

# Threads: how do I sign up and is it any different to Twitter?

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Author: Josh Taylor

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Five million people signed up for Threads, Meta's answer to Twitter, in the four hours after its launch on Thursday, according to boss Mark Zuckerberg. What can we expect from it? How does Threads work? Threads allows you to sign up using your Instagram login, and you'll be able to follow all the accounts you already follow on Instagram on Threads automatically as they join. You can send posts of up to 500 characters, include images, gifs, and videos of up to five minutes in length. It looks a lot like Twitter – short text-based pieces of content, likes and reposts. You can quote a thread similar to quote tweeting. Why is my feed a bunch of people I'm not following? One of the main criticisms of Threads in the hours since it launched is that people are seeing a mixture of posts from the accounts they're following and then a bunch of random accounts. Meta has indicated it's a mixture of followed accounts and algorithmic recommendations. There's no way to see just the posts of the people you follow at the moment, and the company hasn't indicated whether it will provide this option in the future. Can I send DMs? There is no way to direct message other users right now. Probably a relief for some. Can I keep my Instagram account private and my Threads account public? Yes, if you want to keep your Instagram more personal you can keep it locked down and have Threads public. Though if you're under 16, the Threads account, like Instagram, is private by default. You can make Threads private at any time, and also choose who can reply to your posts on Threads. Will there be a 'close friends' setting, like on Instagram? There is no plan for that at this stage, but if you prefer less of an audience, you can always switch your profile to private so only those who follow you will see your threads. How can I access it? Currently you can access Threads only via the iOS or Android apps. There is no desktop version at this stage, and Meta could not say when it might make one available. Will Threads have ads? Meta has indicated it will not monetise Threads this year, but left open the door for ads in the future. Can I get a different username? For now, Meta is letting people log in using only their Instagram login, and you'll keep the username you have on that account for Threads. This is good news for accounts that might be worried someone could grab their username. Can I find followers from other social media platforms? Not at this stage, but Meta wants the app to be similar to rivals like Mastodon, and be decentralised and allow users to transfer accounts to other platforms. The company is working to make Threads compatible with ActivityPub which allows social networks to be interoperable and would let users of Threads take their accounts and followers to other ActivityPub-supported apps. What's the moderation like? It's basically what you'd find on Instagram. That means it'll be stricter than Twitter around things like nudity, and will enforce content rules around hate speech that Twitter has been lacking in since Elon Musk took over. Why hasn't it launched in the EU? Meta sources have indicated regulation is the reason it has been delayed in the European Union,

with concerns being raised about whether the app will comply with strict EU data privacy rules. Privacy advocates have pointed to the amount of personal information Threads can collect, including health, financial, contacts, browsing and search history, location data, purchases and “sensitive info”, according to its data privacy disclosure on the App Store as a reason they’re concerned about the app.