**SETAC-AU Guide to twitter**

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Twitter is an excellent tool for modern scientists. Its uses range from science communication and connecting with the public to making connections with fellow scientists within Australia and around the world. Many journals and organisations also have Twitter accounts, which allows for an at-a-glance feed of their recent activities. Still, starting out on Twitter can feel a lot like you're shouting alone into the void. SETAC-AU have adapted a quick start guide, originally developed by RACI, to help our members get involved in the online scientific community.  Here, we aim to outline a few simple steps on how to join Twitter and make the most of your experience from the very beginning.
First, some terminology:

*Twitter* is a platform where users share their thoughts, news, information and jokes in 140 characters of text or less. Twitter makes global communication cheap and measurable. Profiles are (usually) public — anyone in the world can see what you write, unless you elect to make your profile private. Users "follow" each other in order to keep tabs on and converse with specific people.

A *Tweet* *is a* message up to 140-character.

A *Retweet* is the sharing or giving credit to someone else's tweet.

A *Direct Message* is a private, 140-character message between two people. You can decide whether to accept a Direct Message from any Twitter user, or only from users you are following. You may only direct message a user who follows you.

A *Twitter handle* is the account name [=user name]. When you view a Twitter account, the handle appears after an "@" sign, e.g. @SETAC_AU. If you include someone's Twitter handle in your Tweet, that person will receive a notification of your Tweet.

A *Mention* is a way to reference another user by their handle in a tweet (e.g. @mashable). Users are notified when @mentioned. It's a way to notify someone of a tweet and start a discussion with them and other users in a public realm. Including their handle at the beginning of your tweet limits who will see it, so it is best to put handles at the end.

To *follow* is when you are subscribing to another user's Tweets.

A *hashtag* is a topic of discussion following a "#" sign, e.g. #setac, #ecotox, #ozchem, #ozchemchat or #realtimechem etc. The hashtag allows the term to become searchable, thereby facilitating global discussion of a single concept instantly. Use of popular hashtags facilitate discussion between accounts that do not yet follow each other. More on this later.

The *Feed* is the stream of tweets you see on your homepage. It's comprised of updates from users you follow.


To *like* is to click the heart button under a tweet to show your support or agreement with it. They are tallied up to indicate how many people like the comment. A like may also sometimes be used to acknowledge that you have read/seen a tweet where further response isn't required.

**How to start a Twitter account**

1. Go to the Twitter homepage at https://twitter.com/
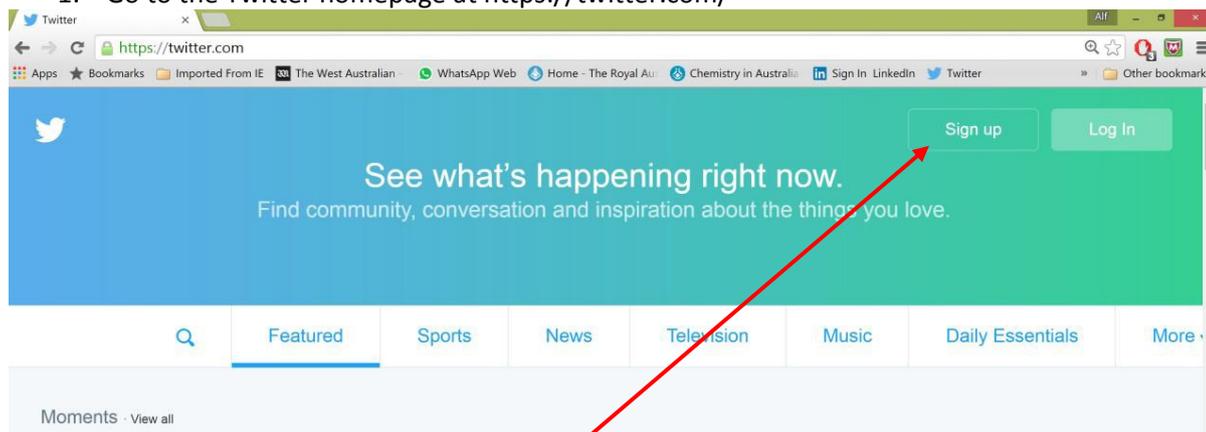


2. Create an account by clicking the "Sign Up" button. You'll need to put your name in, select a "handle" [Often, people who create professional accounts simply use their own name as the Twitter handle; however you are not unique some handles may already be in use] and a password.

3. You now create a profile by firstly choosing your areas of interest, who you want to follow [here it gives you a list based on your internet history]. You can add a photo and bio if you want and then search for contacts via your g-mail or outlook accounts to see what they are saying. You do not have to give Twitter access to your contact list if you are concerned about privacy- this step is optional.

4. Once you have signed up, you can view your home page:

**Your home page**

1. This is a snapshot of your profile. You can navigate to your tweets, a list of your followers or a list of people following you by clicking on the respective links.

2. You can send your first tweet by either clicking on your name which takes you to 2 pre filled in tweets and a blank or click on the tweet icon at the top right hand corner and type your message.

3. To embed pictures to your tweet, click on the camera and browse to find the image file you want and select it.

4. The profile display page is your timeline. It is a real-time feed of the tweets from all the accounts that you follow obviously before you follow any accounts, it will be quite empty. The latest tweets are shown at the top of the timeline; scrolling down is scrolling back in time. You can "reply", "retweet" or "like" tweets from the grey icons on an individual tweet.

*Reply* begins a tweet with the Twitter handle of the account that made that tweet. Your tweet will generate a notification to that account.

*Retweet* makes that tweet visible on your profile and to your followers.

*Like* simply archives the tweet to a category of "liked tweets" on your profile.

5. The search bar is useful for finding users of Twitter whose names or Twitter handles you know, or for finding Tweets containing particular hashtags.

6. "Home" brings you back to your timeline if you surf away from this screen. "Moments" lists current news topics of interest. "Notifications" shows tweets that mention you (i.e. include your Twitter handle) and any likes or retweets your tweets receive. "Messages" are private messages sent to you by other Twitter users that cannot be viewed by anyone other than you.

7. Your 'about you' section on the left hand side of your home page is an editable 140 character biography of who you are and what you are interested in. You can add hashtags (#something) and handles (@institution) to show affiliation or support.


**Connecting with scientists in environmental toxicology and chemistry**

1. Before you get started, give your profile a little polish by navigating to your profile settings. Write a short bio and upload a profile picture. This helps give your account authenticity and a professional feel and increases the likelihood that people you follow will follow back.

2. Search for @SETAC_AU



3. Click on the "Follow" button to begin receiving tweets from SETAC_AU on your timeline
4. Click on the "Following" tab to see twitter accounts SETAC_AU is following, you may like to follow these too. Alternatively try searching for specific accounts you might like to follow e.g. @RACI_HQ, @EMCRForum, @gbrmarinepark, @ecotoxicology @realscientists etc

5. Send a tweet to the @RACI_HQ account, introducing yourself. We can welcome you to Twitter and make your account visible to our followers, which is guaranteed to make you some new followers!

Other than directly finding accounts to follow, using hashtags is a good way to connect with like-minded individuals on Twitter. Searching for these hashtags finds tweets and therefore Twitter accounts that use these hashtags. Here are some common hashtags used by our community:

#SETAC or #SETAC_AU

#Science

#ecotox

#pollution

#chem

#environment

#ozchem - used in Tweets on issues relevant to the Australian chemistry community.

#ozchemchat - a live online chat organised by @raci_hq  on the first Monday of every month. Find details in the RACI events calendar on their website.

#realtimechem - an international hashtag for chemists, used to highlight practical chemistry and issues relevant to the chemistry community.

#ActualLivingScientist

#phdchat

#ecrchat

#scicomm

#freshwater

#WorldWaterDay


**A caution on twitter**

Twitter is a way of getting messages out to a global audience. Tweets can quickly be retweeted and reach an audience beyond what you may have expected or intended. While it's generally acknowledged that the tweets of a personal accounts are personal view, it may be conflated with the view of the organisation you are affiliated with.

Nearly all organisations now have social media policies which need to be adhered to when tweeting. Ensure what you're tweeting is appropriate and in keeping with the code of conduct of your organisation.