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# Promoting your story on Twitter: a focus on threads

Dos and don'ts to best promote your content  
on Twitter using threads

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# Why do we still care about Twitter?

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- **Engagement may be down, but many media brands maintain strong followings**
- **Scientific community remains strong**
- **There's no viable alternative (yet?)**

# Twitter threads

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- **One good way to tell a story on social media.**
- **Allow you to tell a story across a series of connected tweets**
- **Offer more ways into a story - more angles, increases reach**



# Why do them?

- Build engagement
- Build profile / trust in tweeter
- Build profile / trust in media brand (e.g. Nature)
- Attract new readers



# Why do them?

→ **Clicks aren't the focus**

Most publishers don't get a huge amount of traffic from Twitter

→ **Twitter is a great way to reach your audience**

We see scientists resharing Nature's content on Twitter

→ **Driving engagement**

Many media brands use Twitter primarily to drive engagement

# How to - overview

# Getting started

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- **Do you have an interesting story to promote?**
- **Can you easily pull out facts/tidbits from within it that will stand alone to inform readers?**

# Getting started

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- **Does your story have interesting visual elements - graphs, images?**
- **Does it have some surprising facts or quotes?**
- **What can you say that will make people want to learn more?**



## Writing/style tips

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- **Start your thread with an attention-grabbing intro - a strong fact, quote, image or video**
- **Be interesting, be concise, add personality/humour if the topic allows**

## Practical tips

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- **Write the thread in google docs or similar ahead of time - catch typos**
- **Link to the story in the first tweet, and maybe again at the end.**
- **Add any additional related content in other tweets, ideally your own!**

## Practical tips

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- **Keep it reasonably short - 10 or so tweets should be your max**
- **Use the first tweet to flag that this is a thread - or somehow let readers know you have more to say**

## Practical tips

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- Many readers find numbering helpful - e.g. 1/10, 1/n if you happen to be sending tweets as you write them
- Try to make each tweet standalone, to some extent

## Practical tips

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- **Keep mentions/hashtags to a minimum - you want to flag your content to others but you don't want it to get too busy**

# Examples - from Nature reporters and editors



Max Kozlov   
@maxdkozlov

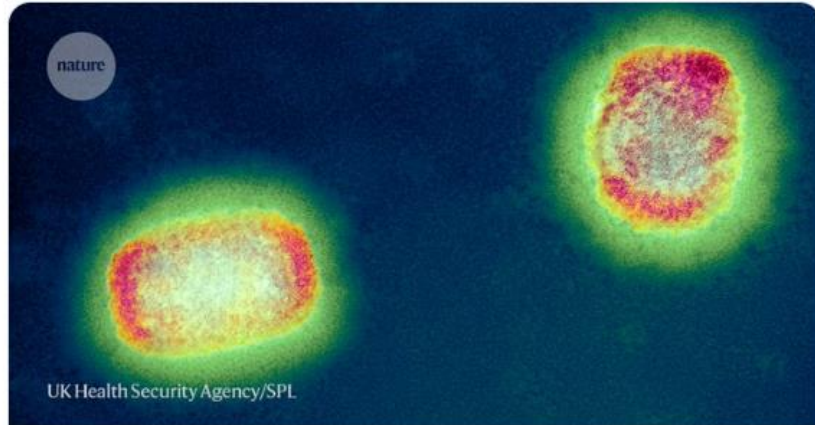


Since last week, [#monkeypox](#) cases have ballooned from 120 to over 440 now.

What have scientists learned about the virus since then?

An explainer for [@Nature](#).

THREAD:



[nature.com](#)

Monkeypox outbreaks: 4 key questions researchers have

Nature - Scientists are racing to understand the latest monkeypox outbreaks

Monkeypox thread by Max Kozlov - highlights the key news points from his explainer.

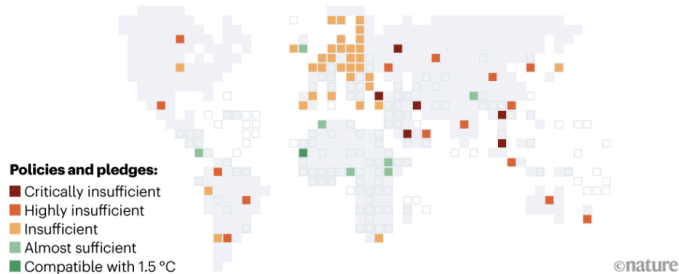
[go.nature.com/ABSW5](https://go.nature.com/ABSW5)

# Examples from @nature



The Climate Action Tracker analyses countries' climate commitments. Ahead of COP26, it found that of the nearly 40 countries it tracked, only one has policies compatible with the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 °C (1/4) [go.nature.com/3mctzzS](https://go.nature.com/3mctzzS)

The Climate Action Tracker (CAT), a group of scientists and policy experts, assesses the potential impact of countries' climate commitments. Most nations are currently falling short of what is required to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.



11:40 AM · Oct 28, 2021 · Twitter Web App

||| View Tweet analytics

107 Retweets 13 Quote Tweets 192 Likes



nature @Nature · Oct 28, 2021

Replying to @Nature

@climateactiontr has ranked Gambia as the only country with commitments compatible with the 1.5 °C goal. Although policies are not yet in place to achieve the country's commitments, it is ramping up renewable energy production and could drastically reduce emissions by 2025 (2/4)

2 3 10



nature @Nature · Oct 28, 2021

The climate policies and commitments of 21 countries were rated as critically or highly insufficient by the @climateactiontr. Nations with policies rated as 'critically insufficient' include Russia and Saudi Arabia, which continue to rely on and export oil and natural gas (3/4)

2 3 14



nature @Nature · Oct 28, 2021

Find out how your country's climate commitments measure up, and learn more about the upcoming climate conference in our need-to-know guide to COP26 (4/4) [go.nature.com/3mctzzS](https://go.nature.com/3mctzzS)

5 16

<https://go.nature.com/ABSWz>

Short  
thread  
breaking  
down a  
graphic  
from our  
pre-  
COP26  
explainer

# Examples - external author sharing Nature piece



Natalie E. Dean, PhD ✓  
@nataliexdean

Out today -- my piece in @nature on a topic I feel very strongly about = the need to coordinate and harmonize observational vaccine studies! If you think it is hard to compare vaccine trials, you haven't seen anything yet. A thread. 1/6

“There is rarely a cure for messy data.”

nature

nature.com

COVID vaccination studies: plan now to pool data, or be bogged down in confu...

Nature - Incompatible research designs will obscure essential answers about vaccine effectiveness. It's time to plan together.

- **First tweet conveys importance of topic, immediacy, outlines how she's going to tell you something you don't know**
- **Rest of thread bullet-points key info from the article**

<https://go.nature.com/ABSW3>



# Examples from researcher published in @nature



Alexey Polilov   
@AlexeyPolilov

I am proud of the work of our team on the flight of the smallest beetles, published in the third issue of [@Nature](#) this year.  
[nature.com/articles/s4158...](https://www.nature.com/articles/s4158...)  
1/9



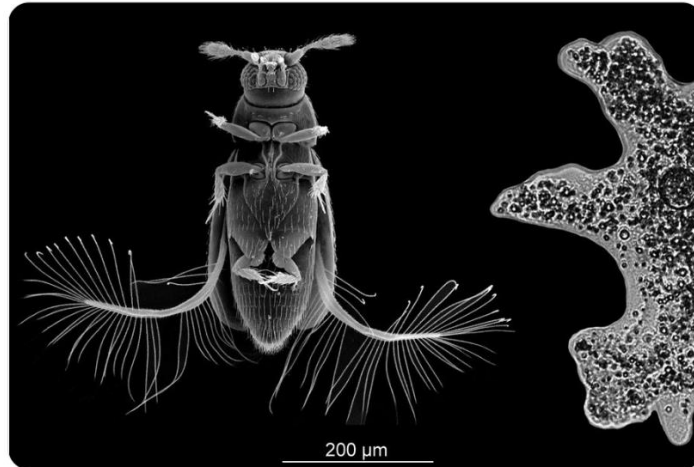
4:19 PM · Jan 19, 2022 · Twitter Web App

1,188 Retweets 289 Quote Tweets 4,945 Likes



Alexey Polilov   
@AlexeyPolilov · Jan 19

Replying to [@AlexeyPolilov](#) and [@Nature](#)  
2/9. This is a study of the flight of one of the smallest insects, comparable in size to unicellular organisms



4

175

779



<https://go.nature.com/ABSW4>

- Tweets contain strong imagery - opens with a video

# What doesn't work

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- **Over-long**
  - Should this have been an article instead?
- **Self-indulgent**
  - Is the lack of an editor especially obvious here?
- **Boring**
  - People are busy - you need to grab their attention!

# Appendix: Some additional resources / tweets

Get these at [go.nature.com/ABSW-extra](https://go.nature.com/ABSW-extra)

- Open Notebook article on how to write a Twitter thread
- Fun story-telling thread from Radiolab host Latif Nasser (highlighted in the Open Notebook article above)
- A choose-your-own-adventure thread
- Good summary of tips - with link to relevant World View from Nature Immunology
- How to do an advanced search on Twitter - a useful tool

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# Thank you

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