

Twitter's redesign includes new font, less visual clutter

Your eyes aren't deceiving you. There's something different about Twitter.



Queenie Wong Aug. 11, 2021 11:52 a.m. PT

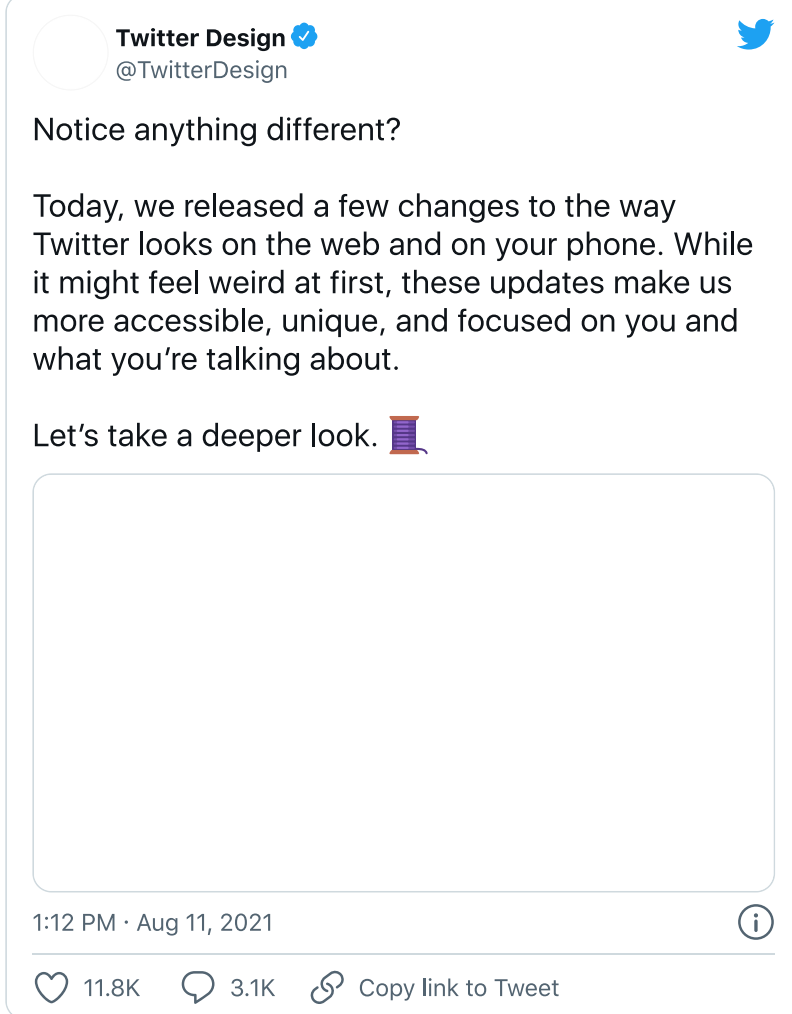
▶ LISTEN -



Twitter's website got a makeover.
Sarah Tew/CNET

Twitter on Wednesday unveiled a new design for its website, including a new font, higher-contrast colors and less visual clutter. The social media company said the changes are meant to make it easier for people to scroll through text, photos and videos.

"While it might feel weird at first, these updates make us more accessible, unique, and focused on you and what you're talking about," Twitter Design said in a [tweet](#).



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As social networks expand the number of features on their websites, introducing things such as live audio, shopping and newsletters, the sites can feel like they're becoming harder to navigate. So it's not surprising that companies such as Twitter are trying to make their sites feel less cluttered.

As part of the makeover, Twitter said, it created its own font for the first time, called Chirp. In the past, the company has used typefaces such as SF Pro, Roboto and Helvetica Neue. Twitter said all Western-language text aligns to left, a change that should make it easier for users to read text as they're scrolling through the site.

Some Twitter users, though, tweeted they weren't fans of the changes and called the new font "ugly" or "unfinished."

The site's colors are now higher contrast and less blue so photos and videos on Twitter stand out more. There are also fewer gray backgrounds and divider lines, and the company said it increased space to make text easier to read.

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Twitter's new font, Chirp, is apparently giving some users headaches

It's inevitable: Twitter changes Twitter, and Twitter users complain on Twitter. But does Chirp make you feel like a woodpecker is pounding on your skull?



Gael Fashingbauer Cooper  Aug. 11, 2021 2:11 p.m. PT



Change is never easy, and Twitter users aren't afraid to complain. Those two truisms combined on Wednesday when [Twitter unveiled a new design](#) that included a new font, called Chirp, and higher-contrast colors. Almost immediately, users began to complain -- with many saying the new font gave them headaches. (This writer is getting them too.)

A Twitter spokesperson told me, "We tested the font and found that while it does take people a little time to get used to it, overall they like

the change. We're listening to feedback about the font and will continue to improve it."

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Pity the poor Twitter employee who had to gamely charge onto the platform and try to explain why the changes are for the better, because even if they were, no one wanted them.

"Today, we released a few changes to the way Twitter looks on the web and on your phone," a tweet from Twitter Design reads. "While it might feel weird at first, these updates make us more accessible, unique, and focused on you and what you're talking about."

Notice anything different?

Today, we released a few changes to the way Twitter looks on the web and on your phone. While it might feel weird at first, these updates make us more accessible, unique, and focused on you and what you're talking about.

Let's take a deeper look. [▶](#)

pic.twitter.com/vCUomsgCNA

— Twitter Design (@TwitterDesign) August 11, 2021

Chirp, the new typeface

Twitter's Derrit DeRouen posted an entire thread about why the company felt a need to develop its own typeface, writing that, "for everyday use it must be sharp and legible (with good density), but with personality and distinctiveness."

I want to give a bit more depth to Chirp, our new typeface.

Type, in 280 character doses, is the foundation of Twitter. In the history of the company we've either relied on someone else's typeface, from SF Pro and

Roboto, to Helvetica Neue in our brand.

pic.twitter.com/OrvIYsxF9g

— Derrit DeRouen (@DerritDeRouen) January 27, 2021

But some found Chirp harder to read.

"PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE let us change the font back," said one Twitter user. "It's incredibly difficult for me to read with, and it physically hurts to look at it."

Said another, "It looks like the letters are doing the wave, I hate it."

Same. I can't believe they claimed this would be easier to read because it is definitely much harder to read

— Tango (@tangozlulu) August 11, 2021

You could've just made the font changeable based on the user settings (and Android already did that! Not sure about iOS though) and made a lot of this under settings, instead of forcing it upon users that don't even want the change

— Naz (@BluSpringg) August 11, 2021

It looks like the letters are doing the wave, I hate it.

— Rigtoofen (@Rigtoofen) August 11, 2021

yo it sucks. this font looks unfinished. hope you didn't pay them for a job well done cuz this aint even satisfactory. Not even close. I feel like i'm playing a retro video game from late 80's era. this isn't "easier" to read. who was your test focus group for this anyways???

— Birdthulu (@Kaddiss_Telelia) August 11, 2021

Pass the aspirin

A number of Twitter users made the same point: The new font is giving them headaches.

"The new Twitter font has cured my addiction to this bird app because i actually can't scroll without getting a headache now," wrote one user.

"Read tweets with Twitter's new font and get a headache," one person wrote. "Then maybe you'll close your eyes out of frustration and eventually fall asleep."

the new twitter font has cured my addiction to this bird app because i actually can't scroll without getting a headache now

— ali de haan (@lunetsdaya) August 11, 2021

Read tweets with twitter's new font and get a headache. Then maybe you'll close your eyes out of frustration and eventually fall asleep ☹️

— mnemosyne (@cd_mnemosyne) August 11, 2021

came back to twitter only to get a headache because of the new font pic.twitter.com/hkOYppGswK

— Queen mystic cashier (@ymint_) August 11, 2021

ive heard several people say they have a headache and had to stop using desktop twitter for now

— 🍎 spooky maiden 🍎 (@sunrisegrove) August 11, 2021

Ok but is anyone else getting a slight headache from the Twitter font change or just me

— Max @ Meat Meditation (@tuxedomakscos) August 11, 2021

Color my world

Another change involved the color scheme of the site. Notably, Follow buttons are now black in regular mode or white in dark mode, whereas before, users could choose from a variety of different colors.

"Our new buttons are high contrast too," the site's design account posted. "Now the most important actions you can take stand out. Yes, the follow buttons look different, but they'll help you see what actions you've taken at a glance."

Our new buttons are high contrast too.

Now the most important actions you can take stand out. Yes, the follow buttons look different, but they'll help you see what actions you've taken at a glance.

— Twitter Design (@TwitterDesign) August 11, 2021

But some users weren't fans. Said one, "the new black buttons for following someone feel like i am about to curse them with my newfound presence which i guess is like, accurate."

the new black buttons for following someone feel like i am about to curse them with my newfound presence which i guess is like, accurate

— stephanie (@isosteph) August 11, 2021

I love how I use dark mode to prevent eye strain and headaches and then twitter is like "what if we made the follow button bright white on a dark background wouldn't that be great" no it's giving me the eye strain I'm trying to avoid

— Queenie (@queer_queenie) August 11, 2021

So you keep our custom colored buttons for "Tweet" and "Reply" but not follow? That's just so jarring, and we would rather keep the custom color for everything, not be forced to have the one you pick for us

Hope you take this into consideration

pic.twitter.com/3h6TuCny1n

— Sol (@FavoniusSol) August 11, 2021

I literally unfollowed and followed someone because of this ingenious plan. Oh but the "Reply" button is blue.

Hey [@Twitter](#) your design is inconsistent and broken.

Fire someone.

— Alternate Radio Ghosts (@alradioghosts) August 11, 2021

just had a brief "fuck fuck did i unfollow this person and now have to follow them back after which they'll know i unfollowed them in the first place" moment but twitter just changed the color of buttons

— jenn (@jennschiffer) August 11, 2021

Too late to turn back?

And this being Twitter, some users just delivered on the jokes.

"Twitter has now become your domestic partner," wrote one person.

"You get home and they are like, 'honey do you notice anything different? I've been working all day rearranging all of your stuff don't be mad, while I might feel weird at first you are going to love it!'"

And some users pointed out that if Twitter was really feeling the need to make changes, there are others that should've come to the forefront.

"Still looking for the edit feature," said one.

Twitter has now become your domestic partner 😂! You get home and they are like "honey do you notice anything different? I've been working all day rearranging all of your stuff don't be mad, while I might feel weird at first you are going to love it!" 🙄😂😂😂

— Daniel Newman (@DanielNewman) August 11, 2021

Here, let me suggest your next step


pic.twitter.com/j34p1dN5f6

— John Lonnon (@devilfruitbat) August 11, 2021

Sure Twitter, change my fonts & colors just to fvck with me a little. I don't mind 🙄 pic.twitter.com/iloucGlsUU

— Woke 🙄 "Crucify the ego before it's far too late"
(@WokeAnimal) August 11, 2021

but no one asked pic.twitter.com/DG31QoE4Hb

— karr/kaisa  RT PINNED (@berdacs) August 11, 2021

Still looking for the edit feature

pic.twitter.com/WiLyRIN2Xt

— Michael Lisle (@mll_sc) August 11, 2021

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