their Tweets as soon as they post something new. Anyone on Twitter can follow or unfollow anyone else at any time, with the exception of blocked accounts. See "block."

**Follow(s) (n.):** A follow is the result of someone following your Twitter account. You can see how many follows (or followers) you have from your Twitter profile.

**Follow button (n.):** Click the Follow button to follow (or unfollow) anyone on Twitter at any time. When you follow someone, you will see their Tweets in your Home stream.

**Follow count (n.):** This count reflects how many people you follow and how many follow you; these numbers are found on your Twitter profile.

**Follower (n.):** A follower is another Twitter user who has followed you to receive your Tweets in their Home stream.

**Geolocation (n.), Geotagging (v.):** Adding a location to your tweet (a geolocation or geotag) tells those who see your Tweet where you were when you posted that Tweet.

**hacking:** Gaining unauthorized access to an account via phishing, password guessing, or session stealing. Usually this is followed by unauthorized posts from the account. Hacked accounts are sometimes referred to as "compromised." [Click here if you've been hacked.](#) [Read more about how to keep your account safe.](#)

**Hashtag (n.):** A hashtag is any word or phrase immediately preceded by the # symbol. When you click on a hashtag, you'll see other Tweets containing the same keyword or topic.

**Header photo (n.):** Your personal image that you upload, which appears at the top of your profile.

**Home (n.):** Home is your real-time stream of Tweets from those you follow.

**Impersonation (n.):** Online impersonation (pretending to be someone you're not) that is intended to deceive is prohibited under the Twitter Rules. Parody accounts are allowed. See "parody." **list (n.):** From your own account, you can create a group list of other Twitter users by topic or interest (e.g., a list of friends, coworkers, celebrities, athletes). Twitter lists also contain a timeline of Tweets from the specific users that were added to the list, offering you a way to follow individual accounts as a group on Twitter.

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**Mention (n., v.):** Mentioning other users in your Tweet by including the @ sign followed directly by their username is called a "mention." Also refers to Tweets in which your @username was included.

**Mobile web:** Twitter's website tailored to fit your mobile device. Visit it at [mobile.twitter.com](https://mobile.twitter.com).

**Notifications, notifications (n.):** The Notifications timeline displays your interactions with other Twitter users, like mentions, favorites, Retweets and who has recently followed you. If you request it, we send notifications to you via SMS or through the Twitter for iPhone or Twitter for Android apps.

**Parody (n.):** You can create parody accounts on Twitter to spoof or make fun of something in jest, as well as commentary and fan accounts. These accounts must disclose that they are parody, fan or commentary accounts in order to comply with our strict policy against impersonation. See "impersonation."

**Phishing:** Tricking a user to give up their username and password. This can happen by sending the user to a fake sign-in page, a page promising to get you more followers, or just simply asking for the username and password via a DM or email.

**Pinned Tweets (n.):** You can pin a Tweet to the top of your profile page to keep something important to you above the flow of time-ordered Tweets.

**Profile (n.):** Your profile displays information you choose to share publicly, as well as all of the Tweets you've posted. Your profile along with your @username identify you on Twitter.

**Profile photo (n.):** Your personal image found under the Me icon. It's also the picture that appears next to each of your Tweets.

**Promoted Accounts:** Promoted Accounts present suggested accounts you might want to follow as promoted by our advertisers. These appear in your Home timeline, and via Who to Follow, search results and elsewhere on the platform.

**Promoted Trends:** Promoted Trends display time-, context-, and event-sensitive trends promoted by our advertisers. These appear at the top of the Trending Topics list on Twitter and elsewhere on the platform, and are clearly marked as "Promoted."

**Promoted Tweets:** Promoted Tweets are Tweets that are paid for by our advertisers. These appear in your Home timeline, at the top of search results on Twitter and elsewhere on the platform, and are clearly marked as "Promoted."

**Protected/private accounts:** Twitter accounts are public by default. Choosing to protect your account means that your Tweets will only be seen by approved followers and will not appear in search.

**Reply (n., v.):** A response to another user's Tweet that begins with the @username of the person you're replying to is known as a reply. Reply by clicking the "reply" button next to the Tweet you'd like to respond to.

**Reactivation:** You may reactivate a deactivated account within 30 days of the deactivation date. After 30 days, deactivated accounts are permanently deleted.

**Retweet (n.), RT:** A Tweet that you forward to your followers is known as a Retweet. Often used to pass along news or other valuable discoveries on Twitter, Retweets always retain original attribution.

**Retweet (v.):** The act of sharing another user's Tweet to all of your followers by clicking on the Retweet button.

**SMS:** Short Message Service (SMS) is most commonly known as text messaging. Learn how to send a Tweet via SMS.

**Short code (n.):** A five-digit phone number used to send and receive Tweets via text message. Find your short code.

**Spam:** Refers to a variety of prohibited behaviors that violate the Twitter Rules. Spam can be generally described as unsolicited, repeated actions that negatively impact other users.

**Suspended:** Suspended accounts have been prohibited from using Twitter, generally for breaking Twitter Terms of Service.

**Text commands:** When using Twitter via SMS, these commands allow you to access most Twitter features with simple text keywords. Learn the Twitter text commands.

**Timeline (n.):** A timeline is a real-time stream of Tweets. Your Home stream, for instance, is where you see all the Tweets shared by your friends and other people you follow.

**Timestamp (n.):** The date and time a Tweet was posted to Twitter. A Tweet's timestamp can be found in grey text in the detail view of any Tweet.

**Top Tweets:** Tweets determined by a Twitter algorithm to be the most popular or resonant on Twitter at any given time. Read more about Top Tweets.

**Trends (n.):** A Trend is a topic or hashtag determined algorithmically to be one of the most popular on Twitter at that moment. You can choose to tailor Trends based on your location and who you follow.

**Tweet (n.), Tweetable (adj.):** A Tweet may contain photos, videos, links and up to 140 characters of text.

**Tweet (v.):** The act of sending a Tweet. Tweets get shown in Twitter timelines or are embedded in websites and blogs.

**Tweet button (n.):** Anyone can add a Tweet button to their website. Clicking this button lets Twitter users post a Tweet with a link to that site. Learn how to add the Tweet button to your website here.

**Twitter:** An information network made up of 140-character messages (including photos, videos and links) from all over the world. Sign up!

**Twitter emoji (n.):** A Twitter emoji is a specific series of letters immediately preceded by the # sign which generates an icon on Twitter such as a national flag or another small image.

**Unfollow (v.):** See "follow."

**URL, URLs (n.):** A URL (Uniform Resource Locator) is a web address that points to a unique page on the Internet.

**Verification (n., v.):** A process whereby a Twitter account receives a blue check icon to indicate that the creator of these Tweets is a legitimate source. Verified users include public figures and those who may have experienced identity confusion on Twitter.

**Who to Follow:** Who to follow is an automated list of recommended accounts we think you might find interesting, based on the types of accounts you already follow and who those people follow.