

# The 100 Twitter Rules To Live By

BUSINESS NEWS

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Late last night, I hit 100,000 followers on Twitter. In honor of the milestone, I'm taking a shot and imparting all I've learned in my 853 days using the platform.

1. Twitter is for everyone. A person in any profession can help his or her career if he or she utilizes it correctly.
2. Only follow your friends if they have something you want to hear. Facebook is for friendships.
3. For the rest of eternity, no one is going to believe you if you said you were hacked, even if you were. Sorry.
4. Please don't link your Foursquare and Twitter accounts. Your Twitter followers signed up for your Twitter content, not the fact that you just became the mayor of Starbucks.
5. Rome wasn't built in a day and neither was your Twitter account. Developing a strong following takes time and effort.
6. Always credit your source if you find content worth sharing. Think like a journalist when you're passing along quality info.
7. Don't ask to be followed. Twitter is a meritocracy. Earn it.
8. Don't tweet out inspirational quotes unless that's the purpose of your account. By now everyone has heard "Carpe Diem, seize the day." -Horace
9. Don't tweet that you are bored. Now I am too.
10. If you follow someone, don't be offended if they don't follow you back. Not everyone plays for "Team Followback." Earn their follow from strong, periodic @replies if you feel that you have something to offer.
11. Don't be tempted by the speed of Twitter. Take a breath before each tweet and ask, "If I was a follower, would I want to

read this?" If not, delete it.

12. Unless you are a pro athlete, don't tell me that you are at the gym. I get it, you work out.

13. Proofread your tweets. The amount of typos in 140 characters is mind blowing.

14. Find your Twitter niche, but don't be afraid to branch out a little. Most followers enjoy a little variety every now and then.

15. Quantity of tweets is fine as long as it's quality. I average more than 40 tweets a day.

16. Unless you are 14 years old, don't make your account private. No strangers will want to request to follow you.

17. Do not use a default Twitter background. Instead, use an image or photo that complements your interests or personality.

18. Follow Friday's are perhaps the emptiest tweets on all of Twitter, unless you tell me why they deserve my follow.

19. Want to give your recommendation more oomph? Do it on Tuesday; nobody is expecting it.

20. Just because you are getting slammed doesn't mean you should blame Twitter. Learn to absorb the hate and get a thicker skin, it's useful in life.

21. If you're RTing (*retweeting*) someone with comment, it's OK to shorten up their original tweet in order to keep it under 140. Just don't alter the original person's intended message.

22. Don't harbor on the fact that you lost one follower. Rejoice in the fact that you gained two.

23. Athletes & celebs blame Twitter when "sharing" goes wrong. It's not the sharing of information that's the issue, it's what you share.

24. Never ask for a RT (*Retweet*) for your birthday (or for any reason).

25. Never fulfill a birthday RT request.

26. Your avatar should intrigue/humor viewers. Change it up. But whatever you do, no animated GIFs! (*Graphics Interchange Format*)

27. Make good use of your Twitter bio space. "Mother, Sister, Daughter, Lover of Life" does absolutely nothing to spark someone's interest.

28. Don't get offended if someone unfollows you. Instead, use it as a learning experience. Perhaps your tweets need

some tweaking. Everyone is entitled to a trial run before purchasing your product.

29. People love screengrabs. Those that are experts at capturing the perfect TV shot (like @bubbaprog and @jose3030) do well on Twitter.

30. Know when something has reached a critical mass. Look around to see if your entire timeline has tweeted the same quote. Hold back.

31. Know why people follow you. If you're a foodie, don't send 20 Florida Marlins tweets on a single night.

32. Instead of complaining about spam bots offering you free iPads, take 3 seconds and report them as spam. Help solve the problem.

33. Check out your followers. If someone's bio looks interesting, follow them.

34. Go through who you're following every few months. Weed out the bad, the non-existent & those you feel don't suit your interests.

35. If you get retweeted, don't automatically expect new followers. People evaluate your feed before following, so it's not an automatic process.

36. Twitter Search may be the most valuable search engine on the Internet. Use it.

37. Always put your comment before the RT. Commenting after the original tweet makes it difficult to distinguish your comment from the original.

38. Twitter is the ultimate on-the-go tool. Find an app you can tweet most comfortably with & learn the heck out of it.

39. Don't tweet and drive. Unless you are very good at it.

40. Twitter isn't a Monday to Friday site. It flows straight through the weekend.

41. Don't ask your followers what's going on with a certain topic. Follow the right people & use Twitter's search box.

42. Double-check your links to make sure they work prior to tweeting. If you do happen to screw up a tweet, don't follow up with a "Whoops, here's the correct link" tweet. Just remove the old and tweet the new.

43. Have a friend who bashes the fact that you're on Twitter? Log them in for a week & show them how it works. In no other walk of life have people bashed something so fervently that they haven't tried.

44. Friend didn't adhere to Tip 43? People who don't use Twitter don't get it. They'll mock you, but it's their loss. Keep

doing your thing.

45. Want to partake in a funny movie-related trending topic? Tweet one, not ten.

46. Good follow partaking in #AnnoyingHashtag? Some Twitter apps have a temporary "Hide" or "Mute" feature. (Your secret is safe with me.)

47. Often referred to as a "Master Tweet," never, ever RT yourself.

48. When sharing a link, try to add a little flavor to it. Your followers want content from a person, not a robot.

49. Ask your followers for good accounts to follow. Twitter can suggest everyone they want to, but the best follows will come from your followers.

50. Create lists to sort your interests. It will come in handy when you want a specific group's most recent tweets.

51. Don't announce when you've unfollowed someone. Egos run rampant enough on Twitter, so just quietly unfollow and move on.

52. Don't obsess about missing something in your timeline. Obsess about furthering the dialogue.

53. See a tweet with content that you'd like to check out later? Many Twitter apps have an "E-mail Tweet" option. Maximize efficiency by using your inbox as your personal "to-do" list. Also, "Favorite" a tweet for later.

54. Avoid using underscores and long, jumbled number sequences in your Twitter handle. People should be able to recite your handle from memory.

55. Don't RT something with comment that is better suited for an @reply or DM. Wasting your followers' time is a no-no.

56. Stop tweeting how much your Twitter account is valued at. The only thing your account is worth at that point is an unfollow.

57. Don't tweet about something amazing you just saw without including a pic. That's the ultimate Twitter tease right there.

58. People don't care what you're doing, they care what you're seeing.

59. If you are going to tweet a long quote, use [Twitlonger](#). Don't continue a quote through three tweets. It becomes very fragmented since most people are following a lot of people.

60. Short tweets stand out. Try saying something poignant in 50 characters. It has a great chance of getting RT'd.

61. If you're a journalist, take it easy on the pre-promotion. Reading that you are going to be on in Grand Rapids is

annoying. Now if you say something good after you're done in Grand Rapids, tweet it out.

62. Don't go too long without checking your @mentions. Twitter isn't a one-way street and you should take in valuable feedback.

63. Just because this isn't face-to-face communication doesn't mean you should disrespect people. There are real humans behind the computers.

64. Only change your Twitter handle if you're absolutely convinced that it will be a smart move in the long haul (i.e., fewer characters, easier to remember, etc.). Your handle becomes your identity. Change your background/avatar/bio if you're looking to switch things up.

65. Don't give your followers a play-by-play or box score of a sporting event. If they are interested, they are watching.

66. Go easy on the Instagrams. Yes, your iPhone takes pretty good pics and there's an app to age them. It doesn't make you a professional photographer.

67. Show your gratitude when a company goes above and beyond for you. If you are impressed, let your followers know.

68. When mentioning a person or brand, use their Twitter handle if they use the service.

69. Unless replying to a specific Tweet, don't start your entry with an @mention because only those who follow that person / brand will see it (unless that is your intention).

70. If including a photo with your message, make sure it is crisp and represents the subject matter correctly.

71. All photos should have the correct orientation, don't make someone rotate their head when you could take the time to rotate the photo.

72. If you have 200,000 followers and you follow no one, you aren't getting the full Twitter experience. Twitter isn't a megaphone, it's a telephone.

73. Don't always use Twitter's "Retweet" button. If you find something worth retweeting, use "RT" & get the credit you deserve for finding it.

74. Get hate-tweets? It probably means you're doing something right. Chances are the hater has less than 200 followers anyway.

75. Following athletes/celebrities is usually pointless. Twitter is about good tweets; not hearing an NBA star say, "What's good, fellas?!" Make a list if you want to follow them, but don't invite them into your timeline.

76. Run a company? Don't have your employees sign the tweets with their personal signature. Followers don't care & you're just wasting characters. Unless it's "BO" on the White House feed.
77. Have a good tweet at 3:17AM? If you're not the first to tweet the Vancouver riot kissing couple, hold on to it. Chances are you'll get more eyeballs at 10:00AM.
78. Use a real location in your bio, not a state of mind or something pretentious like "On the move."
79. Have 3 good tweets to send out that aren't time sensitive? Schedule them at different times (you can use platforms like [Tap 11](#)) so each one gets the proper attention.
80. Network! Twitter allows you to connect with just about anyone. Reach out... You'd be surprised how quickly you can hit it off.
81. Don't plainly RT someone; add your touch to the tweet - even if it's just a word or two.
82. Choosing a new Twitter name? Again, keep it short. Do the talking in your bio (i.e. @JoeSmithWCQR should be @JoeSmith).
83. When someone visits your account, your tweets are your resume. Fill it up with @mentions and you're missing out on potential new followers.
84. Stop forming your tweets as hypothetical letters to inanimate objects. "Dear Sun: I am very hot today. Shine away. Sincerely, Me." This was creative about a year ago.
85. If you have a critical mass of followers, use amount of retweets and mentions on certain topics to gauge what's generally hot and what's generally not.
86. Keep the smiley faces & CAPS to a bare minimum. I'm sure you're happy, but you're not that HAPPY.
87. Funny tweets speak for themselves. There's no need to add "lol" in a retweet.
88. Stay away from song lyrics, even if it describes your mood perfectly.
89. Don't overdo it with the #hashtags. A few key words is fine, but the run-on sentence hash tag has been done.
90. If any athlete/celebrity ever says anything good, it will be retweeted quickly.
91. Don't be afraid to follow, and tweet out, strangers. There are smart people outside of your circle of friends.
92. Never RT a list of Follow Friday's that someone included you in. If you're really that excited about it, mark it as a

Favorite and spare your followers.

93. If you're with a group of people who also happen to have Twitter, refrain from going on a tweet-tagging spree. Instead, take a picture and tag your friends on Facebook.

94. If you're using Twitter primarily via text, you're selling yourself short. Depending on your notifications setup, you'll be either bombarded or behind. Also, good luck fixing errant tweets. It's time to invest in a smart-phone.

95. If you experience Twitter writer's block, just take a break. You don't have a daily quota to meet, so there's no need to force it. Your followers will be pleased with consistent, quality content.

96. Get people who surround you on a daily basis on Twitter. Believe me, it's a marriage tip too.

97. Don't tweet during important life occasions. Savor the moment; Twitter will be there for you when it's all done.

98. Klout Score > Follower Count. Check out [Klout.com](http://Klout.com) and see where you rank.

99. I don't care how ugly you think you are, set an avatar. Nobody wants to follow a colored egg. It only means your future on Twitter is "cooked."

100. Spend time with people you know in real life because who are you going to talk to when Twitter gets over capacity?

People ask me if I do what I do on Twitter by myself. The answer is no. For almost a year now, my trusty sidekick Eli Langer ( [@EliLanger](https://twitter.com/EliLanger) ) has helped me and I've recently brought in a bigger team to include the likes of Tyler Burns ( [@BurnSTYLEr](https://twitter.com/BurnSTYLEr) ), Meredith Kenyon ( [@MerKenyon](https://twitter.com/MerKenyon) ) and Nick Begley ( [@NickBegley](https://twitter.com/NickBegley) ). I am very grateful for their help.

**Questions? Comments? [TechCheck@cnbc.com](mailto:TechCheck@cnbc.com)**

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