

Getting Started on Twitter:

You have your account. What's next?

1. Spend Time on Your Profile. Don't be an egg. It is fine not to show your face in the picture or to use a pseudonym (just make sure your instructor knows who you are). But give thought to creating your Twitter identity. For example, consider listing what types of things you are interested in discussing. People can only engage you if they know what interests you.

2. Find Role Models. Not sure how to start? Follow your instructor and observe how they tweet. Ask them for recommendations on who else to follow or search Twitter for thought leaders in your discipline or field (such as authors you've read). Watch what they do and who they retweet and mention, and add those people to your list.

3. Check Out Hashtags. Search for hashtags around topics that interest you. For example, hashtags used during conferences are great places to find information, articles, or others to follow. Your instructor probably has some ideas.

4. Listen and Lurk. Good conversations on Twitter happen when you have something to offer. Oftentimes, newbies need to sit back and listen for a while before they know what they can add. Start with listening. When you hear something good, retweeting is a great way of letting others know you're there without being too bold. However, soon you're going to want to add to the conversation.

5. Consider Different Ways to Contribute. There are different ways to add to the conversation; a diverse approach is usually best. Some ideas include: sharing articles or information that other people may interest other people; promoting your work or that of your classmates (always a great way to start a conversation); letting your personality shine through with pictures and gifs that tell your story.

6. Have a Conversation. Engage classmates, instructors, and others in dialogue about something related to the course. Consider checking in briefly several times a day instead of just once so you can keep the momentum going.

