



350 Mass Twitter 101 Guide

This guide covers creating a Twitter account, tips for writing tweets, and hashtag basics.

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Why Twitter?

While both Facebook and Twitter are good places to share content, Twitter is the best social media platform for **targeting individuals** like reporters, partners and decision makers, all of



whom pay much more attention to Twitter than Facebook.

Twitter is also great for reaching outside your friends and family to **weigh in on trending topics** because you can use hashtags to participate in specific conversations happening in the moment.

Vocabulary

Tweet: A standard post on Twitter containing 140 characters or fewer.

Retweet (RT): A tweet that has been reshared to all of a user's followers.

Feed: The stream of tweets you see on your homepage. It's comprised of tweets from ALL the users you follow.

Username: Also called a handle, you get to choose this identifier. It begins with "@" and is unique to you.

Mention: By including someone's username (like @350Mass) in a tweet, you can conduct public conversations with other users. Whenever you mention another user, Twitter notifies them.

Hashtag: Always begins with the # symbol. A hashtag denotes a topic of conversation (e.g. #noDAPL, #ActOnClimate). You can click on or search a hashtag to see all the tweets that include it in real time—even from people you don't follow.

Reply: Tricky one! This kind of tweet begins with a username (like @350Mass) and appears only in the feeds of people following BOTH the sender and recipient. Put a period before the username to turn a reply into a mention so that everyone who follows you can see it.

Direct Message (DM): A private, 140-character message between two people.

Anatomy of a tweet



Creating your Twitter account

1. Go to the [Twitter homepage](#) , click on the button that says "Sign Up Now"
2. Follow the instructions.
3. When selecting a username, short and simple is best!
4. To add a profile photo, just click on the small blue box with the camera on it. Choose a profile photo of yourself that is identifiable if you want people to know who you are, especially if you have a common name.
5. To add a header image (like Facebook's cover photo) click on the blue rectangle, then click "edit profile" and then "add a header photo."

Types of tweets

Activists use Twitter in a number of different ways. Here are a few:

- Lobbying decision makers
- Pitching reporters
- Thanking and congratulating partners
- Building relationships with politicians
- Sharing news or commentary

Let's look at some examples...



Type one: Pressuring decision makers

Check out this tweet by 350 Mass Franklin node coordinator Carolyn Barthel. In this tweet, she both corrects Governor Charlie Baker (a.k.a. “Governor Selfie”) on a false statement he made about the Weymouth compressor statement and invites him to visit the compressor station.



Type two: Pitching reporters—



Type three: Thanking and congratulating partners—



Type four: Building relationships with politicians—



Type five: Sharing news or commentary—



Hashtag basics

There are two main types of hashtags you want to keep in mind:

Campaign or action hashtag: This type of hashtag identifies your specific campaign or action and allows you and your followers to find each other's content.

- *Examples of current 350 Mass campaign hashtags are #RenewableCities and #StandUpCharlie*

Topic hashtag: This type of hashtag reaches far beyond your campaign or action to reach others with similar interests who might not yet be following what you are doing.

- *Examples are #ActOnClimate and #KeepItInTheGround for the global climate movement, and #mapoli for Massachusetts state politics.*



Writing your first tweet

Okay, time to fly the nest! To start, let's try the most common type of advocacy tweet: pressuring decision makers. Think of a campaign you are involved in and ask yourself these questions:

- Who is the campaign's **target**? Search for your target's name in the Twitter search bar to see if they're on Twitter.
- What do you want your target to do? This is your **demand**. Your tweet should tell them this.
- What kind of **tone** are you going for?
- Does the campaign have a **hashtag**?

Once you've answered these questions, click on the blue button in the top right that says "tweet" and create your tweet using these components! You may have to fiddle with the wording to stay within the 140 character limit.

Writing your first tweet: Case Study

Let's try that again using the #StandUpCharlie campaign for practice:

- Who is the campaign's **target**? Search for your target's name in the Twitter search bar to see if they're on Twitter.
 - *Governor Charlie Baker is the target. He's @MassGovernor*
- What do you want your target to do? This is your **demand**. Your tweet should tell them this.
 - *We want Baker to take a stand against all new pipelines*
- What kind of **tone** are you going for?
 - *For the campaign targeting a popular governor who is weak on climate? Truth-speaking and firm, but positive and respectful. Not demanding or hysterical.*
- Does the campaign have a **hashtag**?
 - *Yes! #StandUpCharlie*

Who to follow

- Follow @350 Mass for updates on 350 Mass campaigns and other climate action in Massachusetts



- Follow 350 Mass nodes on Twitter: @350MALowell, @350MABRK, @350Newton, @350SouthShore, @350MANShore
- Follow @350 for national and global content
- Find and follow your state representative and state senator

Other Twitter tips!

- Mention @350Mass and we'll always try to retweet!
- When sharing news articles try to not just share the headline. Think about it and provide a more personal analysis.
- Try to have a mixture of retweets and original posts
- If you want everyone to see your tweet in their feed, make sure you don't start your tweet with a username, e.g. @MassGovernor. This makes your tweet a reply and hides it from lots of people. You can put a "." before the username, like .MassGovernor

Homework

- If you have a smartphone, figure out how to download the Twitter app (hint: whenever you can't figure out how to do a computer-related thing, try Googling it!)
- Retweet or write at least one tweet each week. If you are stumped, look for inspiration in the "Two-Minute Twitterism" section I include in the newsletter most weeks.
- Find and follow five climate activists you admire. It could be folks from your local node or someone like Bill McKibben!

Are you your node's next media coordinator?

Consider volunteering as your node's media coordinator! You'll get lots of special support and training in any of the following areas that interest you:

- Managing any node social media channels
- Providing basic social media advice and training for node members
- Writing media advisories and press releases for node-level events, actions and victories
- Building relationships with local reporters

Just email katherine@betterfutureproject.org to find out more!