

# Twitter 101

## Glossary

First, some basic terms:

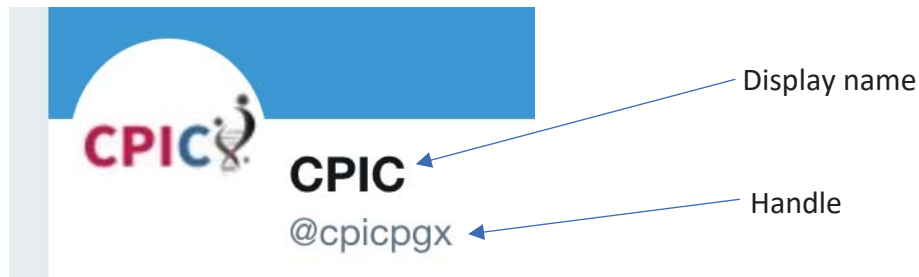
**Tweet** – A piece of text up to 280 characters in length. Tweets can also contain images, videos or links.

**Follow** – Following a Twitter account means that tweets from that account will be included in your timeline.

**Timeline** – A feed of tweets from accounts that you follow.

**Handle** – The ID of a Twitter account. All Twitter handles start with '@' and do not have spaces. For example, the CPIC Twitter handle is @cpicpgx. Your Twitter handle must be unique to your account.

**Display name** – The name that is displayed on your account. This can help to show who you are if your handle is not obvious. Your display name does not have to be unique.



Both the Twitter handle and the display name of any account are shown in that account's tweets, as shown below.



**Mention** – When your Twitter handle is included in a tweet, you have been mentioned. Similarly, if you add someone else's handle to your tweet, you are mentioning them.

**Retweet** – Retweeting is when you re-post a tweet to your own account, with or without a comment. Anything you retweet will be shown on your profile and in your followers’ timelines.

**Like** – Liking a tweet can mean different things depending on the context, but it is mostly used to show appreciation or support for a tweet or as a bookmark so that the tweet can be easily found again. Tweets that you like are not shown on your profile and in your followers’ timelines.

**Hashtag** – A way of tagging your tweet with keywords to make them easier to find. All hashtags start with a # and cannot include spaces or punctuation (e.g. #pharmacogenomics, #PrecisionMedicine, #puppiesarebetterthankittens). Scientific meetings will commonly have ‘meeting hashtags’ (e.g. #CPIC2019) to allow all the tweets about the meeting to be easily found.

**Useful accounts:** CPIC (@cpicpgx), PharmGKB (@pharmgkb), PGRN (@pgrnhub), PharmVar (@pharmvar)

**Useful hashtags:** #pharmacogenetics, #pharmacogenomics, #PGx, #PrecisionMedicine

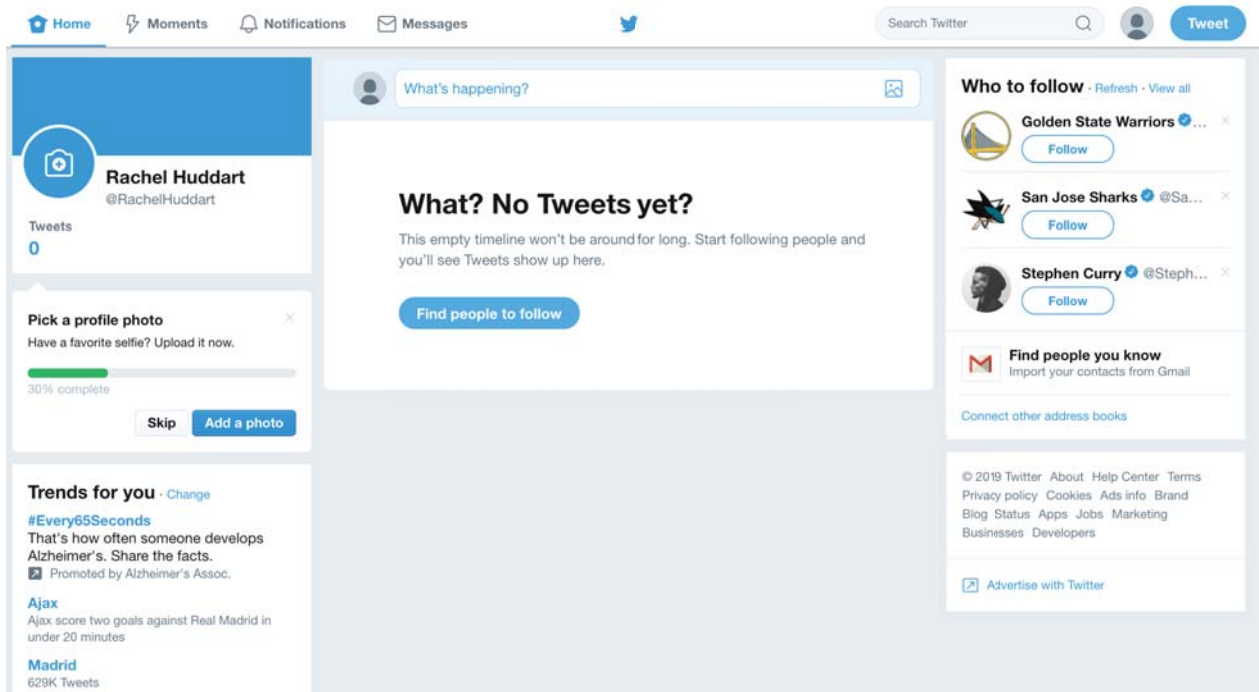
### Getting a Twitter account

To sign up for a Twitter account, you will need the following:

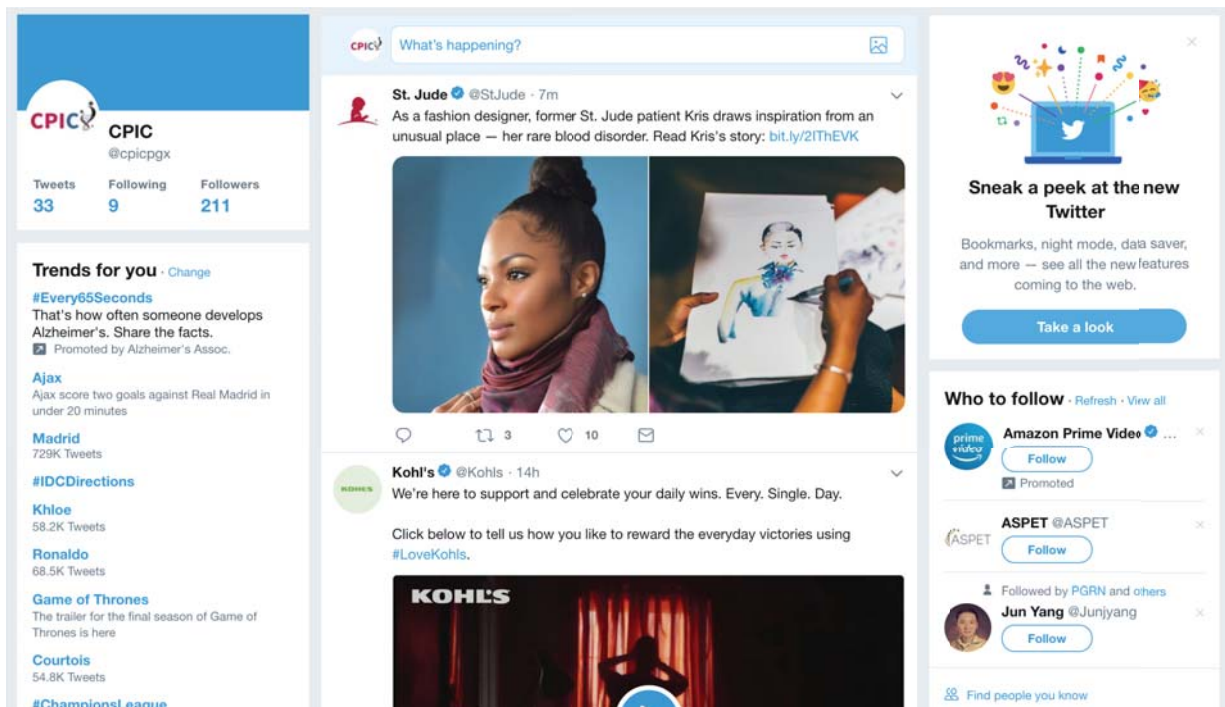
- A phone number or email address that you want to be linked to your Twitter account. You can’t set up multiple Twitter accounts using the same email or phone number.
- An idea of what you want your Twitter handle to be. Something that’s easy to remember and/or close to your own name is good.
- (Recommended) A picture to use as your profile picture.

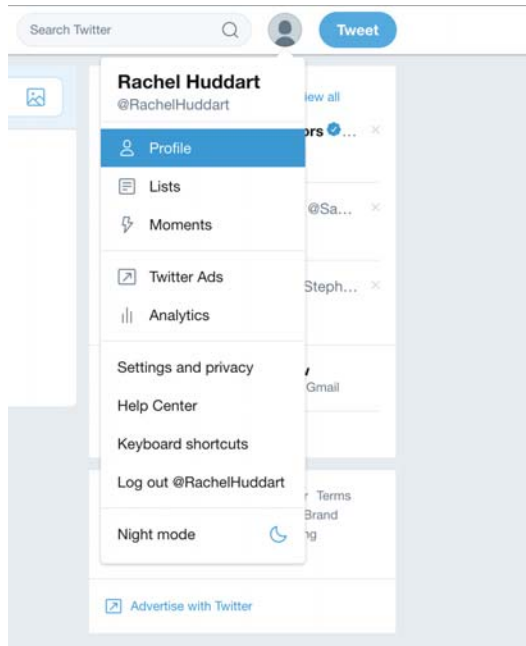
You can create a Twitter account at [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) and clicking on the sign up button. There is a verification step where a code is sent to your phone or email. Once you’ve verified your account, Twitter will take you through some steps of adding a profile picture and a bio as well as suggesting interests and some accounts to follow. It is up to you whether you want to do these steps now or later.

You'll then be taken to your homepage, which will look something like this. Your timeline is in the middle of the page. Note that this shows a dummy account that no longer exists. Don't try to follow it.

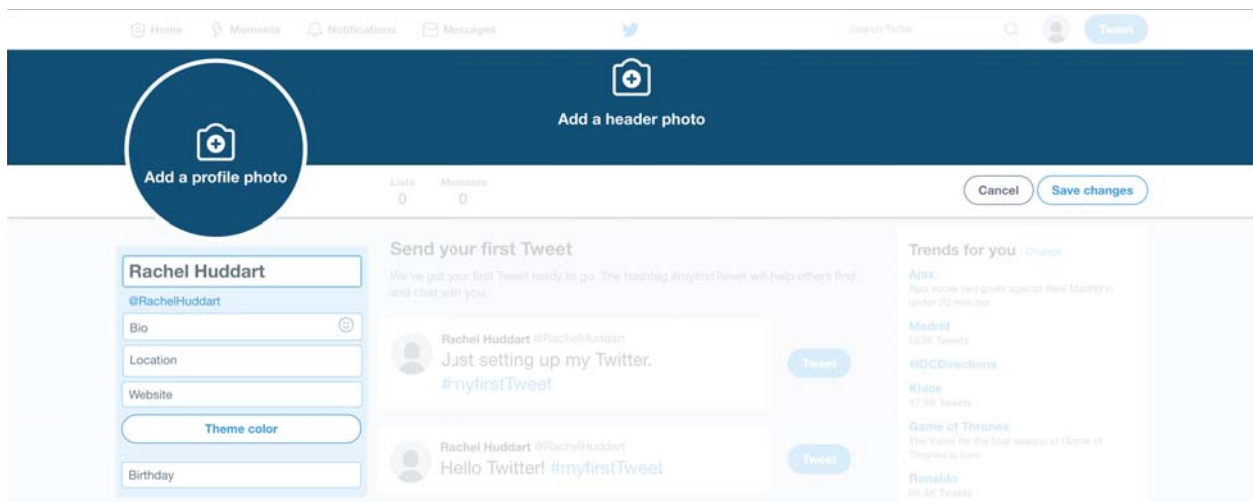


Your timeline will fill up with tweets as you follow accounts, as shown below. Twitter will also insert advertisements in there as well (CPIC does not actually follow Kohl's)





You can edit various aspects of your profile by clicking your profile picture in the top-right corner, selecting Profile, then clicking Edit Profile. If you haven't uploaded a profile picture, you will have the standard Twitter figure instead.



Having a profile picture is highly recommended. Accounts with the Twitter figure are generally seen as not being active/worth following or potentially spam/troll accounts. A short bio is also very useful in helping potential followers to find you.

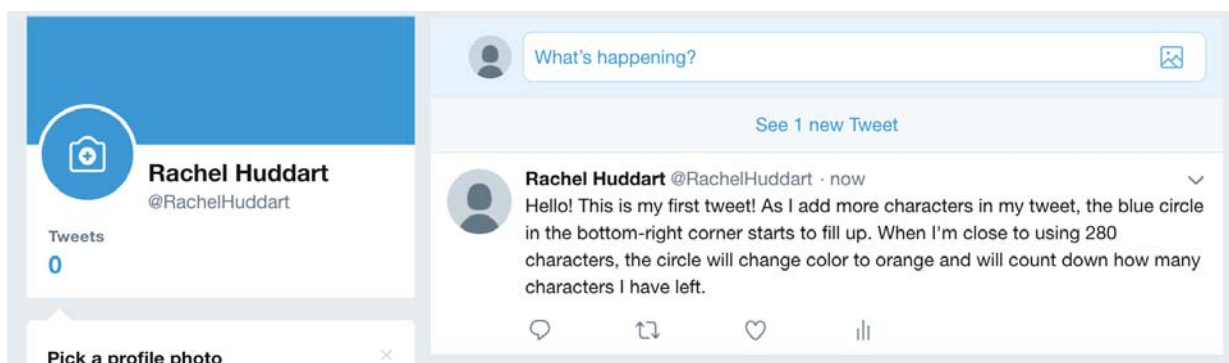
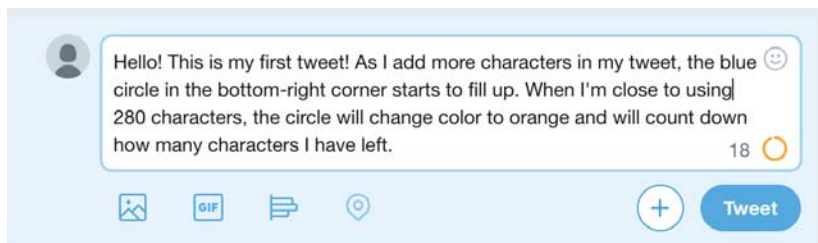
The header photo is used as a banner across the top of your profile page and as background for your profile across various areas of Twitter. It's not as important as a profile picture, but does make your account look more polished.

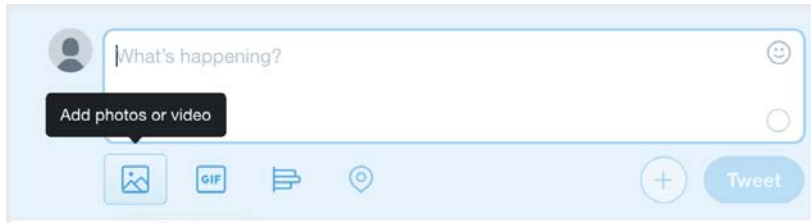
## Tweeting

You can tweet from the box at the top of your timeline on your homepage, or by clicking on the Tweet button in the top-right corner of any Twitter page.



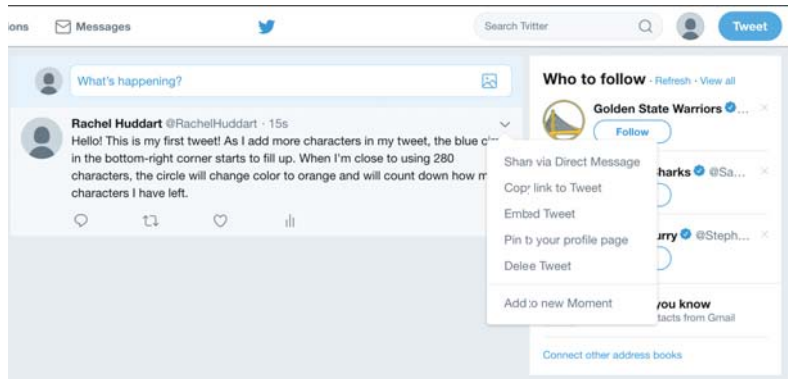
Write your tweet and click the Tweet button when you're finished. Your tweets will appear in your timeline. The default setting for Tweets is Public, so anyone can see them, including people without a Twitter account. It is possible to change your account to Protected and limit who sees your tweets, but we're not going to cover that here.





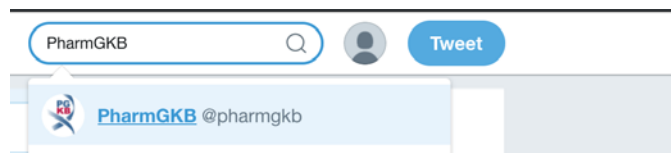
You can add photos or video to any tweet by clicking on this button. Links can be pasted into the tweet text. All links count as a maximum of 23 characters in a tweet, regardless of their actual length.

**Tweets cannot be edited once they have been posted.** If you have made a mistake in a tweet, you'll have to delete it and rewrite it. Use the drop-down menu at the top-right of the tweet to find the delete option.



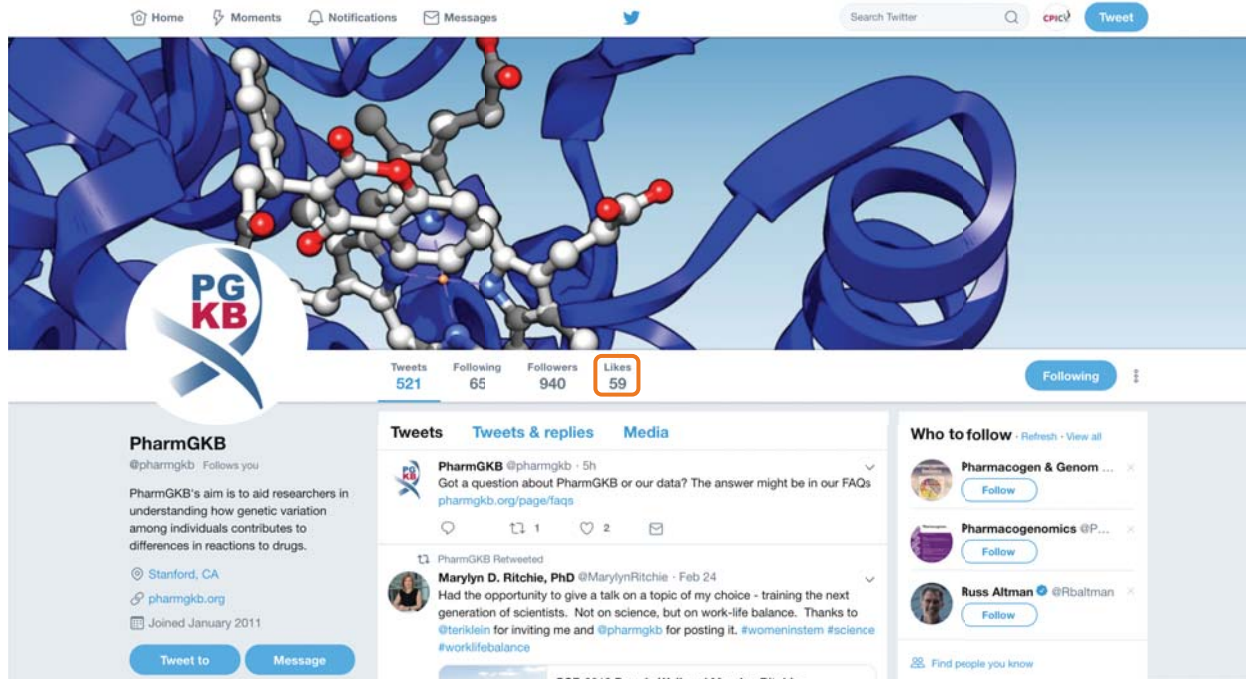
Following, retweeting, liking, etc.

Twitter offers suggestions for who to follow on your homepage and on profile pages. These suggestions become more useful as you follow more accounts. You can search for a specific account using the search bar in the top-right corner. You can search for either a Twitter handle or a display name. Clicking on an account takes you to their profile page, where you can click the Follow button to follow them.



The blue tick symbol shows the verified account of famous people/organizations and helps you distinguish them from fake accounts. Most accounts won't have blue ticks, this is mostly for figures in government/sports/entertainment.

This is what a profile page looks like. Information about the account is on the left side, under the profile picture. Tweets and retweets from the account are shown in the middle



Clicking on 'Likes' (orange box) will show you tweets liked by that account. If you're using the Like button to bookmark tweets, you can retrieve those tweets by clicking 'Likes' on your own profile page.

You can like a tweet using the Like button. It's a very useful way of marking tweets that are interesting but that you don't want to share with your followers.



Retweeting essentially means posting an already-written tweet as if it was your own. It is an easy way to share interesting and important tweets with your followers. Use the Retweet button on a tweet and, if you want, add a comment to the retweet to show your opinion or provide additional context/explanation.



This tweet shows how mentions and hashtags can be combined in a tweet. @ASCPT\_ClinPharm is the handle for CPT, where this guideline was published. Mentioning them in this tweet means that the tweet will show up in their notifications and they can choose to interact with it. In this example, they retweeted this to their followers. Using hashtags like #pharmacogenomics and #ADHD allows the tweet to be found by anyone who searches for those terms.



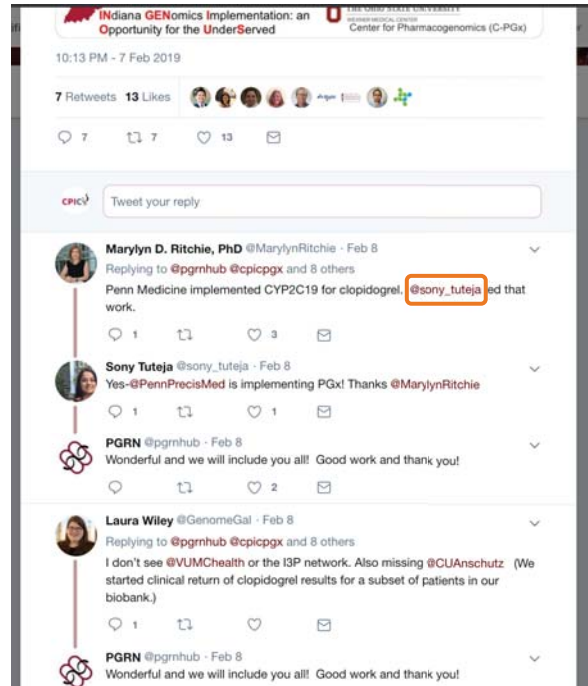
**It is always better to mention a Twitter handle of an organization rather than using a hashtag for them.** Including @cpicpgx in a tweet brings it to the attention of the people running the CPIC Twitter account, who can then retweet/like your tweet. Using #cpic means that the tweet will only be found if someone searches for those terms. #cpic is used too often for too many other things on Twitter that it's very difficult to search #cpic for CPIC-relevant tweets.

You can reply to any tweet using the reply button. Your reply will be displayed underneath the original tweet. Replies are a good way to have conversations on Twitter.

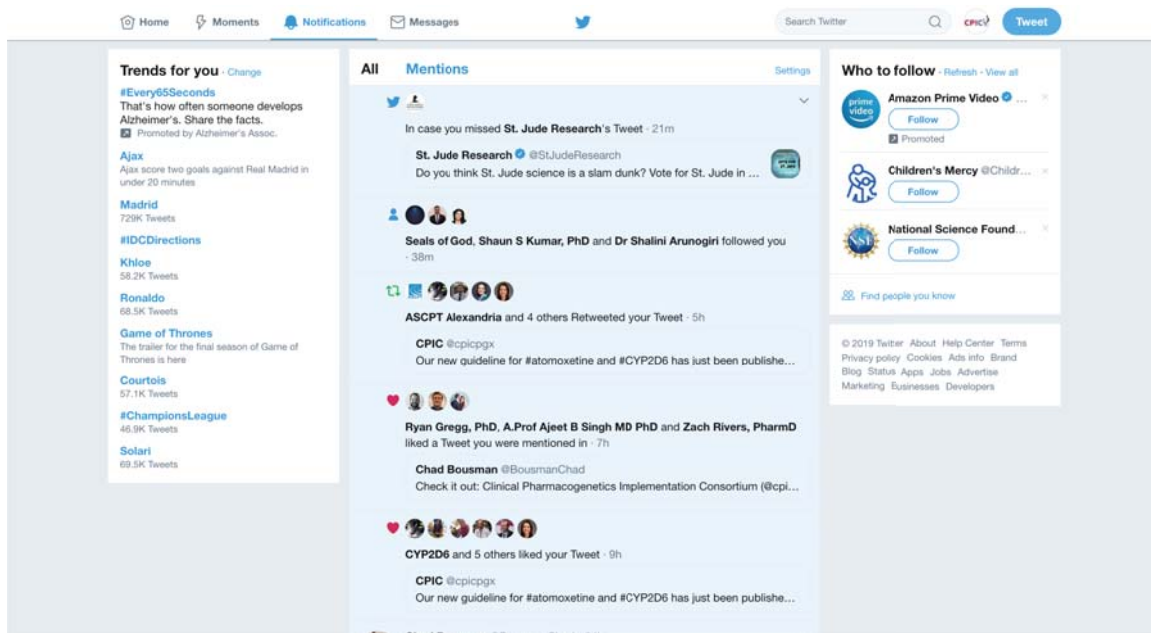


The tweet from PGRN on the next page is a great example of using mentions and replies. Several other accounts are mentioned in both the original tweet and replies as a way of inviting them to contribute (orange boxes) while the replies underneath show the conversation and suggestions made by other people on Twitter.





Use the Notifications button at the top-left to check on who's following you, who's mentioned you and who has liked or retweeted your tweets.



Finally, some advice about getting followers. Building up followers on a new Twitter account is very difficult and slow, so don't be discouraged if you don't have hundreds of followers within a week of joining. The best way to get followers is to keep tweeting and using mentions and hashtags so that your tweets are easily noticed and found. Adding your Twitter handle to the first or last slide of your presentations can also help. Good luck!