# Twitter's disappearing tweets, called Fleets, are now available for everyone

Twitter on Tuesday announced a global launch of "Fleets," the ephemeral tweeting feature it first announced earlier this year and tested in various markets around the globe.

Now, any mobile Twitter user, regardless of where they live or what platform they're on, will have access to the disappearing messaging feature, which will sit right at the top of the timeline in a row of Stories-like bubbles. Twitter hopes the new feature will help reduce the pressure around tweeting by letting users express more casual thoughts and feelings while also concerning themselves less with saying something profound or racking up likes and retweets. Fleets starts rolling out today on Android and iOS and should be available for everyone in the coming days, the company says.

"Through our tests in Brazil, Italy, India, and South Korea, we learned Fleets helped people feel more comfortable joining the conversation – we saw people with Fleets talk more on Twitter," explain design director Joshua Harris and product manager Sam Haveson in a blog post. "Those new to Twitter found Fleets to be an easier way to share what's on their mind. Because they disappear from view after a day, Fleets helped people feel more comfortable sharing personal and casual thoughts, opinions, and feelings."

*Twitter thinks Fleets will relieve the pressure of posting*
At its most basic level, Fleets is a Stories clone, borrowing all of the best ideas implemented by Instagram and Snapchat. You can share text, respond to others' tweets, or post videos with the same background color and overlaid text options you get on other messaging apps with ephemeral features, with

every message disappearing after 24 hours. You can also respond to others' fleets by tapping on one and sending a direct message or emoji to the creator, which will start a DM conversation similar to how the story reply process works on Instagram. Twitter says it will also be introducing stickers and live broadcasting at some point in the future.

Right now, the company says there will be no indicator if someone screenshots one of your fleets, and anyone who follows you will be able to see what you fleet by visiting your profile if they don't immediately see your bubble at the top of the timeline. So it's not exactly right to think of Fleets as a fix-all remedy to social media outrage culture or the platform's propensity to direct large numbers of individual actions toward a single target — what we colloquially call "getting ratioed" or piled on or canceled or whatever name or phrase you'd like to attach to briefly becoming an internet punching bag.

*Image: Twitter*

But what Fleets seem likely to help with is dividing the sheer volume of opinions that get trafficked on Twitter every minute of every day into more digestible formats. That may spark changes in how we communicate on the platform. Undoubtedly, some users will try to push the limits of what can be said or shown on a fleet versus a tweet. Twitter is sure to face fresh moderation challenges when deciding whether to write new rules or modify for combating, say, harassment or misinformation as it pops up in Fleets.

But most of us can just use Fleets to send out the one-off reaction or hot take and let it expire in the void like most dumb opinions do anyway, just as Instagram Stories lets you share unpolished and (dare I say) fleeting snippets of our daily lives that don't have to be framed or filtered to perfection.

*It’s not clear whether Twitter’s version of Stories will take off*

That’s, of course, assuming people on Twitter actually want to use this feature and actually follow through in any meaningful capacity. Part of the great stories takeover of social media that Snapchat inadvertently kicked off more than a half-decade ago meant products and services that never needed ephemeral messaging got it anyway — from Facebook’s main app to YouTube to even LinkedIn. Those Stories clones may stick around, but they inevitably become ghost towns.

It’s not immediately clear that Twitter needs a Stories take of its own. But if any platform can benefit from disappearing messages that lower the stakes and promote perhaps healthier and more stress-free communication, it’s the social media platform the sitting president of the US is actively using to undermine election results. If we can’t or won’t log off in 2020, then we all need to chill out a bit — and maybe fleeting is one way to do that and make the internet more bearable in the process.

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