twitteroid

MASTERING

twitter

in 10 minutes... or less!

UPDATED
2009
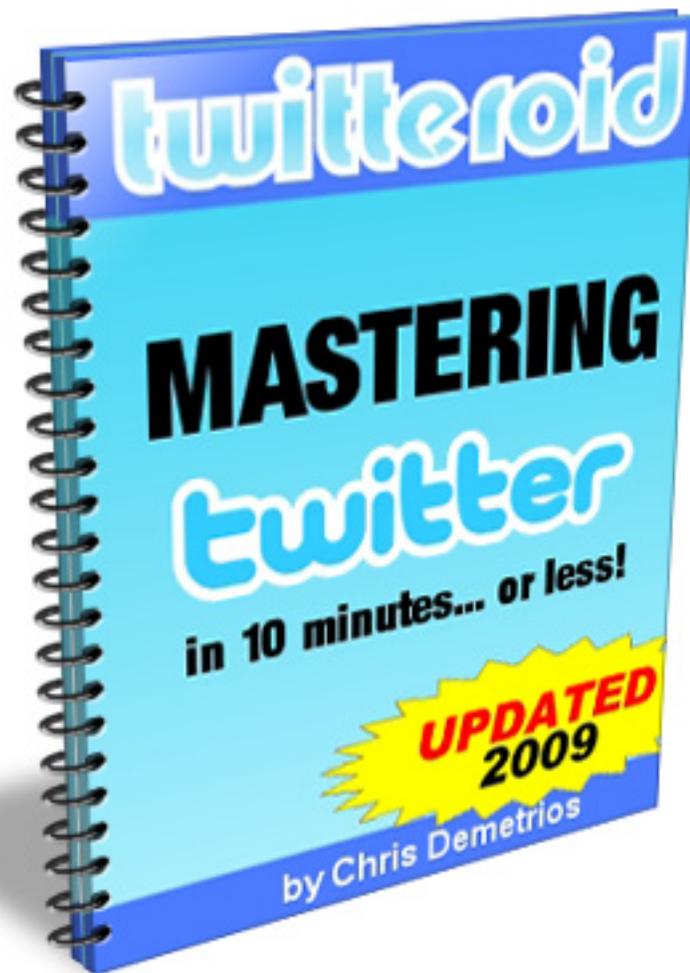
Version 2.0

This tutorial been sponsored by:

W. Terry Whalin

http://www.right-writing.com

twitter: http://twitter.com/terrywhalin

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There are only two simple conditions to the rights:

1. You **<u>may not</u>** sell this tutorial.
2. You **<u>may not</u>** modify this tutorial in any way.

Note: This tutorial is optimized for viewing on a computer screen, but it is organized so you can also print it out and assemble it. Since the text is optimized for screen viewing, the type is larger than normally found in printed books.

Disclaimer

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Messages From The Author

January 6, 2009

Twitter has changed since version 1 of this report. In the 2009 edition I have updated the tutorial with new screenshots, some new features and removed old content that doesn't apply anymore.

I welcome any feedback on this tutorial, both good and bad. By the time you read this I hope to have the Twitteroid reports site updated and ready to accept feedback & your comments. Naturally, you can also follow me on Twitter. I'm afraid I don't "tweet" as much as I'd like to (maybe because I'm kept too busy writing reports… <wink>) but I do like to keep in touch with people.

August 14, 2007

The purpose of this tutorial is to get you up and running in Twitter in the minimum amount of time with no fuss or frivolous banter in-between. You will also get some pointers on how to set yourself up for reasonable success too.

I sincerely hope that it will jumpstart your Twitter experience and that you will find it an invaluable starting point in your social networking adventures.

The latest version of this document will always be available on the site itself. Since Twitter is relatively new there are bound to be changes in the pipeline and I will be updating this document periodically.

In the meantime, let's get on with it!

Regards,
Chris Demetrios

About the Author

By qualification I'm an Electronics engineer and by profession a software systems architect, CRM systems consultant and software developer. My hobbies and interests include Internet technologies, marketing and entrepreneurship.

Throughout my 17-year Information Technology career I've been involved in almost every phase of software development from conceptual design right through to global deployment and support.

Contacting me: I welcome **any** feedback (good or bad) on this tutorial. There are three ways to do this:

1) Email: tutorialfeedback (at) twitteroid.com (treated as confidential)

2) On the site's Feedback page (treated as confidential)

3) On the tutorial's "info" page (approved comments will be made public)

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1. How To Create Your Twitter Account

1. Go to http://twitter.com

Figure 1-1: Twitter homepage

2. Click on the "Get Started—Join!" button.
You will be taken to the account creation page and presented with a form like this:

Figure 1-2: Twitter Account creation form

3. Filling in the Create Account Form

Tip 1: Selecting your username

    a. You can have up to 15 alphanumeric characters in your username as long as there are no spaces.

    b. Avoid using a silly username like `jcd1324`. Twitter is a social network first and foremost and as you are dealing with real people, who wants to follow or hear from someone with an *obviously* fake name?

    c. As you type in the characters for your desired username, Twitter checks automatically if the username is available.

    If someone is already using that username Twitter notifies you like this:

Figure 1-3: Username already exists

If the username you chose is available, Twitter highlights it in green like this:

Figure 1-4: Username is available

Tip 2: Use a REAL email address that you check often.

Don't worry you will not receive spam from Twitter. In fact, having been a member since May 2007, I receive only one or two emails from them a month. The reason you want to enter a real email address is:

    a. In case you lose or forget your account password you can have it sent to you.

    b. Direct messages from your friends are emailed to you immediately.

Tip 3: The "Humanness" Factor

This tip only works with FireFox – If you're struggling to see the two confirmation words you can enlarge the image by holding down the "`Ctrl`" key (in Windows) and pressing on the "+" on your keyboard. This "zooms" up the the page. To return to normal size later type in "`Ctrl`" and "0" (Zero).

OK, with these tips in mind, fill in the form to create your account. When you're done click on the grey "Accept" button. Here's a completed form example:
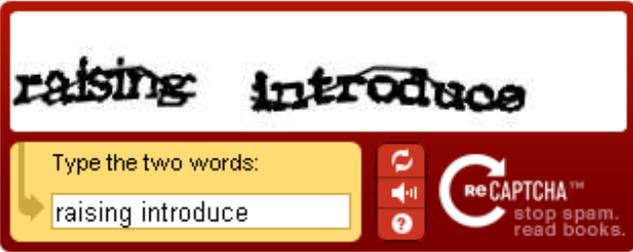
Figure 1-5: Create your Twitter account

Twitter's next step is to get you to invite friends to follow immediately. The first stage of this is to ask you to search for any contacts you may have inside your Hotmail, Yahoo, Gmail etc.

We're going to SKIP this step for now
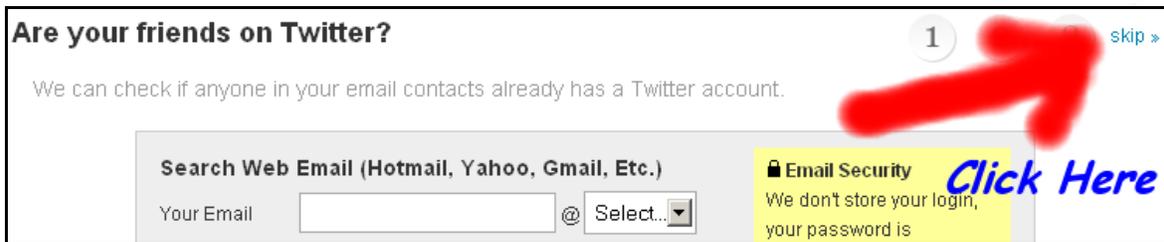
Figure 1-6: Skip this step

The reason you're skipping it is because your account is not ready yet.

If you send out those invites to your contacts right now, this is what they're going to see when they come to your Twitter page:
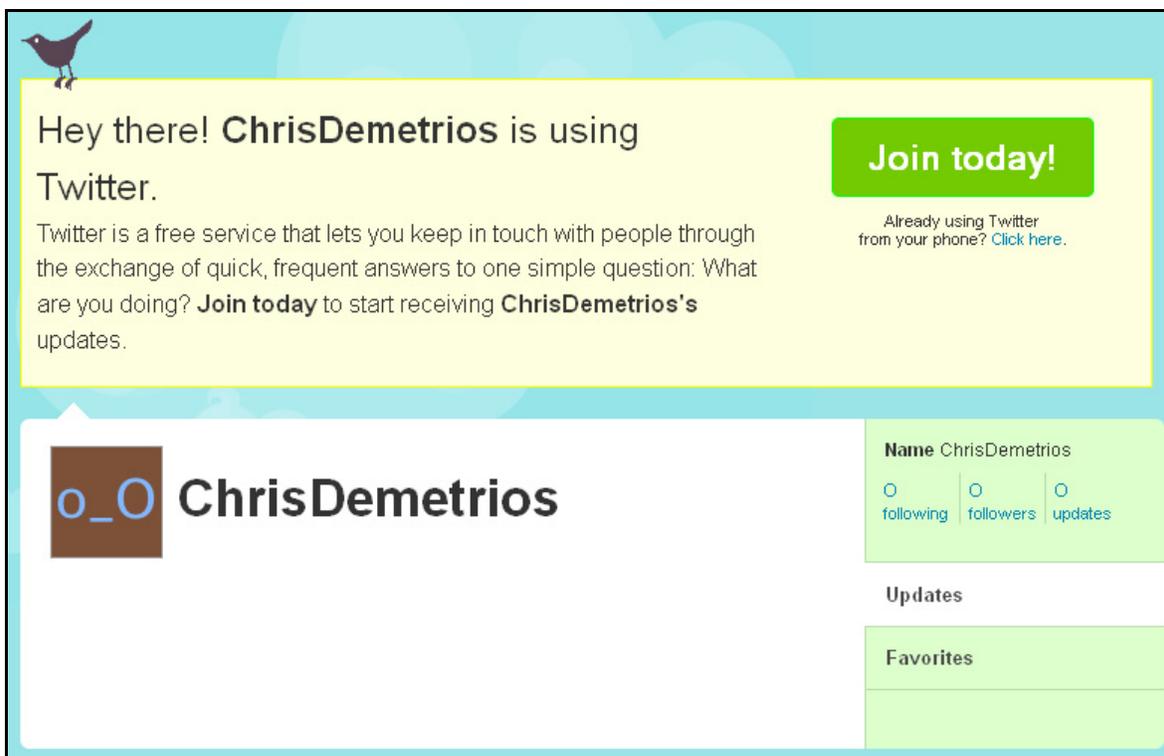
Figure 1-7: What your new account looks like

Ugly isn't it?

Who wants to follow a brown square who isn't doing a single thing on Twitter?

I know I don't.

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The only people that would follow you are your loved ones and… they'll only do it because they have to or more likely because you threatened them with grievous bodily harm if they didn't ☺!

All right, let's "fix up" your account – make it look prettier – and tell Twitter how you want to use it. One more thing before I forget…

Congratulations, you are now officially an active user on Twitter! Your "homepage" on Twitter is now **http://twitter.com/*username*** (where username is the one you chose earlier on.)

2. Setting Up Your Account

You will be taken to the following screen when you skip the "Invite Friends" step:
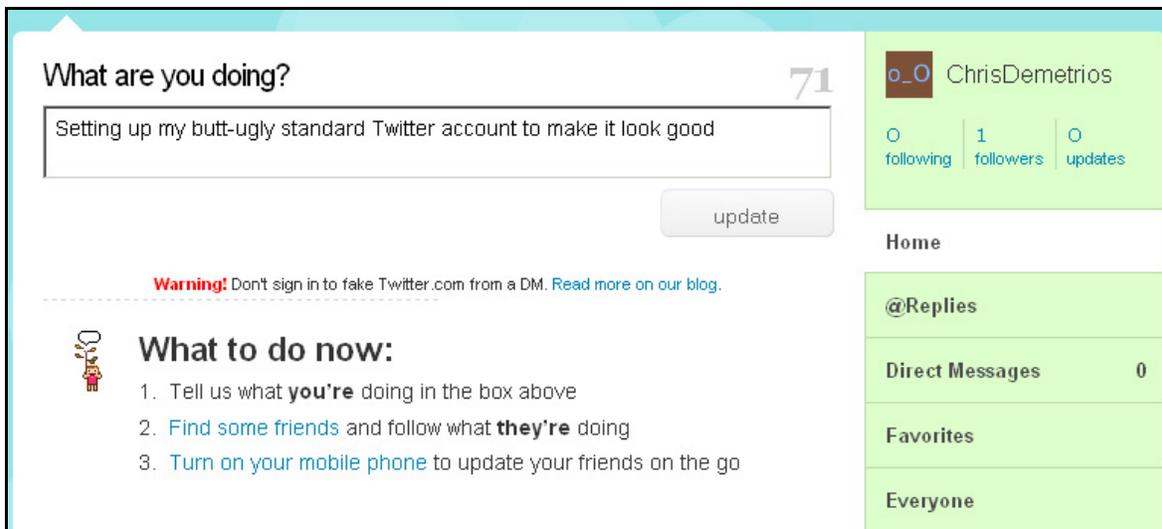
Figure 2-1: The Welcome screen

Twitter tells you to what to do next, but we're only going to listen to them for the first step ☺ In the screenshot above, I typed in:

```
Setting up my butt-ugly standard Twitter account to make it look good
```

Then clicked on the grey **Update** button. Now you try it. You'll see a screen like this afterwards:
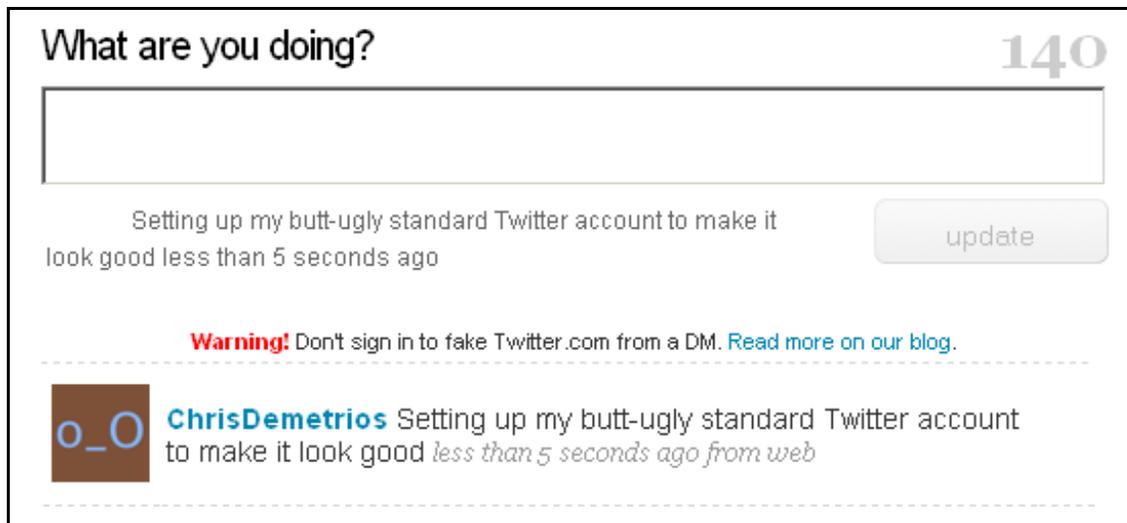
Figure 2-2: Your first post

Congratulations on your first Twitter post. Now let's get down to business… we want to change your account settings and *smarten* up your Twitter page.

Step 1 Your Account Settings

Your first move from here is to click on the settings link to access your account settings.

Figure 2-3: Accessing your account settings

You should see a screen similar to this:

Figure 2-4: Account settings

Let's go through the fields and fill them in.

Name : By default this contains your Twitter account username. Change this to your real name. In the example above (my name's not so common...) I'd add a space between my first and last name.

Username : If you want to change your Twitter username, *do it now...* You **can** change it later but it gets complicated because you'll need to inform everyone about your new Twitter URL and "tell" your followers that you've changed your name and it's actually you... Another reason is anyone going to your old Twitter name will be greeted with a "User not found" error... oops!

Email : Pretty self-explanatory. If you want to change your email address, that's where you do it.

Time Zone : Set this to wherever in the world you are.

More Info URL : This link is displayed on your Twitter profile page under your name. If you have a website, blog, facebook or other page on the Internet put the link in here.

One Line Bio : The name says it all... Enter a one-line description of yourself here. Make it interesting. Something to encourage like-minded people to follow you or click on your **More Info URL** before they start following you.

Location : Enter where you are in the world. When people search Twitter to find others living close to them they use this field.

Protect My Updates : Since you're just starting out with Twitter keep this option unchecked (off). When you turn on this option only you need to manually approve every follower so they can see your Twitter updates ("tweets" in Twitter terminology)

If you want to start building a social network fast it's not a good idea to protect your updates. On the other hand if you have a small group of friends and you don't want the world to see what you're doing, by all means, turn it on.

Language : At the time of writing Twitter is only available in English or Japanese... so I guess in your case you can leave it "as is"

And don't forget to click on the "Save" button when you're done!

[Save]

... um... not this one, the one in your browser ☺

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Step 2 Enabling Your Mobile Phone For Twittering

This step is only necessary if you want to receive or send Twitter updates from your mobile phone.

Figure 2-5: Setting up phone & IM

Word of CAUTION: Depending on your service provider and the mobile plan you have, you could end up paying for every Twitter message received or sent. One person I know of found out the "hard way" when he received a bill of $33.00 for text messaging! Consider yourself warned.

Step 3 Setting Your Notification Preferences

Notifications are "self-explanatory", simply enable the types of messages you want to receive in your email inbox when the following events occur:

Figure2-6: Notifications

NEW Reply Notifications
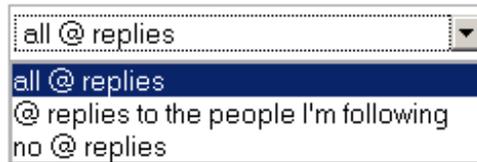
Figure2-7: @ Replies

This option is new since version 1 of the tutorial: The ability to filter out other peoples *@replies* from your timeline. *@replies* are used in Twitter to get the attention of the person whose **username** follows the @ sign.

For example:

If someone replies to a tweet sent out by your sponsor: **terrywhalin**

Depending on the settings you choose here:

1. **all @ replies**

    You will "tap into" the whole conversation between the two of them and will see it in your timeline – even if you aren't following the person replying. However, it's going to overwhelm you if you're following a lot of people or a lot of people "talk to" **terrywhalin**

2. **@replies to the people I'm following   (default setting)**

    With this setting you only get to see the replies sent out by people you're following. If someone you're not following directs a reply to "your leader" you don't see it. i.e. You're only "tapped in" to half the conversation.

3. **no replies**

    If you enable this option you exclude yourself from any "conversations" the people you're following are sending out. This is a useful setting to enable when you're following too many people and helps keep your timeline "clean" but it also means that you may miss out on interesting tweets.

Additional notes:

* I have a few links to where you can get additional software that will help you with managing your Twitter on page 20 of this guide.

* **New Follower Emails:** This is a handy feature to have when you're not sitting in front of Twitter all day. It's nice to know when someone starts following you ☺. Notification emails give you the opportunity to reciprocate and become friends.

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NEW With the introduction of automated tools in 2008 where marketers are following everyone under the sun I've revised my opinion on this…

Should you find complete strangers following you just to get your attention and not providing you with any value, turn this option **off**. Our email Inboxes are cluttered up enough as it is, besides you can always spend a few minutes a day checking on who's followed you lately… and decide whether you want to follow them or not.

- **Direct Text Emails:** It is good to have this enabled because you get the direct message emailed to you if you don't have Twitter on. Twitter's web front-end doesn't make it easy to know when you have received a direct message - and some desktop clients neglect to notify you too. *In my books this is a MUST HAVE option!*

  One thing to note here… only people who are following you and whom you are following as well can send you direct messages.

Step 4 Upload Your Profile Picture

Twitter's default "browns square" image leaves a lot to be desired! Your profile picture is displayed "almost everywhere" in Twitter! Get a good one, in fact anything other than the default one will get you further.

Because we're on a social network people want to see "who's talking". If you want to increase your followers then you definitely want to add a picture to your profile (even if it is a cartoon character…)

This is what my settings for @twittaroid look like:
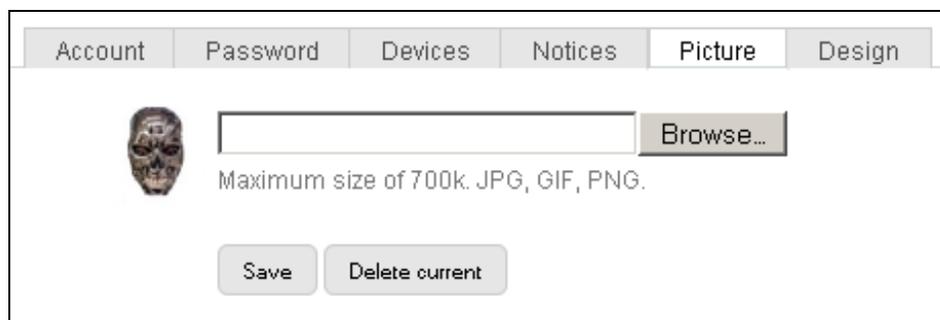
Figure 2-8: Profile Picture

Find a picture of yourself… or an interesting picture elsewhere and upload it.

Step 5 Customizing The Look Of Your "Homepage"

Twitter gives you the flexibility to change the color-scheme of your "homepage"
You have three options:

1) Apply a pre-defined theme to it.

2) Change your background image

3) Customize the color-scheme with your own colors.
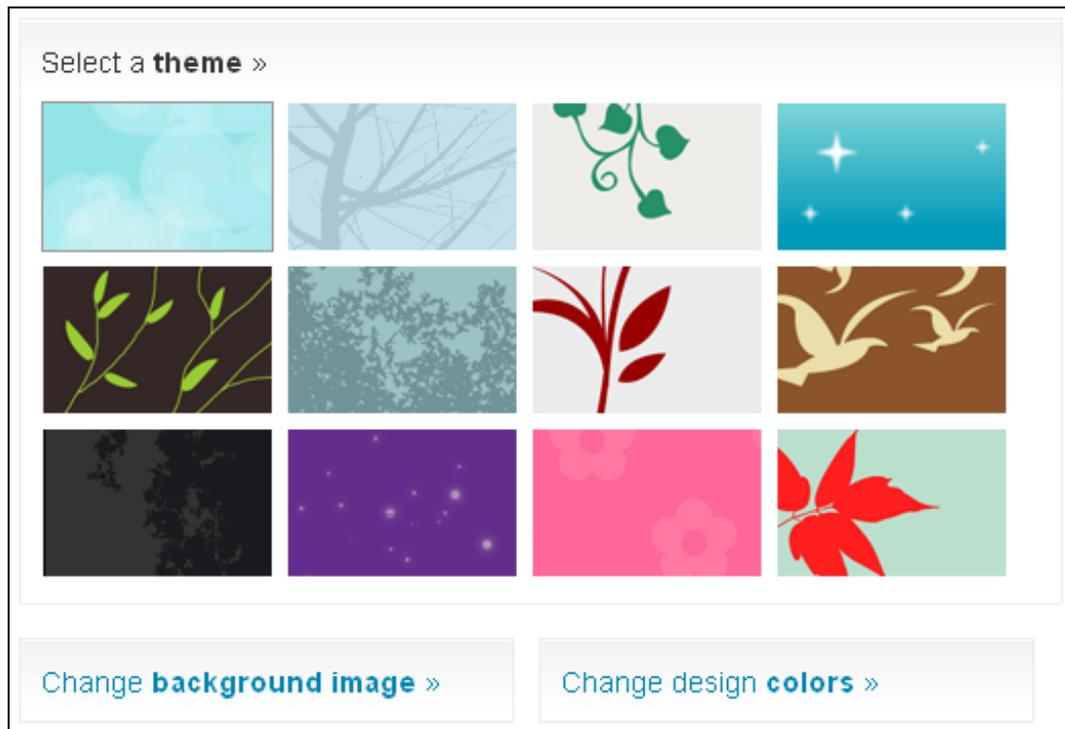
Figure 2-9: Design Settings

Almost all the "heavy hitter" addicted Twitter users that I have seen immediately
apply their own color-schemes and background images. I highly recommend you
do the same. Now's your chance to differentiate yourself and give your home a
"personal touch."

3. How The World Sees Your Twitter Page
If they're logged out of Twitter
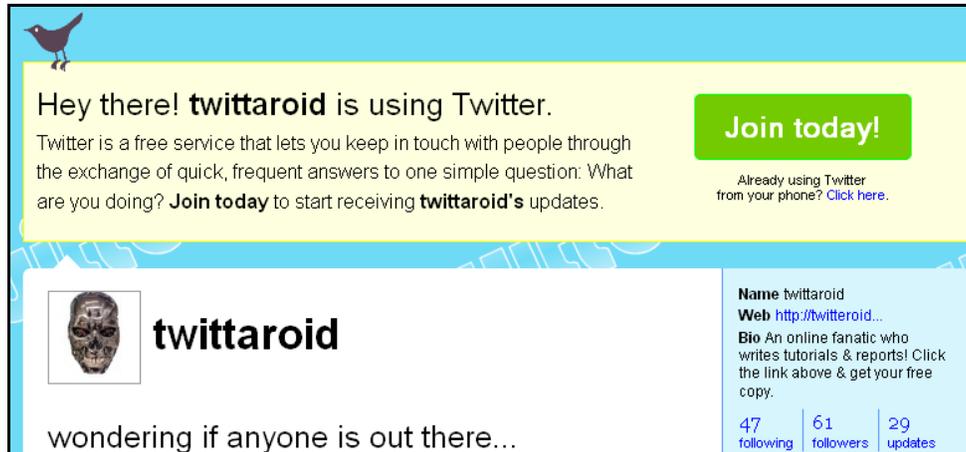
Figure 3-1: What your page looks like to someone who is not logged in.

And when they're logged in
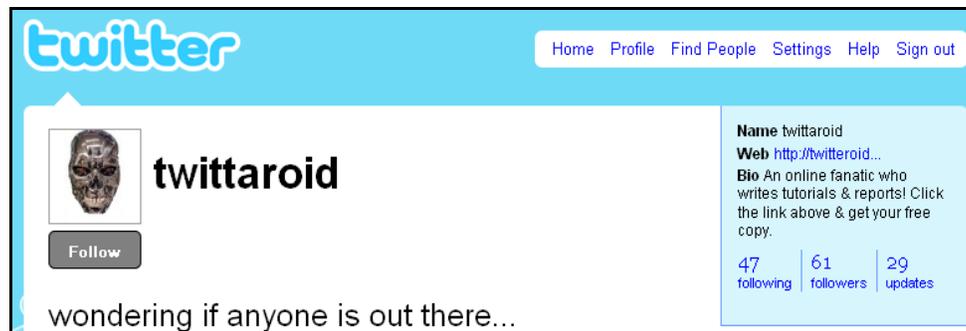
Figure 3-2: What your page looks like to another Twitter member

Do you notice the "**Follow**" button? That's what they need to click on to start following you ☺. Likewise, it's the button you will click on to follow people that are interesting to you.

Now that you know what your page looks like to the world, let's explain what it is you're looking at:

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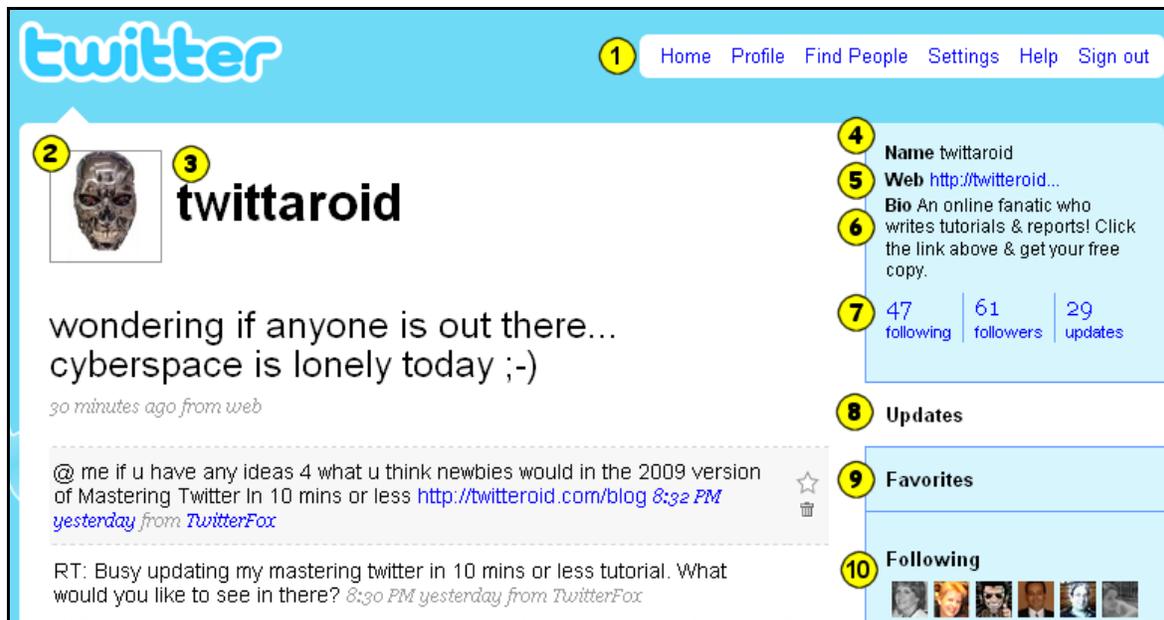
Figure 3-3: Twitter Explained

1. In case you haven't guessed yet, this is your navigation menu.

2. On the left you will see the picture you uploaded

3. Your username (in this case it is **twittaroid**)

4. Your real name that you set up earlier

5. Your website URL

6. The one-line short "bio" you setup in the settings.

7. Displays your "social statistics": the number of people you are following, the number of followers you have and how many "tweets" / updates you've made since you joined.

8. This is the "current tab" and displays the personal updates you have made.

9. If you have "favorited" any tweets and you click on the "Favorites" tab, a list of these will appear in the white section to the left. To favorite an update you click on the star to the right of the text in the tweet.

10. This display shows pictures of some of the people you are following.

The area in white is called your "timeline" and is the place where you view "tweets". In the screenshot above you're viewing "Updates" which are "tweets" that you have personally made.

4. Announcing...Yourself!

So far you have:

a) Set up your Twitter page correctly and

b) Checked that everything looks the way you like it.

Our next step is to do your first update and announce yourself to the world. Before we get to the actual "update," there are a few tips for you:

1. Make your first update something interesting rather than the bland "Checking out Twitter" updates that you see out there... You **do** want people to follow you, right? Right! Well, would you follow someone that's just "Checking out Twitter?" Um...no!

2. Twitteroid's "KISS" – ***Keep It Short and Sweet***. You have 140 characters of text to use. Use it wisely.

   If you have a blog... make your first post something like:

   ```
   This is my first tweet! It would be great to meet people who
   share one or more of my interests - maybe that could be you?
   Do tweet me if so!
   ```

3. About URL's – These can suck up your 140 character limit quickly! Use a free URL shortening service like [TinyURL](#) to save space. All the Twitter tools I've seen incorporate this feature into their "updates" box and do it automatically for you.

   One more thing about including links in your "tweet" is to keep it short so the URL remains visible.

Let's get to it then. Click on the Home link in the navigation menu. You should now see a screen containing the "What are you doing?" question box similar to this:
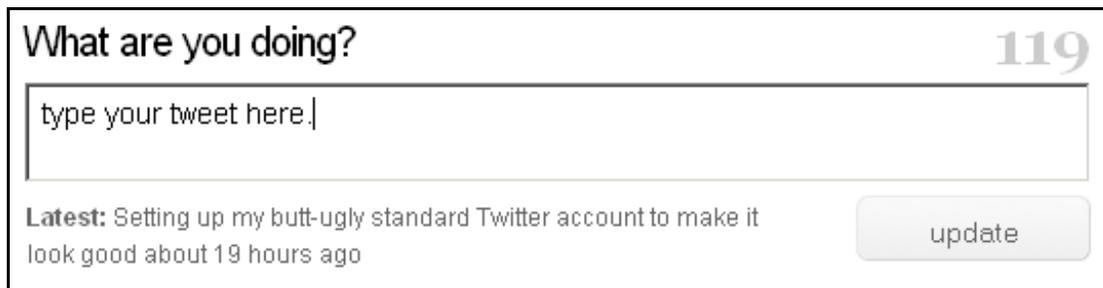
Figure 4-1: Posting a tweet

Remember when I told you that you have only 140 characters to squeeze your message into? In the screenshot you'll see that Twitter does a "live countdown" of the number of characters left in your "tweet" as you type.

>> Enter your first update and click on the grey "Update" button.

That's it. You have just made your first update. Simple isn't it? From now on all you need to do is go to this page to post all your updates.

If working from your web browser is not your thing (and you like working directly from your computer) get one of the Twitter has a list of the most popular desktop software tools here.

If you want to dig even deeper there is also the Twitter's wiki has a complete list of Twitter related tools.

And… if you're wondering what I use for Twitter… Well, I'm a big fan of Firefox (a free web browser) because it's *simply better* than Internet Explorer and I can do a whole lot more with it, like… use Add-ons! An example of this is the TwitterFox Add On I use to see what's happening in the *twitterverse* from inside my web browser (without having to be signed-in on Twitter.)

5. Playing Follow The Leader

Since Twitter is a social network it's pointless to have a Twitter account and no one to "talk" to. Now that your Twitter account is "dressed for success" let's find some interesting people to follow.

Side-note: Before you continue, make sure you're logged in on Twitter.

As a first exercise, let's follow this tutorial's sponsor: **W. Terry Whalin**

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Following Your Sponsor

Copy this URL into your web browser:

http://twitter.com/terrywhalin

or click on the link above to open a new tab or window in your web browser.

When you visit the homepage of someone you're not following Twitter picks up on this and inserts a Follow button under the username. A list of their twenty most recent "tweets" is also displayed. Have a look at them and decide if this someone whose 'news' or conversations you would be interested in.

If you are then click on the "Follow" button:

Figure 5-1: Following someone new

After you've clicked the "Follow" button web page is updated and a similar result to this is displayed:

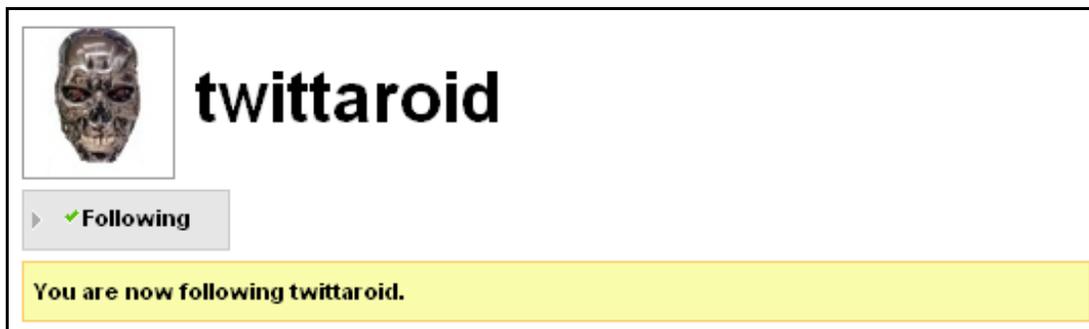
Figure 5-2: You're Following
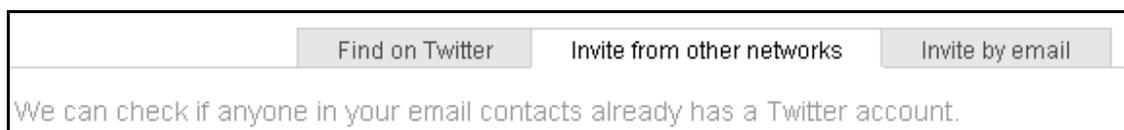
Inviting Friends To Follow You

Remember that step you skipped earlier on when we were setting up your account? Well, now you're ready for it… Click on the "Find People" link in the navigation bar

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You'll be presented with three tabs or options to finding people.

a) Inviting people from other networks you belong to

At the time of writing Twitter supports integration with the following networks: Hotmail, Yahoo, AOL, MSN and Gmail. Here's a quick overview of what happens when you use this option:

- You're prompted to enter your account details for the network

- Twitter logs in to your account (e.g your Gmail) and retrieves your email contact list from that account.

- Twitter then searches it's database for their email addresses and creates a list of your contacts who are already on Twitter. All you have to do is: Tick off who you'd like to follow and click on the "Continue" button – Twitter takes care of adding them to your "following" list for you.

- In the next step Twitter lists all your contacts who are NOT on Twitter and asks if you would like to send them an email invitation to join and start following you. As in the previous step, you tick off the ones you'd like to send an email to. This is a sample of what the email looks like that they receive:

```
From:    [Your Name] your@emailaddress.com

Subject: [Your Name] wants to keep up with you on Twitter

Message:
To find out more about Twitter, visit the link below:
<link to your Twitter homepage>

Thanks,
-The Twitter Team

About Twitter

Twitter is a unique approach to communication and networking based
on the simple concept of status. What are you doing? What are your
friends doing—right now? With Twitter, you may answer this question
over SMS or the Web and the responses are shared between contacts.
```

```
This message was sent by a Twitter user who entered your email
address. If you'd prefer not to receive emails when other people
invite you to Twitter, click here:
<link to your Twitter homepage>
```

b) Invite by email

In this step you enter a list of email addresses of people you know and want to follow on Twitter. The process is similar to the previous step, except you have to manually enter the email addresses.

Tip: Personally I don't recommend using this option. In my opinion it's probably better to send your friends an email from your own computer, using your own email account.

You'll probably achieve much better results with this because your friends will recognize your normal email address in their email inbox. Also, email service providers might incorrectly flag Twitter's email as SPAM. Using your own email increases your chance having your invitation delivered and read.

c) Find on Twitter

This option allows you to search for people already on Twitter based on matches in the username, first name or last name. A list of possible matches is returned for you to select from.

Another option for search is the next step…

NEW *Searching Twitter To Find People to Follow*

OK, so what happens if you don't have any friends who are "wired to the 'net"? If this describes you… don't worry, there's a cure for this. Twitter provides us with a search engine: http://search.twitter.com/
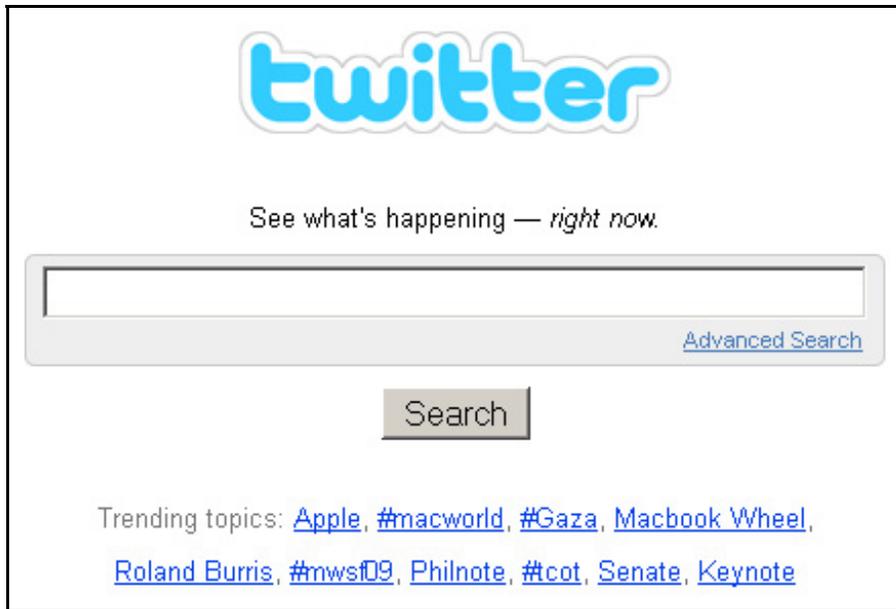
Figure 5-3: Twitter search!

Use the search engine to find people tweeting about topics that interest you.

For example:

> If you're "into" nature conservation you could do a search on "extinct birds" to find other people that share your concerns. Then click on their pictures to see their timeline and follow them if you like them. ☺

> Let's say we're looking for people that share the same taste in music as you… When you have found an interesting update (like the example below)

Figure 5-4: Public timeline

Click on that person's username or on their picture to go to their Twitter homepage to see more information on them. In our example this is what CleverClogs' Twitter page looks like:

Figure 5-5: Public profile

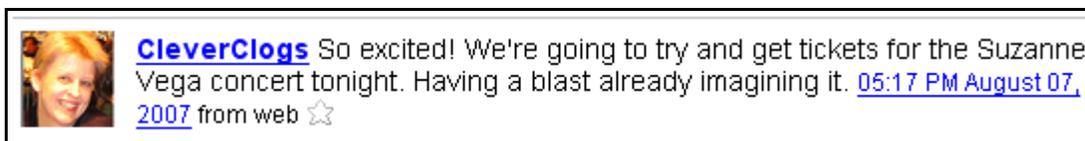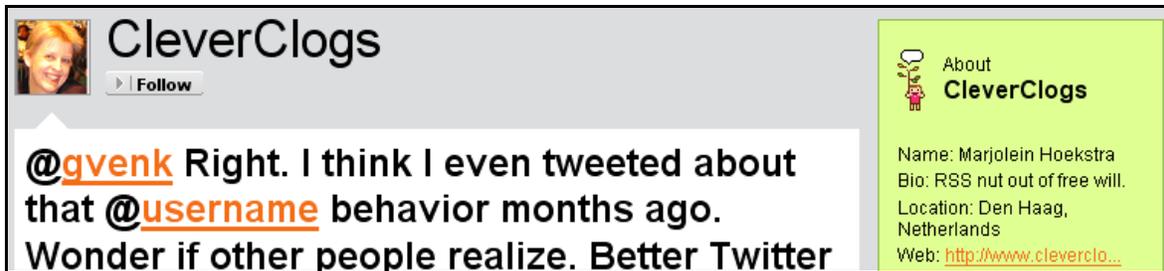Here you can see Marjolein's short bio and what she's been "tweeting" about. If you decide that you like her and want to know more about what she has to say, all you need to do is click on the grey "follow" button and she will be added to the list of people that you are following.

You can repeat this process to start building a list of people to follow. Some people will reciprocate and follow you in return. When this happens you become "friends" in Twitter and can direct message each other. Click here to read more about Direct messaging on Twitter's site.

Tip:

Figure 5-6: Take me home

Clicking on the Twitter logo is a quick shortcut to get to your own homepage after looking at other peoples Twitter pages.

Finding People to Follow from the Public Timeline

This is pretty much a "hit and miss" tactic, but it's still there...

The public timeline in Twitter provides you with a snapshot of "What people are doing" around the world at the specific instant you access the page. Click the Public timeline link in your navigation bar to view it.

You may need to refresh the page a few times until you find someone interesting to follow. Remember: Twitter is international so if you see some updates with funny characters in them, don't be alarmed, your web browser and / or Twitter is NOT broken!

Managing Twitter

On the right-hand side of your Twitter homepage is your "Profile" box that displays your "stats".
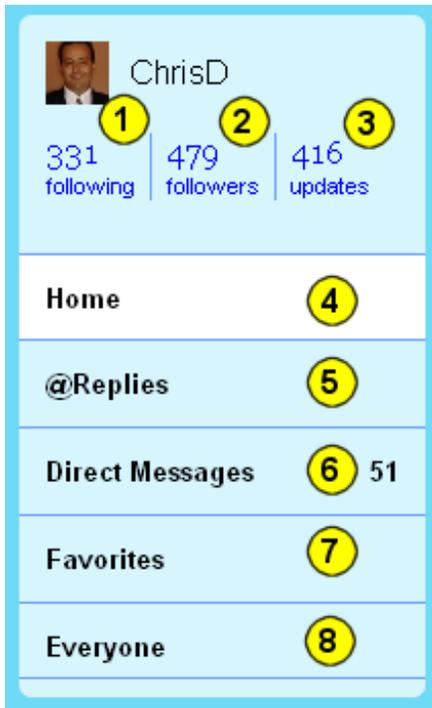
1) The number of people you are following. To manage them click on the link.

2) The number of people who are following you. Likewise, click to manage.

3) The number of "tweets" you have made since joining Twitter.

4) **Home** - displays your timeline and contains both your own tweets and those of the people you are following.

5) **Replies** – click on this tab to view any replies people have directed at you.

6) **Direct Messages** – click on this tab to view any direct message you have received from friends. (see the next page for more info)

7) **Favorites** – If you have "starred" any updates (including your own) this is where you go to view them.

8) **Everyone** – takes you to the public timeline. As the name implies, this is EVERYONE on Twitter and what they are *doing* at that moment in time.

When you move your mouse over someone else's update in the timeline you have the following options available to you: Favorite or Reply (see pic)
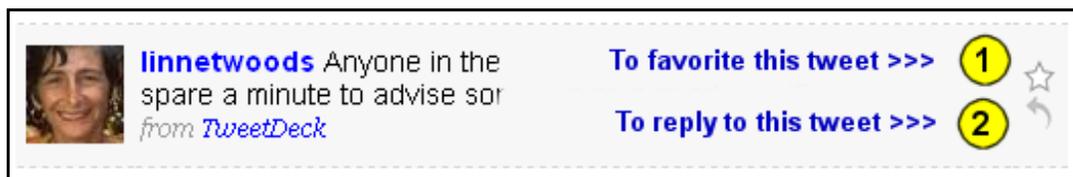
When you're hovering over your own tweets these are the options available to you:
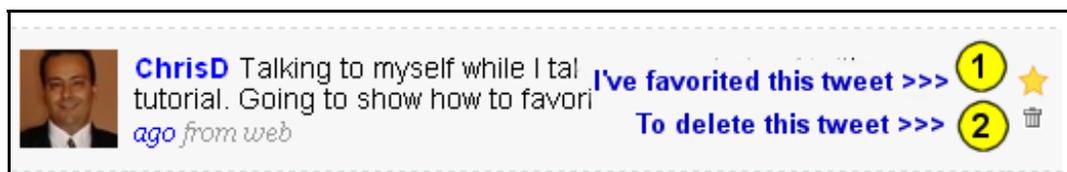
About Direct Messages: These are private updates you have received from friends. A friend is considered someone that you are following **AND** who is following you. i.e. You're both following each other (so you have become friends).

The easiest way to send a direct message is to type the following in your updates:

```
D username the rest of your message goes here….
```

i.e. the letter "D" followed by a space then the person's username followed by a space and then your private message. Another way to send a direct message is to click on the reply icon (appears as a little email symbol) when you are in the Direct Message tab.

Following

Click on the **Following** link to see a list of all the people you are following.
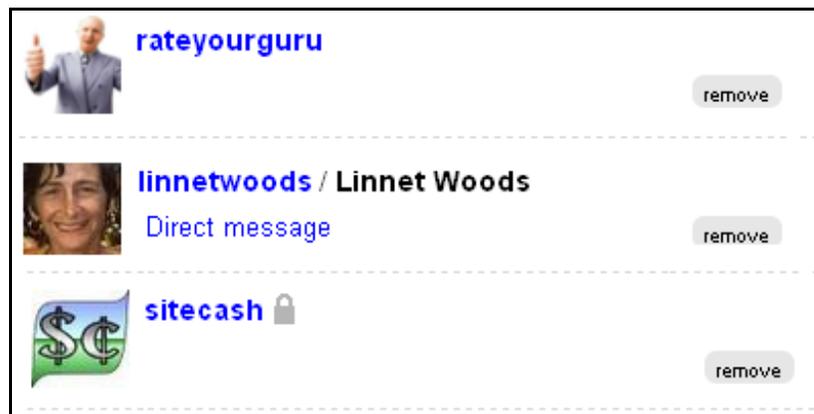
In the screenshot above you can see there is a difference between *rateyourguru* and *linnetwoods* … I'm following both of them but only *linnetwoods* is following me back.

I still get both their updates in my timeline but can only send *linnetwoods* a direct message.

Another thing to notice is the grey padlock symbol next to *sitecash's* username. When you see that symbol it means that this person has protected their updates and you have to request to be manually approved to view them.

Removing: To stop following someone click on the "remove" button. They will be removed from your "Following" list and their updates will not be displayed on your homepage anymore. It's that simple.

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Followers

If you click on the **Followers** link a list of all the people that are following you is displayed similar to this:


In the screenshot above you can see that both Linnet and "A" are following me. The difference between them is that I'm following Linnet back but I'm not following "Mr A" the *brown square.*

You have the option of following him by click on the Follow button or, if he has upset you in some way, click on the "**block**" link to ban him from receiving your Twitter updates. *This is a harsh action and should only be used if the person really deserves it.*

So, What Are You Doing?

OK, now you know almost everything you need to know about Twitter!

Your next step is to click on the Twitter logo to go to your home page and send your next message. It's easy! In the textbox (like the one below)
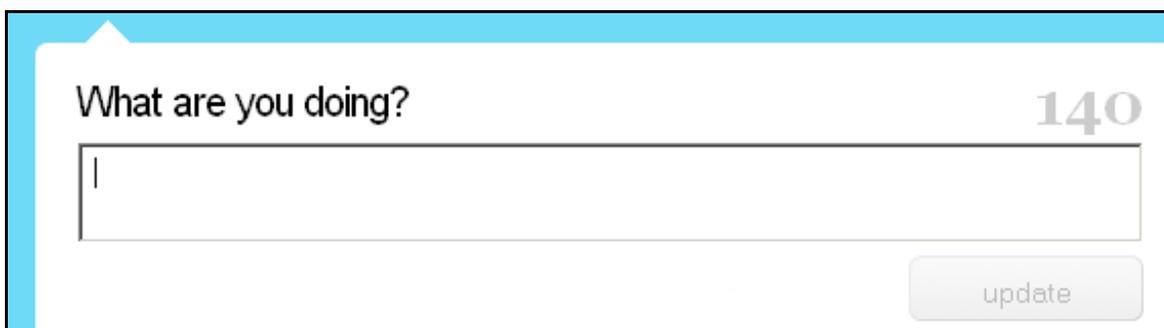
Send the following message:

> @terrywhalin
> Just finished reading Twitteroid's tutorial. Thanks.

This will send a "Thank you" message to W. Terry Whalin

Enjoy Twitter!

Appendix A: How To Generate Even MORE Followers

Do you have any friends that you would like to see on Twitter?

Let's face it, many people haven't got a clue about how to use Twitter and a quick tutorial to get them started will work wonders.

So how can you convince them to use Twitter? Simple, give them a copy of this tutorial telling them how to follow you. ☺

Appendix B: Personalizing This Tutorial With Your Name

Do you have a blog, a website or even an email list? Hey, you might have friends and family that are "technophobic" and want a simple no-nonsense guide to getting up and running like you.

Here's how you can create a closer relationship with your friends, subscribers, customers and website visitors on Twitter…

Give them a copy of this tutorial branded with your own Twitter information and have them follow you as they work through the tutorial. If you look inside this tutorial you can see that it has been personalized for your sponsor with the following information:

Name :   **W. Terry Whalin**

Website :   **http://www.right-writing.com**

Twitter :   **http://twitter.com/terrywhalin**

Making this tutorial your own Twitter "*follower generator*" is as easy as pie.

All you need to do is make a small donation to my *"How To" Report Fund*.

Immediately after your donation has been received you'll be taken to a download page where you will download a "zip" file. Inside the "zip" file are all the tools you need to brand this tutorial with your own details.

Four GOOD Reasons Why You Should Donate

1. You believe this guide is a valuable resource and would like to thank me

    a. for writing it and

    b.   giving it away for free

    Because there are some unscrupulous people out there that charge for similar resources that deliver much less than this tutorial.

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2. You're supporting the creation of more **FREE** guides and reports that will help both yourself and others to "demystify" tasks that seem simple to the experienced but complicated to absolute beginners.

3. You get the chance to have YOUR name associated with quality content. I know because Version 1 of this tutorial received rave reviews and has been circulating all over the Internet – for Free I might add.

4. According to my word processor I've spent over 47 hours writing and updating this report. That's time I should have spent with family & friends… but instead I chose to write this… and then give it away.

Click here to donate now

It's the right thing to do ☺

NOTE:

You DO NOT have to donate.
**You still have permission and the rights to
give this report to whomever you want.
In fact I insist that you do!
Help spread the word and happy "Twittering!"**