



# TweetDeck

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## About the Tutorial

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This is a tutorial on TweetDeck, a Twitter client which is available for Chrome, Mac OS and the Web. TweetDeck is a very popular Twitter client and is officially supported by Twitter. It offers a lot of advanced functions over the stock Twitter experience and is a must-have for anyone who uses Twitter extensively.

This tutorial focusses on how to use TweetDeck to its full potential and explores all its advanced functions.

## Audience

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This tutorial is intended for users of the Twitter Service and can be used by both TweetDeck/Twitter beginners and experienced users alike. Beginners will find valuable information on the various options available to supplement their stock Twitter experience and will find step-by-step instructions on how to access and use the various features of the TweetDeck app.

Even those new to Twitter can get started by simply creating a free Twitter account and start using TweetDeck using the steps detailed here. Experienced users will find useful information on some of the improvements made to TweetDeck and professional tips which can be extremely time saving along with information on the status of various Twitter APIs used of TweetDeck itself.

## Prerequisites

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The readers of this tutorial are expected to have a basic working knowledge of using their operating system and the web browser of their choice. At least one Twitter account is needed to use TweetDeck. It will be an added incentive to be aware of the Privacy settings associated with the Twitter account being used to login to TweetDeck.

## Copyright & Disclaimer

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# 1. TweetDeck – Twitter & Microblogging

## Need for Microblogging

The Internet has revolutionized the way we share information. Blogs have provided an indispensable platform to express both **personal opinions** and **entrepreneurial ideas** unhindered by the limitations of conventional media. There are blogs on almost every subject on the Internet and most blogs allow interactive communication between the author and the readers. However, time is a very limited resource and there needs to be a way to get information across concisely without bogging the reader with too many details. There is also a need for enhanced connectivity and interactivity more than what a conventional blog post can afford. Microblogging has evolved to meet these concerns.

## Twitter and Other Microblogs

Microblogs, initially called, **Tumblelogs**, allow sharing of short snippets of information in a quick and easy manner. The information can be a short sentence or a link to a web page or other multimedia content. The most popular microblogs include Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr. Of these, Twitter has revolutionized the microblogging sphere by limiting the total number of characters that can be shared to just 140, a little short of the length of an SMS.

Twitter was founded by **Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone** and **Evan Williams** in 2006. Since then, Twitter has grown exponentially to become the 'SMS of the Internet'. This has spawned a new generation of Internet users who have managed to convey their thoughts within the limits of Twitter's character limit by devising clever language tactics and URL shortening.

Thus, Twitter has become the **de facto medium** to get real time happening information from all over the world and is the most popular microblogging platform. So much so, that even celebrities and Heads of States use the platform to connect instantly with their followers.

## Accessing Twitter

With millions of 'tweets' exchanged by the hour, Twitter has become the best source of instant breaking news of virtually any topic under the sun. The Twitter service can be accessed by registered users via the **Web, Mobile Apps** and even by **SMS**. Although Twitter is a complete enough service by itself, its popularity begets more flexibility as power users would like more functionality that helps in enhancing their productivity. There has been a spurt of third party clients over the recent years providing enhancements over the native Twitter experience for almost all OS platforms, but the popular one remains Twitter's own client, TweetDeck.

In this tutorial, we will explore how to get the most out of Twitter using TweetDeck and learn some of the customization options it offers along with a brief look at other popular third party clients as well. Having firsthand knowledge of TweetDeck will greatly help in fully harnessing Twitter's potential, so let's get started!

## 2. TweetDeck – The Twitter API

An **Application Programming Interface** (API) is a set of calls that enable software to communicate with each other. APIs help developers to understand the correct way of calling a procedure and interfacing with the software and/or the Operating System. The format or syntax for calling these functions is provided in the **developer documentation** for the software and released as part of a Software Development Kit (SDK). Before delving into the API, it is important to be familiar with the **Twitter Developer Policies** and the **OAuth authentication protocol** before using it them in an app.

### Components of the Twitter API

The Twitter API has four main objects –

- Tweets
- Users
- Entities
- Places

The detailed documentation of each of these above-mentioned objects is available on the following link – <https://dev.twitter.com/overview/api>. This website is a huge repository of a lot of Twitter libraries containing code from Java to Objective-C, spanning almost all device form factors.

There are different APIs within Twitter which includes –

- REST
- Streaming
- Ads
- Gnip
- MoPub
- Fabric, etc.

The most important of them being REST API and Streaming API. The REST API provides read and write access to Twitter data and supports most of the functionality when used along with OAuth. The Streaming API allows for real time streaming of public data in the user's feed.

### Restrictions of the Twitter API

Each third-party client is provided with an API key that is unique to it. An important thing to note is that if the application is mimicking Twitter's full functionality; the API allows only 100,000 tokens to be registered i.e. the third-party client can support only 100,000 registered users. This is done to ensure the quality of service by the API. This is also the reason why most of the third-party clients need to be purchased to use them.

It presents an interesting paradox as the core service and the official application themselves are free while most of the third-party clients need to be purchased. Due to the above-mentioned token limit, purchasing the applications ensures that only legitimate users access Twitter via the third-party application. The pricing is justified by adding a lot of additional and power user functionality which is often not found in the official web or mobile apps.

## 3. TweetDeck – Third-Party Twitter Clients

Given the immense popularity of Twitter as a means of instant communication, it is only natural that it enjoys a lot of developer patronage. Although the Twitter website is the primary means of accessing the service, which the majority uses, it leaves a lot to be desired for power users. Things like multi-account login, multi-panel view, tweet scheduling and feed customization are some of the features that are present in third party apps. We are of course, focusing specifically on TweetDeck but let's also have a look at some of the most popular third party Twitter clients and find out what makes them worth the dough.

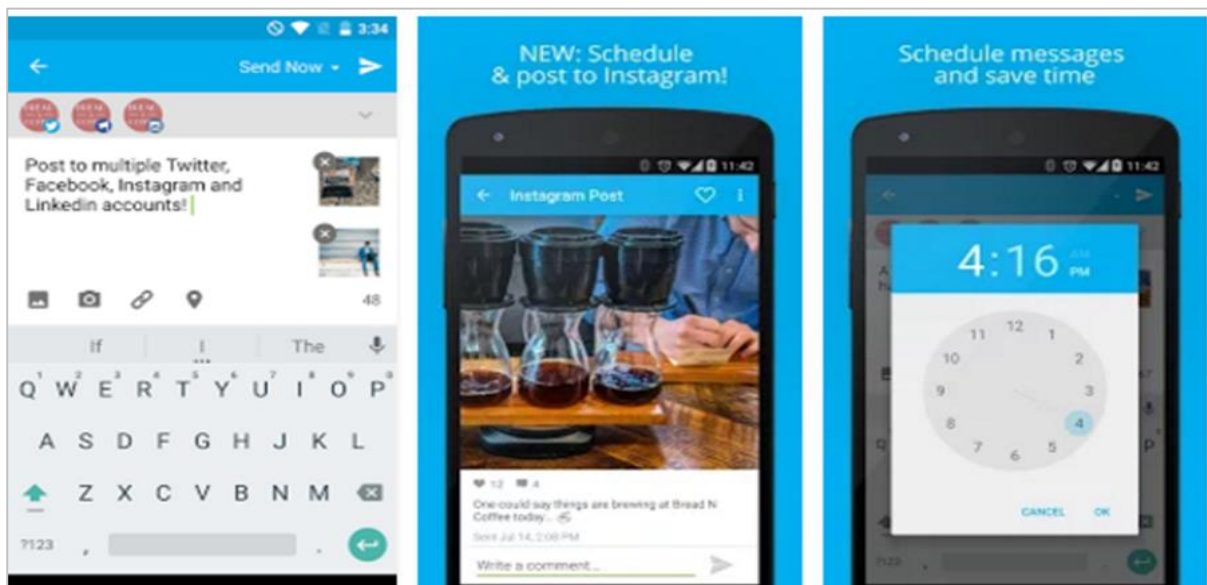
Some of the most popular and trending third-party Twitter clients are as follows. Each of these have been described in detail for understanding their functionality.

The list includes –

- Hootsuite
- Fenix For Twitter
- Tweetbot
- Fenice For Twitter
- Twitter

### Hootsuite

This was one of the original applications that helped in managing multiple social networks at once. A user can check Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc. from a single interface. Professional users get to use the analytics tool as well. This is a free app available on the Android and iOS platforms along with optional in-app purchases. The link to download Hootsuite for the android platform from the google play application is – <https://hootsuite.com/>.





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