

Misleading and deceptive identities policy



1. [Help Center](https://help.twitter.com/) ^ (https://help.twitter.com/)
2. [Platform integrity and authenticity](https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies#platform-integrity-and-authenticity) ^ (https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies#platform-integrity-and-authenticity)

Misleading and deceptive identities policy

Overview

You may not impersonate individuals, groups, or organizations to mislead, confuse, or deceive others, nor use a fake identity in a manner that disrupts the experience of others on Twitter.

We want Twitter to be a place where people can find authentic voices. That means one should be able to trust that the person or organization featured in an account's profile genuinely represents the account owner. While you are not required to display your real name or image on your profile, your account should not engage in impersonation or pose as someone who doesn't exist in order to deceive others. Accounts that use deceptive identities can create confusion, as well as undermine the integrity of conversations on Twitter. For this reason, you

may not misappropriate the identity of another person, group, or organization, or create a fake identity for deceptive purposes.

What is a misleading or deceptive identity?

One of the main elements of an identity on Twitter is an account's profile, which includes a username (@handle), account name, profile image, and bio.

An account's identity is deceptive under this policy if it uses false profile information to represent itself as a person or entity that is not associated with the account owner, such that it may mislead others who use Twitter. Deceptive identities may feature the likeness of another person or organization in a manner that confuses others about the account's affiliation. Fake identities, which may use stolen or computer-generated photos and fabricated names to pose as a person or organization that doesn't exist, are also considered deceptive when they engage in disruptive or manipulative behavior.

What is in violation of this policy?

We prohibit the following behaviors under this policy:

Impersonation

You can't pose as an existing person, group, or organization in a confusing or deceptive manner.

Deceptive Fake Identities

You can't use a fake identity to disrupt the experience of others on Twitter. Using fake accounts in conjunction with other behaviors that violate the Twitter Rules will result in stricter enforcement actions. This includes operating fake accounts to engage in spam, interfere in civic processes, carry out financial scams, artificially inflate engagement, or abuse and harass others. Common features of fake accounts include:

- Stock or stolen profile photos, particularly those depicting other people;
- Stolen or copied profile bios; and/or
- Intentionally misleading profile information, such as profile location.

How do we review accounts under this policy?

We consider some of the following factors when determining whether an identity is deceptive:

1. Does the profile portray the account holder?

Profiles that authentically portray the account owner are unlikely to violate this policy. These types of profiles often use the name of the account owner. Accounts that use business names, stage names, or pseudonyms may also fall into this category.

2. Does the profile portray another person, group, or organization?

One of the main factors in our review is whether a profile uses an image that depicts another person or entity. If we find evidence that demonstrates an unauthorized use of another's image (such as from a valid report from the individual or organization depicted), we will then assess whether the profile image is used in a misleading or deceptive manner. We also weigh deceptiveness when an account uses a computer generated image of a person to pose as someone who doesn't exist.

Using an image depicting another person or entity is not necessarily in violation of this policy and we are less likely to take action on accounts where the use of the image does not mislead others.

3. Is the account intended to deceive others?

If we determine a profile features another's image, we will also evaluate the context in which the image is used. We are most likely to take action if an account falsely claims to be the entity portrayed in the profile photo, as with impersonation or fake accounts. Accounts are less likely to violate this policy if the profile contains context that indicates the account is not affiliated with the subject in the profile image, as with parody, commentary, or fan accounts. In rare cases, we may take action on an account that does not use another's image if the profile includes significantly misleading information, such as a location that does not match the location of the account owner.

What is not a violation of this policy?

We believe giving people choice in terms of how they represent themselves online enables them to express themselves and control their privacy. Twitter allows the use of pseudonymous accounts, meaning an account's profile is not required to use the name or image of the account owner. Accounts that use pseudonyms or that appear similar to others on Twitter are not in violation of this policy, so long as their purpose is not to deceive or manipulate others. The following, for example, are not in violation of this policy:

- Accounts that share your name but have no other commonalities
- Accounts with usernames, account names, or appearances that are similar to others on Twitter
- Using Twitter pseudonymously
- Parody, commentary, or fan accounts that comply with our policy for such accounts.

Who can report violations of this policy?

Anyone can report a suspected misleading or deceptive identity directly from the account's profile.

In cases where an account is suspected of misusing a specific individual or entity's identity, we may need more information to determine whether the account is run or authorized by the entity portrayed in the profile. To ensure we have enough context, we may need a report from the portrayed party or their authorized representative in order to take action.

How can I report violations of this policy?

If you believe an account is posing as you or your brand, you or your authorized representative can file a report here (<https://help.twitter.com/forms/impersonation>). If you believe an account is using a deceptive fake identity or misusing the identity of somebody else, you can flag it as a bystander by reporting directly from the account's profile.

What happens if you violate this policy?

The consequences for violating the policy depend on the severity and type of violation, as well as an account's history of previous violations. The actions we take may include the following:

Profile modifications

If your account is potentially confusing in terms of its affiliation, we may require you to edit the content on your profile. If you violate this policy again after your first warning, your account will be permanently suspended.

Temporary account suspension

If we believe you may be in violation of this policy, we may require you to provide government issued identification (such as a driver's license or passport) in order to reinstate your account.

Permanent suspension

If you are engaged in impersonation or are using a misleading or deceptive fake identity, we may permanently suspend your account.

If you believe that your account was locked or suspended in error, you can [submit an appeal](https://help.twitter.com/forms/general?subtopic=suspended) (<https://help.twitter.com/forms/general?subtopic=suspended>).

Additional resources

To report an account that may be misusing your trademark, please see our [trademark policy](#). For information about our spam rules, you can read more on our [platform manipulation and spam policy](#).

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