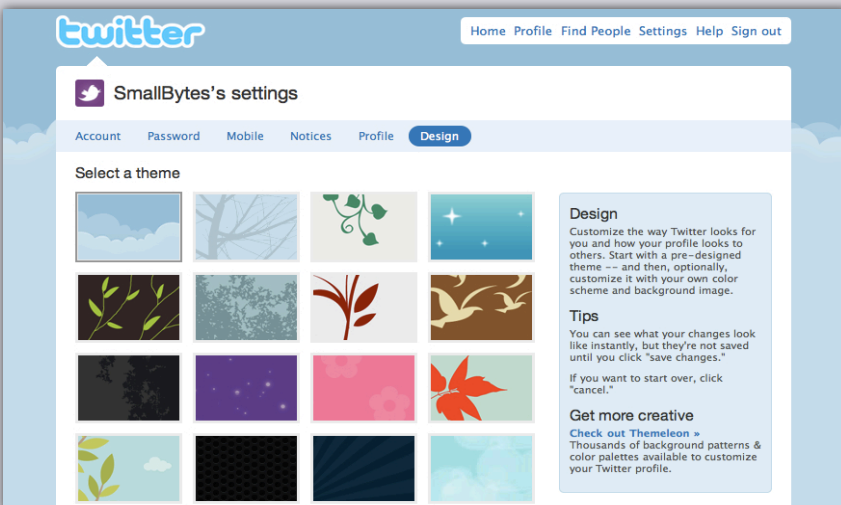
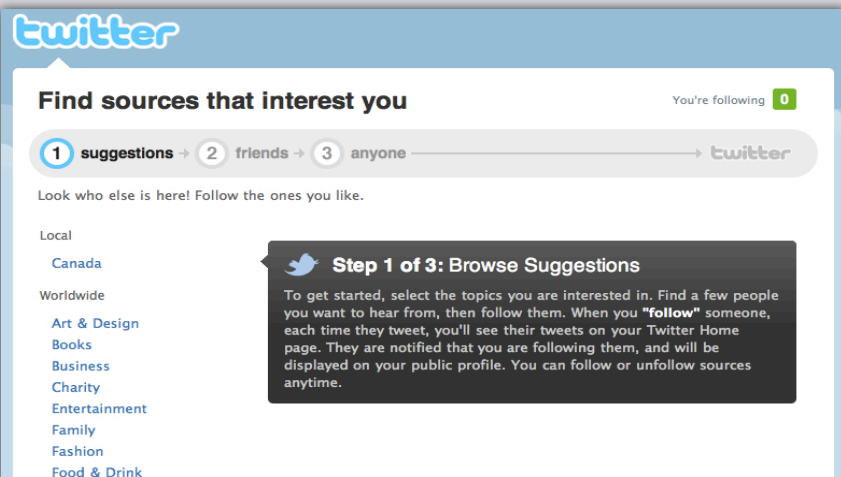
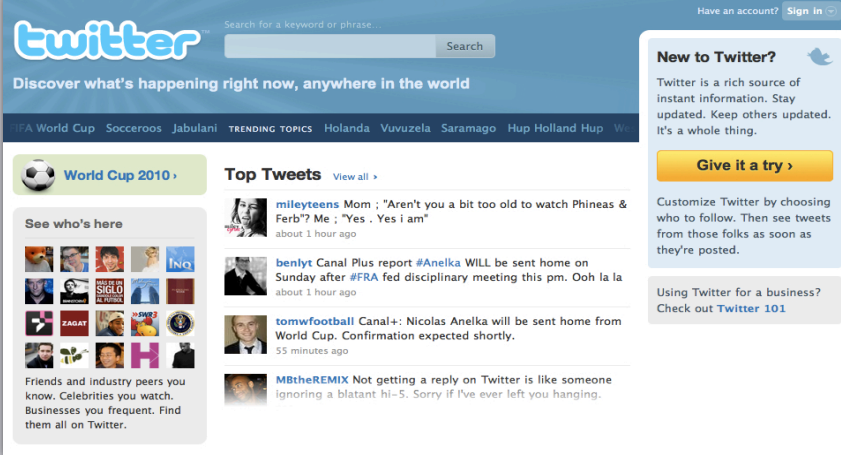


The Digital Diet

A small byte of





What Is Twitter?

Twitter is a microblogging and personal communication tool. Twitter allows the user to send short messages of up to 140 characters while either addressing a message directly (and privately) at a person, at a person in a public forum, or in a general announcement.

Twitter is built around the basis of the question "What are you doing?". You write a short message and publish it to your intended audience. People will reply or comment on your microblog using the @person-name to address the message to you. The beauty and universal appeal of Twitter is that, as a compliment to our busy lifestyles today, it's short, simple and quick.

Visit www.twitter.com to get started with your own microblog.

Getting Started

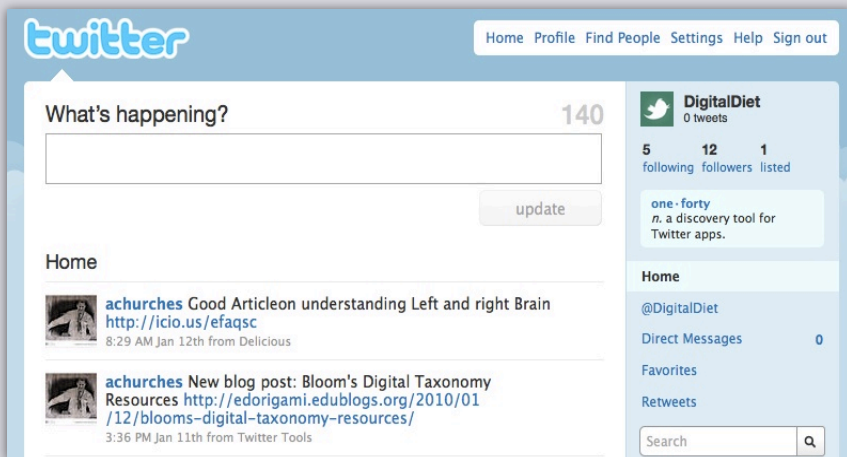
Create your free account on the Twitter homepage. It's very simple—you pick a name, user name, and a password, and you're in. You also have the option of allowing future Tweeters to locate you by your email address; just check the box on the sign-up screen to activate that function.

Once you're all signed up, you are whisked to a new screen that presents you with three starter options. You can browse Tweets by selecting the topics you are interested in from an extensive list. The next step involves finding your friends, where you can check your email address books to determine which of your buddies are already on Twitter.

Lastly, the third step is a search box where you can look for anything or anyone to follow or connect with simply by entering keywords. As you send out your Tweets you can add or invite friends and colleagues, and Twitter with your own personal network.

The look of Twitter is also customizable. You can control everything from your personal account settings, including things like choosing a custom background design for your Twitter page, as well as an option called Themeleon where you can choose even more custom colors and backgrounds to make your Twitter home unique.

Tumblr is an alternative to Twitter. Check it out at www.tumblr.com. If you are not interested in a microblogging tool, then instant messaging tools or chatrooms provide some excellent alternatives.



Find accounts and follow them.

Your Email

Email Password

Twitter in the Classroom

Breaking Down Barriers with Twitter

As a classroom tool, Twitter has the potential to be either a huge distraction or an invaluable assistant. Used correctly, however, it can be a useful addition to any kind of lesson. It is especially useful in the case of students who have insight to offer on a certain question or issue, but are bothered by speaking up in class.

Short messages are quick and to the point. Many educators use Twitter to access their Personal Learning Network (PLN). As the teacher or student posts a question, members of the PLN can offer advice, solutions, and resources.

Information on Tap

This tool can be used to tap into a global network of education professionals. Add your friends and colleagues to the people you are following and as they "twitter" you can follow the updates. It keeps you up to date, and also facilitates communication.

You will find Twitter has worked its way into the profiles of big-name organizations the world over. Their blogs will often be linked to Twitter, as is the case with NASA, CNN, or Discovery Education Network. As they update their blogs, you will receive updates, too. It's a terrific way to make sure you're informed all the time on what remains relevant to your favorite companies, sports teams, and news networks.

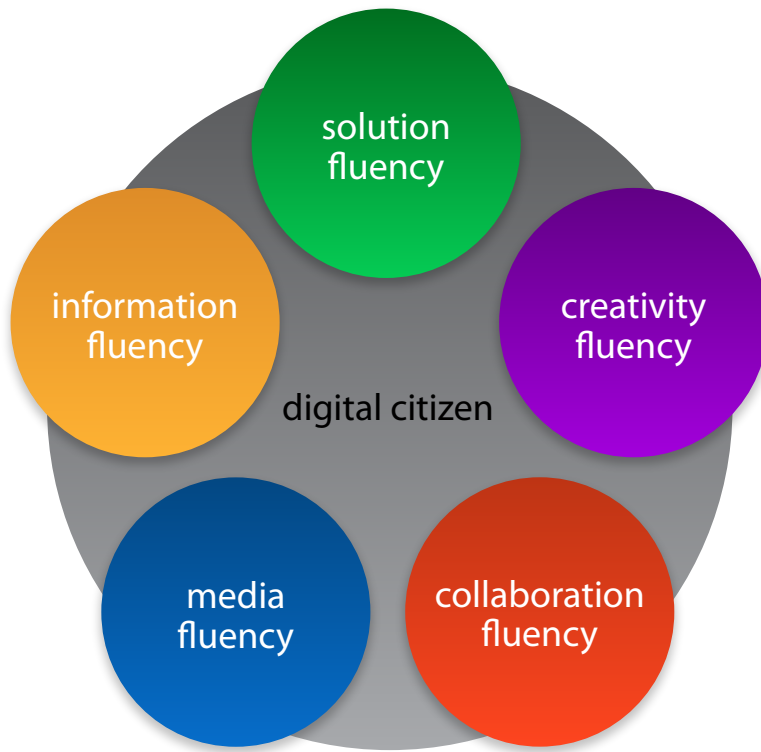
From the homepage, you are also invited to check out Twitter 101. This section of the website describes in detail how businesses are using Twitter to reach out to their prospective markets. It doesn't matter what kind of business you have—Twitter can help you reach millions of people all over the world.

Who's Following Who?

An easy way to find suitable people is to look at your friend's followers. You can view them by clicking on their names. Often Tweets will have updates set as private, which means you must be approved before you can follow them.

You can also control who follows you, as well. You can block people from seeing your updates. Just like other social networks, it pays to be conservative in who you follow and who follows you.

How Do You Use Twitter to Develop the 21st Century Fluencies?



Solution Fluency— With access to lots of information from what you decide to follow, Twitter can be a helpful tool in the problem-solving process. Communication through Tweets out in the field or in any other environment can be of valuable assistance to a project team. Also find quick answers and bits of info doing spot research on Twitter.

Information Fluency—Twitter has provided some large organizations with a great tool for keeping followers up to date on the most crucial bits of information they have to offer. CNN, NASA, BBC, and Discovery Learning Network are all examples of companies that have taken Twitter on as a resource for keeping people informed and educated.

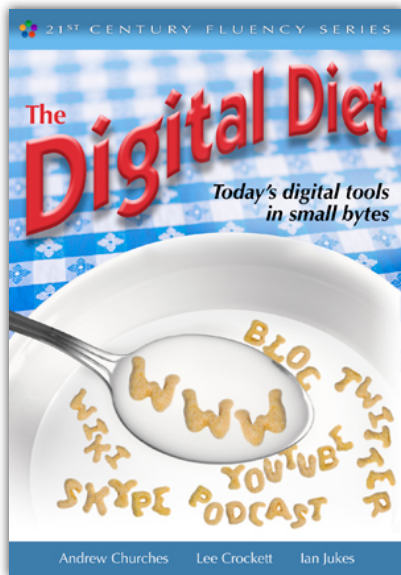
Collaboration Fluency—Collaborating using Twitter is quick and easy using its interface. Quick messages can be sent back and forth between students, teachers, or project group members. Also, as followers are added to a Personal Learning Network (PLN), everyone benefits from the social and educational forums of interaction a tool like Twitter can provide by adding comments, advice and support to questions.

Creativity Fluency—Twitter's personal network capabilities are tremendous. You can customize and create your own personal domain of data and entertainment to keep you both amused and informed by stylizing it to what's relevant and important to you and your specific needs.

Media Fluency—There is good reason why big names have chosen to connect with the world on Twitter. When you see something on Twitter's digital interface, you know it's what's happening now. It is a great way to advertise and promote using a digital platform that reaches millions in a single moment.

The Digital Citizen—As with any other social networking tool, it pays to be diligent about who you follow as well as who you allow to follow you on Twitter. Also, as you tweet in public forums and send out general messages, you must be mindful of how you are portraying yourself in the public eye. It is vital to pay heed to the rules of proper etiquette when sending messages in a blog or microblog.

about this small byte



the book

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21st Century Fluency Project

This resource is the collaborative effort of a group of experienced educators and entrepreneurs who have united to share their experience and ideas and to create a project geared toward making learning relevant to life in our new digital age. Our purpose is to develop exceptional resources to assist in transforming learning to be relevant to life in the 21st century. At the core of this project are our [Curriculum Integration Kits](#)—engaging, challenge-based learning modules designed to cultivate the essential [21st century fluencies](#) within the context of the required curriculum. For more information please visit our web site www.21stcenturyfluency.com.