

Sherry Kinkoph
Gunter

**Second
Edition**

Sams **Teach Yourself**

Facebook®

in **10**
Minutes

SAMS



Sams Teach Yourself Facebook® in 10 Minutes

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Introduction

With more than 400 million active users and growing, it's hard to ignore the buzz about Facebook. It's a hot topic these days, and shows no signs of letting up. If you're ready to get to the bottom of this Internet sensation and find out how to use this social networking phenomenon for yourself, this is the book for you. Social networks are a bit daunting at first, but don't worry. This book shows you how to navigate the site and make use of its various features in no time at all. By the end, you'll feel like you can Facebook with the best of them!

About This Book

As part of the *Sams Teach Yourself in 10 Minutes* guides, this book aims to teach you the ins and outs of using Facebook without wasting a lot of precious time. Divided into easy-to-handle lessons that you can tackle in 10 minutes each, you learn the following Facebook tasks and topics:

- ▶ How to painlessly set up a Facebook account
- ▶ How to create and manage a profile page, including how to add a profile picture
- ▶ How to connect with friends and make new ones
- ▶ How to communicate by messaging, chatting, and posting status updates
- ▶ How to track what your friends are doing and what they're up to on Facebook
- ▶ How to upload photos, links, and videos to share with friends
- ▶ How to share your common interests and hobbies through groups
- ▶ How to add applications to get more out of your Facebook experience
- ▶ How to sell and buy stuff in the Marketplace

- ▶ How to use Facebook's mobile features
- ▶ How to create pages for a professional business or organization
- ▶ How to keep yourself safe on Facebook
- ▶ How to conduct yourself on the site and follow Facebook's terms of service and unspoken etiquette rules

After completing these lessons, you'll know everything you need to know to get the most out of your time on Facebook.

Who This Book Is For

This book is geared toward anyone interested in learning his or her way around Facebook. Whether you're a new user or a seasoned participant, or you're just learning how to navigate the new and improved interface, this book shows you each major feature of the site and how to make use of it. For example, have you always wanted to start your own group? Have you ever wondered how to invite people to a party? Or perhaps you've always wanted to look for more applications to try but didn't know how to find them? You'll learn how to do these tasks, and more.

Each lesson focuses on a particular subject, such as communicating on Facebook or using the Photos application. You can skip around from topic to topic, or read the book from start to finish.

What Do I Need to Use This Book?

To use this book, all you really need is a healthy dose of curiosity to find out what you can do on Facebook. To use Facebook itself, you'll need a computer (PC or Mac), a web browser (any kind will do), and an Internet connection. That's it. Facebook is free to use, so if you've got those three things, you're all set and ready to go.

Conventions Used in This Book

Whenever you need to click a particular button or link in Facebook, you'll find the label or name for that item bolded in the text, such as "click the **Delete** button." In addition to the text and figures in this book, you'll also encounter some special boxes labeled Tip, Note, or Caution.

TIP: Tips offer helpful shortcuts or easier ways to do something.

NOTE: Notes are extra bits of information related to the text that might help you expand your knowledge or understanding.

CAUTION: Cautions are warnings or other important information you need to know about consequences of using a feature or executing a task.

Screen Captures

The figures captured for this book are mainly from the Internet Explorer web browser (version 8.0) captured on a PC. If you use a different browser or a Mac, your screens might look slightly different.

Also keep in mind that the developers of Facebook are constantly working to improve the website. New features are added regularly, and old ones change or disappear. This means the pages change often, including the elements found on each, so your own screens may differ from the ones shown in this book. Don't be too alarmed, however. The basics, though they are tweaked in appearance from time to time, stay mostly the same in principle and usage.

LESSON 6

Tracking Wall Postings, News Feeds, and Notifications

In this lesson, you learn how to keep track of news and activities on Facebook. You'll learn how information flows on the site, and how to manage your Wall, news feed, and notifications to keep abreast of the latest information.

Understanding Facebook Information Flow

As a social networking site, Facebook acts much like a broadcasting service, sharing news about its members wherever they are. However, rather than tuning in to see general news about everyone on the site or stories selected entirely by Facebook, your news is narrowed down to just the people you know—your friends, family, coworkers, or colleagues. The news that is shared, whether it's status updates, photos, or the latest group someone joined, is referred to as *stories* on Facebook. This news is also called *feed stories*, *stream*, or *news feed* stories. The information that appears on the Home page is a constant stream of stories about the activities and pursuits of your friends. The official name for this is *news feeds*, so that's what we'll call it, too. The stories that appear on your profile are referred to as *mini-feeds* because they're all about you.

For example, anytime you post a status update on your Wall, it's a story on your mini-feed—information dedicated to you. When your friend shares a photo, for example, it appears on his Wall as a mini-feed about him. Out

on the Home page, both stories may appear listed as news feed stories where other friends you both know can see.

What exactly constitutes as news on Facebook, you may wonder?

Anything you do on the site is considered a story. If you join a group, for example, or share a link, it appears as part of your mini-feed, and might even potentially be listed in the main news feed. If you don't want to share all your Facebook activities, you can turn off some of this through your privacy settings. (See Lesson 5, "Guarding Your Privacy," to learn more.)

Another part of this ongoing stream of broadcasting is a Facebook feature called *notifications*. Notifications are messages from Facebook telling you about something that happened on Facebook involving you somehow, such as being tagged (pointed out) in a photo or if someone wrote on your Wall. Typically, these notifications are emailed to you or sent via your mobile connection. On Facebook, they appear on the Notifications pop-up list. Unlike mini-feeds that are generated by you, or news feeds that detail the activities of others, notifications involve you indirectly.

Let's get down to the nitty-gritty details of how to manage your mini-feeds, news feeds, and notifications.

Managing Your Wall

The Wall on your profile page is your public forum for communicating with your Facebook friends and they, in turn, with you. The Wall is a big part of your profile page, located smack-dab in the middle of the page. You can use your Wall to share comments and musings, photos and videos, links to interesting sites, and more. Anytime you update your status, the information appears on your Wall. Friends who view your page can also write on your Wall, or comment on your existing postings. This ongoing spot for social commentary is essentially a mini-feed of news focused solely on you. The news items you post on your Wall, whether it's text or links or photos, are interchangeably called *stories* on Facebook. Figure 6.1 shows an example of a typical Wall. The Wall appears by default when you display your profile. If, by chance, you've clicked another tab on your profile page instead, you can click the **Wall** tab to return to the Wall view at any time.

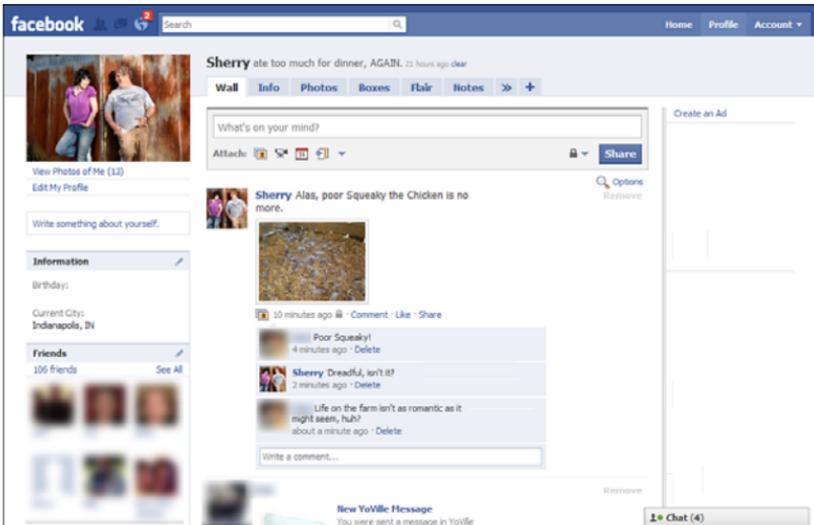


FIGURE 6.1 Use the Wall to share information, such as what you're currently doing, postings of your favorite video clips, and more.

As you add new information onto your Wall, previous postings scroll down to make room for the latest items at the top. You can use your browser window's scrollbar on the right to scroll up and down your Wall stories. Based on how much you or your friends add to your Wall, the postings may change hourly, daily, or weekly. You can use the **Older Posts** link at the bottom of your Wall to view older postings. The more you log in and interact on Facebook, the more activities show up on your Wall. You can do lots of things to work with and manage your Wall. This section shows you how.

TIP: You can adjust privacy settings for your Wall and news feed activities. Move your mouse pointer over the **Account** link at the top of the Facebook page and click **Privacy Settings**. This opens the Choose Your Privacy Settings page, and you can click the **Customize Settings** link under the Sharing on Facebook information to change Wall postings. To control Wall postings, check out the Posts by Me, Friends Can Post on My Wall, Can Comment on Posts, and Can See Wall Posts by Friends options and set them the way you want for your profile Wall.

Updating Your Status

To post something on your own Wall, fill out a status update and share it. Essentially, this creates a story on your page. Click in the text box at the top of your profile page, as shown in Figure 6.2, where it says something like “What’s on your mind?.” In previous versions of the Facebook interface, the box had different titles. The name or text may change at anytime, but the intent remains the same: to share something that you’re thinking or doing, some random remark, observation, or witty thought. Type out your status update, and then click the **Share** button to post it on your page. Facebook adds the information to your Wall, as well as to the news feed that appears on your Home page and your friends’ Home pages.



FIGURE 6.2 Use the status update box to post an update about what you’re doing or thinking.

TIP: You can also fill out the update box on your Home page to update your Facebook status. When you click in the box, additional buttons appear for adding photos, video, events, or a link.

The update box is technically known as the *Publisher*. When you activate the What’s on your mind? box, which you can do just by clicking inside the field, you can use the additional buttons below the field for sharing a link, photo, event, or video along with your comment text. If you have other applications loaded, you can click the arrow button at the end of the row of buttons and add an application action to the comment, too. If you click the **Link** button, for example, you can add a link to another web page to share along with your comment. To learn more about sharing links, see Lesson 7, “Communicating Through Facebook.” To learn how to share photos, see Lesson 8, “Sharing Photos.” To learn how to share videos, see Lesson 9, “Sharing Videos.”

How often you update your status is entirely up to you. It really depends on how often you log in to Facebook and how much you want to share about what you're doing or thinking. Some users like to post updates several times a day; others like to post more sporadically based on things that happen throughout their day. Other users like to update their status once a day or, if feeling not so social, once a week. Facebook Walls are really all about connecting with your friends, so it's up to you to decide how much to participate and share.

Removing Wall Postings

Sometimes you might need to edit your Wall postings—for example, perhaps you misspelled a word or need to remove a questionable posting a friend left on your Wall. You can remove the story with the error and replace it with a corrected version. To remove a posting or story, point to the item on the Wall to display a tiny **Remove** button to the far right of the posting. Click the button to open a Delete Post box, as shown in Figure 6.3. Click the **Delete** button to confirm the removal.

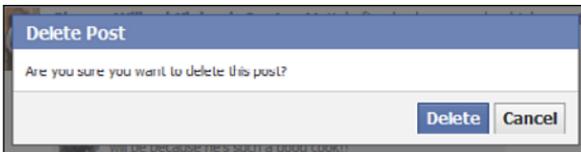


FIGURE 6.3 You can easily remove a posting from your Wall.

TIP: If removing postings from a particular person is a pain, consider adjusting your privacy settings to prevent future postings. Click the **Account** link at the top of the Facebook page and click **Privacy Settings**. This opens a Choose Your Privacy Settings page where you can edit your settings, including customizing who posts on your Wall. Click the **Customize Settings** link to open the Customize Settings page. Under the Things Others Share group of options, you can disable the **Friends Can Post on My Wall** setting so that no one can leave posts, or you can prevent a person from seeing your Wall posts by clicking the pop-up menu next to **Can See Wall Posts by Friends** and choosing **Customize**. This opens a dialog box where you can type in the name of the person who is no longer allowed to view your Wall.

Filtering Your Wall Postings

You might notice a tiny link labeled **Options** at the top of your Wall area. Click the link to display three blue words at the top of the Wall: YourName + Friends, Just YourName, and Just Friends. These are filters that control what's displayed on the Wall. By default, the Wall displays postings by both you and your friends. You can choose to filter the postings by displaying just your own postings, or viewing only the postings left by friends. Just click a filter name at the top of the Wall, as shown in Figure 6.4. Facebook immediately shows the postings based on your selection. To return to the default setting again, click the first filter (*YourName* + Friends). Filters apply only to your view of your Wall, not your friends' view of your Wall.



FIGURE 6.4 Use the filters to filter your Wall postings.

You can use these same filtering tools on your friends' Walls. When you open a friend's profile page, you can click the **Filters** link to display the same filter buttons. Of course, instead of your name on the buttons, the friend's name appears.

Writing on a Friend's Wall

You saw how easy it is to write on your own Wall by posting a status update with the Publisher box. You can also post comments on your friends' Walls. Start by displaying a friend's profile page. You can do this from a variety of pages, such as the Home page or Friends list, just by clicking your friend's name link. After her profile is open, click in the **Write something** box, as shown in Figure 6.5, and type your text. Oddly enough, it's the same box you use to update the status on your own profile page, just featuring a slightly different label. As soon as you click the **Share** button, the comment is added to your friend's profile page and also appears on the Home page as one of your activities.

If you'd prefer to add to something someone else has already written instead, just click the **Comment** link below the posting and add your two cents, or click in the **Write a comment** box and type in your comment text. You can also comment on your own postings on your own profile page. When you add a comment, it appears beneath the original story item. If lots of people comment to a story, you can scroll down the comments and see what everyone says. Sometimes entire conversations unfold under just one story posting.



FIGURE 6.5 You can write on your friend's Wall using the Write something text box.

TIP: If you don't have time to type up a text comment, you can always signify your approval of the story by clicking the **Like** link instead. This adds a thumbs-up icon to the story along with your name.

Viewing Wall-to-Wall Conversations

One aspect of communicating via Walls is the appearance of disjointed snippets of conversation scattered about the page. Your friend might have written one pithy comment two days ago, to which you replied, and another comment in response today. However, other activities are listed between the conversation comments. This can be a bit confusing as you're trying to read who said what. You can solve this dilemma by activating the Wall-to-Wall feature. Click the **See Wall-to-Wall** link below the comment to open another page in which the entire ongoing conversation appears without interruption.

Friends who also view your profile page can use the same tool to read the conversation.

Customizing Your Mini-Feed

You can customize how your stories appear on the Wall. You can click the **Settings** link in the upper-right corner of the Wall page to view settings you can turn on or off. If you don't see the link, click the **Options** link and the link changes to **Settings**. When the link is activated, a page similar to Figure 6.6 appears. You can control how imported stories are posted, whether comments are expanded, or even whether you allow postings from others. Simply make your selections; then click the first filter link to return to your regular Wall view. Any changes you made are now reflected on the Wall.

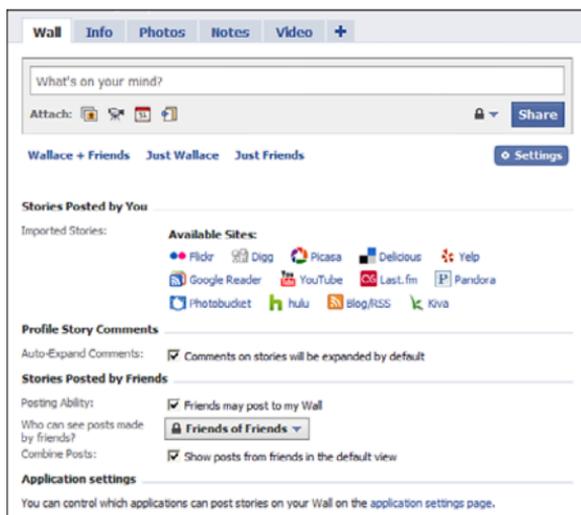


FIGURE 6.6 You can customize your Wall stories using these settings.

Tracking News Feeds

Whenever you want to see what everyone else is up to, click **Home** on the navigation bar (the blue bar at the top of any Facebook page). The Home page, shown in Figure 6.7, displays the constantly updating stories, or live stream, that comprise the news feed about your friends and what they're up to on Facebook. You can read through the list and find out what's happening, view thumbnails of photos, and find out what silly quizzes they're taking or what applications they're using.



FIGURE 6.7 The Home page displays the news feed.

You can filter your news feed display using the filters on the top. For example, to view only the real-time status updates of your friends, click **Most Recent**. Click the **Top News** filter if you want Facebook to display a random collection of content.

You can choose to hide the stories from people you don't want to see. Move your mouse pointer over the story and look for a **Hide** link that appears in the upper-right corner of the story. Click it, and Facebook hides all the stories in the news feed from that particular person. To add them back in again, scroll to the bottom of the Home page and click the **Edit Options** link. This opens a dialog box that keeps track of people you've "hidden" from view. You can add a person back in again at any time.

You can also hide postings from applications in the same way. Just click the **Hide** link, and then click the application name.

Here are a few more things you can do with the news feed:

- ▶ You can click a person's name in your news feed to immediately open the person's profile page.
- ▶ You can add to the person's story by clicking the **Comment** link and adding a comment.

- ▶ Rather than type up a comment, you can click the **Like** link in the story.
- ▶ You can click a photo to open the album and view a larger picture.
- ▶ You can click a link to view the associated web page.
- ▶ You can click a video to view a video clip.
- ▶ You can click a “take this quiz” or “vote on this poll” or similar link to participate in the same activity listed.
- ▶ You can click an application link to add the listed application for yourself.
- ▶ When you scroll to the bottom of the Home page, you can click the **Older Posts** link to view more stories.

TIP: In earlier versions of the Facebook interface, you could easily customize how stories were displayed in the news feed. As of this writing, you have to work a bit harder to control which activities generate stories. If you don't want Facebook pasting information about every application activity and page you join, you can turn off the postings. Click the **Account** menu, click **Application Settings**, and then make sure the **Show** filter is set to **Authorized**. Next to the Ads and Pages option, click the **Edit Settings** link, click the **Additional Permissions** tab in the dialog box that appears, and then deselect the **Publish Recent Activity** check box. Click **Okay** to save your changes.

Managing Notifications

As mentioned at the beginning of this lesson, notifications are messages from Facebook to alert you to stories or activities that involve you somehow. If a friend tags you in a note, for example, or joins your group, you'll see a notification. Some applications you use also generate notifications concerning you automatically. You can view a brief listing of notifications by clicking the **Notifications** icon in the upper-left corner of the Facebook page, as shown in Figure 6.8. The icon often has a red number that pops up next to it, indicating how many notifications you have waiting to be read.

For a full-on display of all your notifications, however, you need to open the Notifications page. Click the **Notifications** icon, and then click **See All Notifications**. This page, similar to Figure 6.9, displays notifications sent from you or received from others. From here, you can view notifications and control which ones are active.

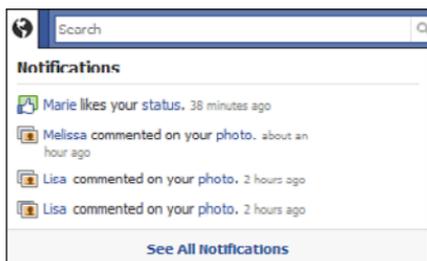


FIGURE 6.8 Activate the Notifications icon to see a menu of recent notifications.

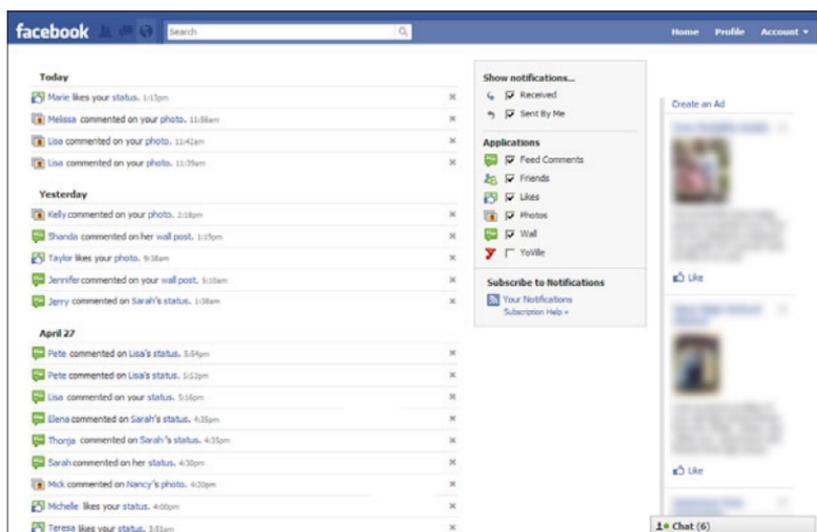


FIGURE 6.9 You can view all your notifications on the Notifications page.

TIP: You can subscribe to your notifications on Facebook, turning them into an RSS feed (which stands for Really Simple Syndication, formats for web feeds of updated content) that you can read through an RSS reader (like Google Reader or Bloglines). Just click the **Your Notifications** link just below the notification settings on the Notifications page and follow the instructions.

Notifications are grouped chronologically by date, so today's notifications appear at the top of the page. Depending on the type of notification, you can click a link to read the message. You can use the check boxes on the right side of the page to control which notifications you see. For example, if you'd rather not see feed comments from applications, uncheck its check box. As you'll quickly learn, the more applications you add to your Facebook experience, the more notifications you'll see. You can easily stop pesky notifications from annoying applications by turning them off. Just deselect the individual application's check box on the Notifications page.

NOTE: It's easy to confuse notifications with requests, and with some applications, the information may appear in both formats. Notifications focus on notifying you, like a mini-news bulletin. Requests focus on inviting you to action, such as befriending someone or joining a group. Just remember, requests appear on the right side of the Home page. Notifications appear when you click the **Notifications** icon.

Summary

In this lesson, you learned how to inform and stay informed on Facebook. You learned the lingo for Facebook news feeds, mini-feeds, and notifications. You also found out how to manage your Wall, write on your friends' Walls, remove postings, and view Wall-to-Wall conversations. You learned how to use the news feed stream on your Home page to view news about your friends. Finally, you learned how notifications work in Facebook and how to view them. In the next lesson, you learn more about communicating through Facebook.

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