



#TWEETCHAT HOW-TO

Twitter chats, sometimes known as a Twitter party or a tweet chat, happen when a group of people all tweet about the same topic using a specific tag (#) called a hashtag that allows it to be followed on Twitter. The chats are at a specific time and often repeat weekly or bi-weekly or are only at announced times. Below is a quick overview on how to join a tweet chat:

1 Sign up for a free Twitter account! Don't have Twitter yet? Head over to twitter.com and fill out the screen that looks like this. Fill out your profile, add a picture and follow the leader of the Twitter chat you want to participate in. Take a look at some Twitter etiquette tips/tricks to get the hang of using it. Be sure to follow the chat hosts, guests and browse the posts on previous chats to see who else may interest you.

The screenshot shows the 'Join Twitter today.' form. It includes fields for 'Full name', 'Email address', 'Create a password', and 'Choose your username'. There are checkboxes for 'Keep me signed-in on this computer.' and 'Tailor Twitter based on my recent website visits. Learn more.' Below the form is a yellow 'Create my account' button. A note at the bottom states: 'Note: Others will be able to find you by name, username or email. Your email will not be shown publicly. You can change your privacy settings at any time.' On the right side, there are links for 'Printable versions: Terms of Service · Privacy Policy'.

2 Finding Twitter chats. Browse a list of regularly scheduled Twitter chats by finding hashtags that interest you on a site like [Hashtag.it](https://hashtag.it) or [Hashtags.org](https://hashtags.org). (Be sure to follow #masspchat every Wednesday night!) Not sure what that is? Just think of a hashtag as a label in your Twitter filing system.

3 How to "listen." You can simply click on the hashtag in a tweet to see all of the recent tweets around that hashtag. If you try to follow the chat from your own timeline on the Twitter website you can, but if it's a big chat you can quickly lose the thread of the conversation. Fortunately there are a number of sites that allow you to follow the chat only and participate more easily. See if there's one you like by trying any of the following:

[Tweetchat.com](https://tweetchat.com)

[Twitterfall.com](https://twitterfall.com)

[TweetGrid.com](https://tweetgrid.com)

[Twubs.com](https://twubs.com)

4 **How to participate.** So you've decided to enter the world of tweet chats! Follow these tips:

- When someone organizes a tweet chat they choose a hashtag related to the event and a time to hold the chat.
- They let as many people as possible know about it and ask them to spread the word.
- Often they will assign a moderator to welcome participants, ask questions and generally keep the conversation on track.
- If there is a guest answering questions they may be posed by the moderator or the participants.
- When you join the chat, spend a moment to scan the tweets around the tag. Who is talking? If there is a host or a featured guest what questions have been posted? What is the theme of the chat?
- Feel free to share tweets from within the chat with your network, perhaps by retweeting or with comments, but don't forget to use the hashtag so people can follow along.
- Retweeting the posts of another user in the chat is a common way to support statements from other tweeters and share them with your own networks.
- If you ask a question or respond to someone in the chat, use the hashtag so everyone can be in on the conversation.
- Some chats use the format of Q1 and A1 to help decipher group questions and answers.
- It's OK to greet your friends who are participating in the chat with a quick mention, but don't use the hashtag unless it's on-topic.
- If you have enough space in the tweet to share their post and comment too great, but if there isn't you can re-tweet their comment intact and then @mentionthem with your feedback and be sure to use the hashtag.
- It's acceptable to send a private tweet to someone if it is off the topic of the chat, but try to do it outside of the hashtag so it doesn't end up in the archive of the chat.
- If you ask a guest to moderator a question, please stay on topic.
- It is not OK (in most cases) to use a tweet chat stream to market your own product or services. This isn't about you.
- You might want to let people know you'll be participating in a chat in advance. This is a nice way to support the host and let your network know you may be a bit noisy during that time.

Make sure you join @massp every Monday at 8 p.m. using #masspchat!