

# Using Twitter Effectively

## EDM310

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#### What Is Twitter?

Twitter is a stream of comments by all twitters. Think of it as a massive blog with the tweets of all tweets being piled up on top of each other at an astounding rate.

#### How do you make Twitter useful?

1. You must Twitter (<http://twitter.com>)
2. You should use an aggregator like TweetDeck (<http://www.tweetdeck.com>)

#### Start With Twitter

1. Create an account on Twitter
2. Your UserName should be short and informative. Mine is drjohnhadley. It would have been better to be drjhs or drjstrange or jstrange. Now it is complicated to change it.
3. You **MUST** have a good Profile that describes you sufficiently in order for others to find you and to know whether they might like to follow you. So first write out your Profile. For this class your Profile **MUST** include **EDM310 student Univ. of S. Ala** Here is my Profile: Professor, Univ of S. Alabama, Photography, Travel Planner, Technology, Future, Cook, Education, Duke, Princeton, Cruise Speaker, Wine Maven, Podcaster, Learner You enter your Profile under Settings/Account. 160 character limit.
4. You **MUST** include a picture. A decent one. (again in Settings under Picture)
5. Your first objective will be to **FOLLOW** people - people from whom you can learn or with whom you are friends). Initially, you should **NOT** be especially concerned about who follows you.
6. You should spend a good bit of time and energy finding people to **FOLLOW**. See the section below **How Do I Find People to Follow and How Do I Follow?**
7. In Twitter itself you will be select people to Follow (see section below **How Do I Find People to Follow and How Do I Follow?**), but you will also be able to do this from TweetDeck. After you have gotten used to using these two tools (Twitter and TweetDeck), you will probably find more people to follow using TweetDeck.
8. In Twitter you can also monitor who follows you. This is not a primary concern at this point, but your list of followers may yield people to Follow. See the section below **How Do I Deal With My Followers?**
9. In Settings/Account There is a checkbox for Protect My Tweets. **For this class DO NOT CHECK THIS CHECKBOX.** You might as well not be using Twitter if you want to grant permission before someone can see your Tweets. If you intend to use Twitter in that wasy, do it **AFTER** you complete this class, or set up a separate private account.

#### Install TweetDeck

There are other choices, but in this class I require you to use TweetDeck so that I will have to support only one aggregator.

1. Go to <http://www.tweetdeck.com>
2. Install TweetDeck

3. See the section below **Using TweetDeck**

## **Understanding Twitter**

You must understand the kinds of Tweets: **public**, **reply** (or **to** or **mention**), **retweet** and **direct** (more or less private).

A **public** tweet is just typed into the message area. It is limited to 140 characters. In some tweets, such as retweets, you cannot use all 140 for your purposes. This is not important to you now since Twitter or TweetDeck will warn you if you go on too long.

A **reply/to/mention tweet** is called to the attention of a Twitterer but it is public. When you see this kind of tweet you know that the sender wanted to call it to the attention of a particular Twitterer or Twitterers. It is written in this way:

@drjohnhadley This is what I have to say to you Notice there is a space after the Twitter name

A retweet is a Tweet that repeats an earlier Tweet of someone else and is formulated to give the original Twitterer credit for the tweet. It takes this form:

RT @drjohnhadley: This is what I have to say to you. It is like saying in your Tweet: Attention my followers: drjohnhadley tweeted this (and I thought you might be interested). Since no one can follow all Twitters, this provides a link between two or more sets of followers while giving recognition to the original source. It can be very helpful in determining others to follow.

A **direct** message is a private message that does not appear on the master Twitter site but does appear on Twitter if you have signed in and does appear in the Direct message column of TweetDeck (see below). It is also sent to your email address and Twitter can be set to make it go to your cell phone (or Skype) as an SMS message. Although this kind of Tweet is not public, I would never use it for information that was truly confidential!

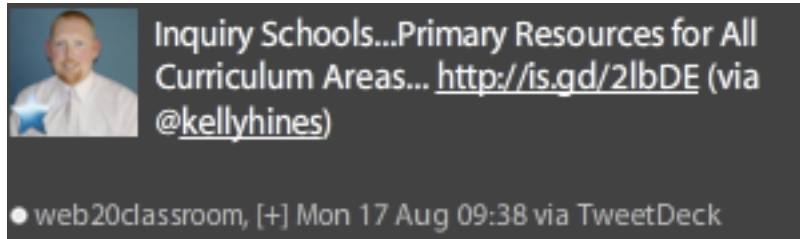
In addition, there are several tools you must use and several techniques or approaches that you must apply. We'll start with Tools.

## **Using TweetDeck (on computer and iPhone)**

Instructions that follow are for computer use of TweetDeck. iPhone use is more limited but operates - generally - in the same way.

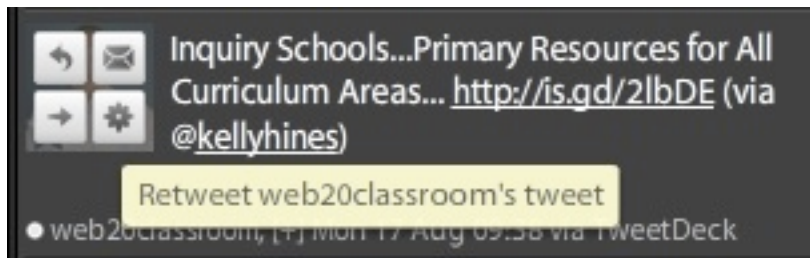
You may want to watch the movie I have done on Using TweetDeck. There is, or soon will be, a link to it on the class blog.

Here is a Tweet in Tweet Deck:



There is a picture in the top left. There is the Tweet. At the bottom is the senders username. The + enables you to add this person to a group. The time and date indicate when the Tweet was sent. via TweetDeck means that web20classroom was using TweetDeck when he sent the picture.

If you move your cursor over the picture you see 4 icons:



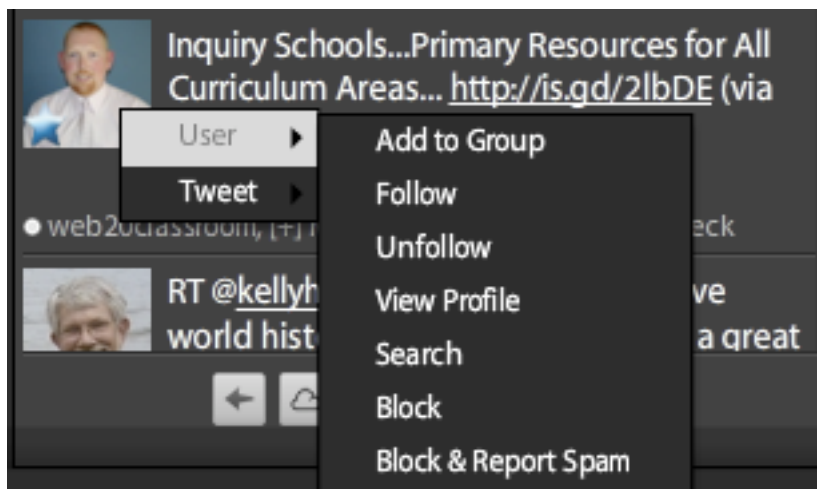
In this case my cursor was over the straight arrow which is a Retweet (see below)

The curved arrow is for a Reply (See below)

The envelope is for a Direct Message (see below)

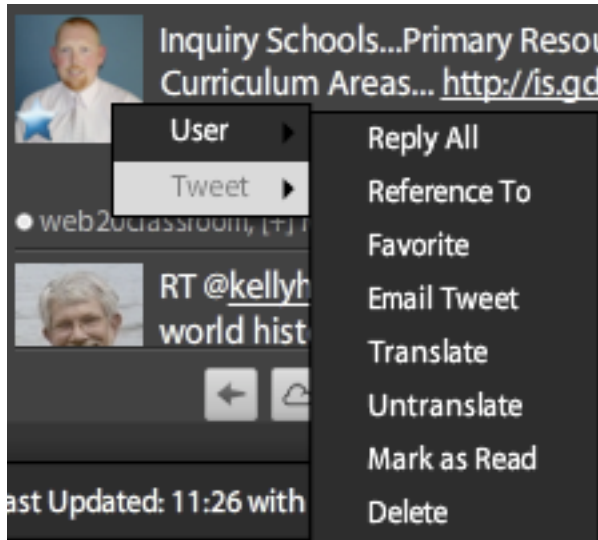
The gear, when clicked, produces two menus.

The top menu is User which gives you these choices:



These actions are self explanatory. A shorter way to ViewProfile is to click the username of the sender (in this case web20classroom). A shorter way to Add To Group is to use the + icon. See **How Do I Find People to Follow and How Do I Follow?** and **How Do I Deal With My Followers?** below.

The second menu offers these choices:



I never use any of them.

TweetDeck offers you 10 columns in which to view Tweets. The following instructions make sense only when you have TweetDeck open on your computer.

Column 1:

The first column (you can move them with arrows at bottom of column) I use for all those I follow. It is called All Friends. This is the first place I look when using Twitter. I spend about 15 minutes three or four times a day reviewing the tweets in the all friends column. I may do many things as I read/skim the tweets. I have indicated above how to do them in TweetDeck by putting your mouse over the picture with a tweet.

In most cases, I just

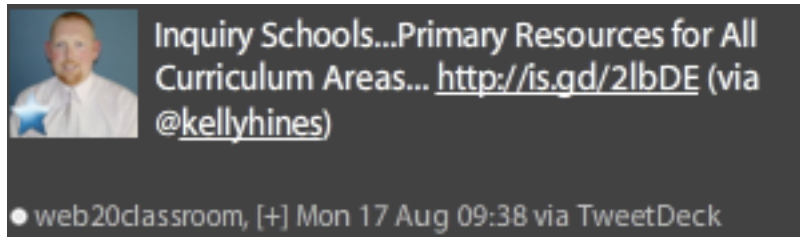
**Move On** (and click nothing in picture space)- no further action necessary.

But I may also do one of the following:

1. **Retweet** (mouse over picture, click straight arrow)- I think my all my friends should see this (remember, my friends may not follow the tweeter and therefore would not see the tweet).
2. **Retweet and mark it with a # sign** (mouse over picture, click straight arrow, add the #tag, e.g. #EDM310 at the end of the tweet. Sometimes you have to condense a few words or edit the tweet to stay within 140 characters.) This is a way to TAG a tweet and make all such tags easily

found and put into a single column in TweetDeck. This is like filing a tweet for later use. **ALL EDM310 Students MUST tag anything they want me to see with the #EDM310 tag. This includes original Tweets as well as RETWEETS! I will not be able to follow all of you. I will monitor your Tweets by following #EDM310.**

3. **Look at the profile.** Click the username of the sender or a user name in a tweet.



For example, I might click on @kellyhines in the Tweet above. Before that I would probably clicked on the URL. If I thought it was a worthwhile page, and since Kelly Hines had sent it first (web20classroom is giving her credit for original post), I would think that maybe I would want to follow HER! So I would want to look at her profile and see her latest tweets. I could also click Follow there and she would become part of my network. This will open their profile in the far right column of TweetDeck. There I can read their profile, see their recent tweets, and click Follow if I think they would be interesting to follow. See **How Do I Find People to Follow and How Do I Follow?** below.

4. **Click on a link in the tweet.** I do a lot of this because the links that are recommended are often very useful to me. When I go to the link I also make use of *Delicious*. Delicious is a social bookmarking tool. It also is what I use to "file" a web or blog page I want to have available later. By giving it a "tag" I am filing that page in a folder (tag) so that I can locate it later. If I am sharing my Delicious finds with others (the social part), they will also have access to my filed (tagged) pages. There is, or soon will be, a link on the class blog to instructions on installing and using Delicious/

5. **Reply to a particular tweet** (mouse over picture, click curved arrow). Answer a question, ask for more information, report a link that does not work, just send a friendly message - congratulations, thanks, etc. Everybody can see this, but a good Twitterer WILL see it.

Column 2:

I use this for Mentions. It shows all tweets of mine which have been Retweeted by someone else (so I can see who thought something I tweeted was of interest to others) and it shows all replies to me. Just above I said that a good Twitterer WILL see replies to a tweet (or any tweet directed to a particular Twitterer). This is how that is done.

Columns 3

I use Column 3 for Direct Messages that I either send or receive. (You only can use Direct messages - send or receive - with your followers.) Direct messages are also sent to your email (and your SMS feed if you enable that option in Twitter itself. To enable SMS feeds - you better

have unlimited SMS feeds or you will soon be broke - go to Twitter, Search People for the person whose Tweets you want sent by SMS, click on their picture, Click on Following - Device updates off, turn Device updates on. You do not want a lot of device updates on!)

#### Columns 4-9

Maybe you want a column with everything you tweet and all mentions. This is the same as the mention column except all of your tweets are mixed in with the mentions and replies. In the other columns, I have specific people or # mark. I change these columns quite often. If I want to see all the tweets that I have tagged for EDM310, I click on the Search twitter tool at the top of TweetDeck and insert a persons name or a hash tag. For example, I would use #EDM310 (and hit return/enter) if I wanted to see those tweets. I would type in wmchamberlain to see all of his tweets AND all of his mentions. In this way I can find out who he tweets with. I can check the profiles of those who twitter to wmchamberlain and decide whether I would like to follow them or not. I can also search for them and put them in a column (even without following them) and follow their "conversations" with wmchamberlain. If you use this tool effectively you can find out a lot about the networks that exist among Twitterers, but you have to work at it. By using this approach I have found gobs of people to follow who have been very useful resources to me!

#### Column 10

I try and leave Column 10 blank so that when I want to look at a persons profile I will have a column for that profile.

You should read Twitter for Beginners published by Crow Information Design. The link to this document can be found in the links on the class blog ( <http://edm310fall2009.blogspot.com> ).

#### **How Do I Find People to Follow and How Do I Follow?**

***When you start using Twitter, your primary objective should be to find someone whom you can follow and learn something from.***

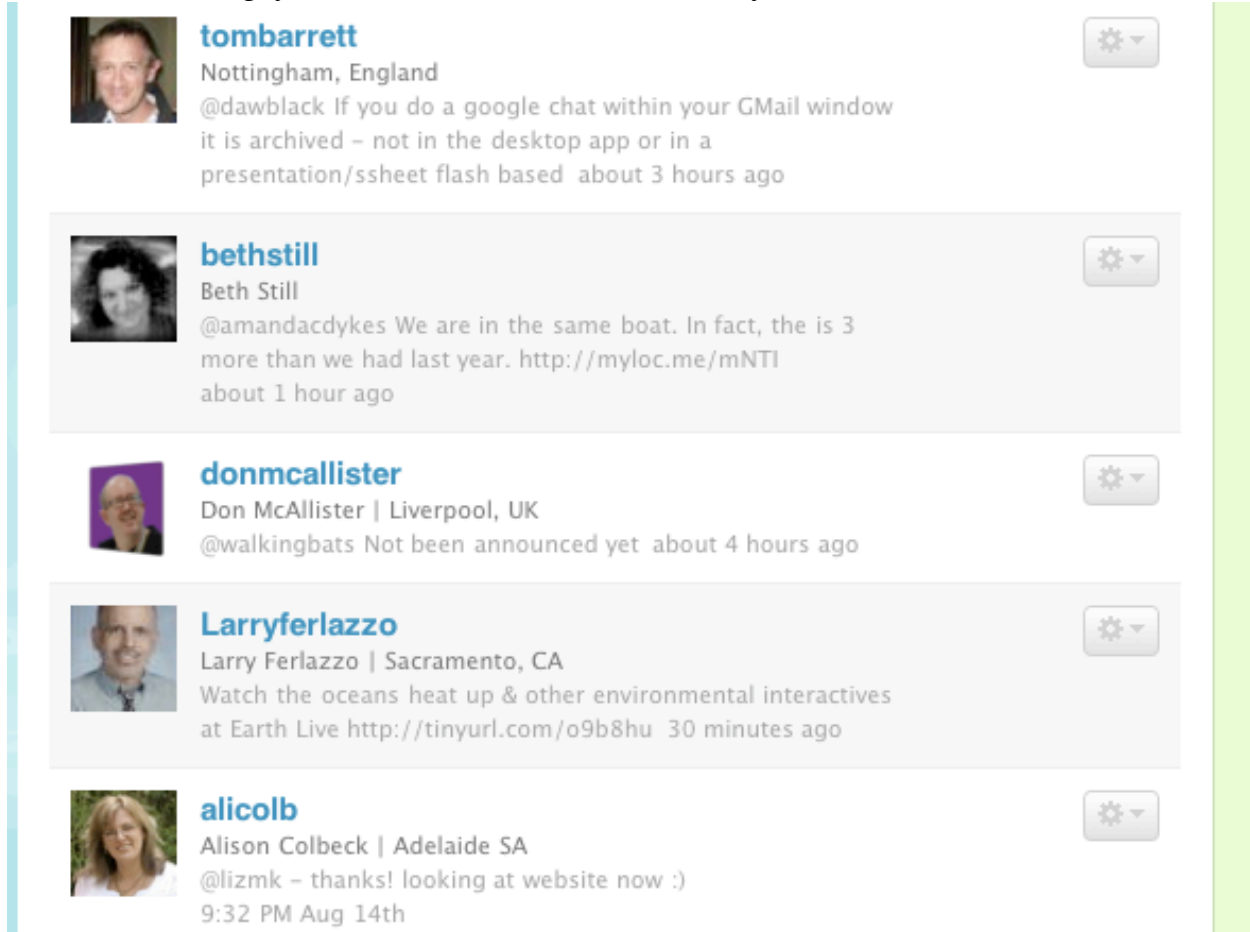
You do that is many ways.

In Twitter (not TweetDeck), there are two search procedures: Find People and Search.

1. You can use Find People to find their username and start following them. Say you want to follow Karl Fisch or Michael Wesch. In Twitter, use Find People. Ehen you find them, Follow them.
2. You could also find people by using the Search technique. Search for a subject such as education. You will find all recent Tweets with the word education in them. This may give you some clues. You may want to click on a username and check the profile and recent tweets. Then make your decision. Search for people. Search for issues or topics such as education, teaching, technology, edtech, etc.
3. You can use Search to search for tagged names (start with #). If you look for #education, you will find tweets in which twitterers have "filed" a tweet in that category. This often proves to

be a good source for names. Then look at profiles, recent tweets, and make your decision whether to follow or not.

4. You can click on a username (or, using Find People, find someone). Then you can look at:
  - a. Who they follow. If you find a person who contributes a lot to you, see who they are following. Click on a name, check the profile and recent tweets, and make your choice to follow or not. For example, if you went to my name in Twitter and looked at the people I am following, you would see these names (and many more).



The screenshot shows a list of five Twitter profiles. Each profile includes a profile picture, the name, location, a recent tweet, and a settings icon. The profiles are: tombarrett (Nottingham, England), bethstill (Beth Still), donmcallister (Don McAllister | Liverpool, UK), Larryferlazzo (Larry Ferlazzo | Sacramento, CA), and alicolb (Alison Colbeck | Adelaide SA).

Profile Name	Location	Recent Tweet
tombarrett	Nottingham, England	@dawblack If you do a google chat within your GMail window it is archived – not in the desktop app or in a presentation/ssheet flash based about 3 hours ago
bethstill	Beth Still	@amandacdykes We are in the same boat. In fact, the is 3 more than we had last year. <a href="http://myloc.me/mNTI">http://myloc.me/mNTI</a> about 1 hour ago
donmcallister	Don McAllister   Liverpool, UK	@walkingbats Not been announced yet about 4 hours ago
Larryferlazzo	Larry Ferlazzo   Sacramento, CA	Watch the oceans heat up & other environmental interactives at Earth Live <a href="http://tinyurl.com/o9b8hu">http://tinyurl.com/o9b8hu</a> 30 minutes ago
alicolb	Alison Colbeck   Adelaide SA	@lizmk – thanks! looking at website now :) 9:32 PM Aug 14th

What you should then do is to click on a name and check the profile and recent tweets. Repeat as often as you find useful.

- b. Who is following them. Repeat the process as described in a above.
5. Using TweetDeck, use the procedures specified in the section on TweetDeck above.
6. Be a detective. If you find a name that may be of interest, check it out. Profile, recent tweets, your decision.
7. Use these resources:

a. Richard Byrne has identified 10 teachers you should follow on Twitter. See his blog post: [10 Teachers to Follow on Twitter](#)

b. Larry Ferlazzo has a list of people to follow on Twitter: <http://is.gd/2gMgt>

c. Beth Still has developed a list 50 educators to follow on twitter: <http://is.gd/2kfLa>

d. My list can be found on the Personal Learning Network handout for this class. The link to that document is on the class blog.

e. See Richard Byrne's post [Seven Ways to Find Teachers on Twitter](#) in his blog [Free Technology For Teachers](#)

8. If at any time you decide to Unfollow a person, just go to their profile and click Unfollow (at bottom of column in TweetDeck or click on gear in your list of those you follow in Twitter).

***Finding the right people to follow is your most important task!***

### **How Do I Deal With My Followers?**

What about people who follow you? For the most part, except for your ego, it really is not nearly as important as whom you follow! Don't worry about it. Here's what I do. Twitter will send you an email when some follows you. Once a week I go to Twitter (not TweetDeck). I click on my followers. Twitter shows me whether I am following them. If I am not following one of my followers, I will look at their profile by clicking on their username. I will use my standard procedure: I will look at their profile and their latest tweets and then decide whether I want to follow them or not. So far, I follow most people who follow me if I think I will find their posts interesting. But I never follow porn stars and marketers or obvious (from their posts) jerks.

While you are looking at someone's recent tweets and bio, you can also see who they are following. This can be a great source of interesting people to follow. This also works with their followers, but it is not as effective since there may be a lot of duds following a gem!

**Should I block people from following me?** There is little cost to letting a person follow you. If they are difficult, you can block them later. Or you might choose to block porn stars and marketers of other products without further consideration. Your choice. You do this from your list of followers in Twitter (wheel tool on far right) or from the User menu on TweetDeck. (See above.)

**"What should I Twitter?"**

If someone asks a question you can help with, reply to them.

If you have found an interesting blog, website, YouTube video, movie, bit of information, share your findings with others.

Give someone a message of encouragement, offer as suggestion, thank them for helping you!

Watch what tweets are important to you and try and reciprocate.

### **Ask For Help!**

Ask for help if you need it. Tweet me: D or @drjohnhadley - note space after D, no space after @ Use @ unless really important that it be private and even then don't think it will be! Email me ([strange.john@gmail.com](mailto:strange.john@gmail.com)) Call me 251-610-2599