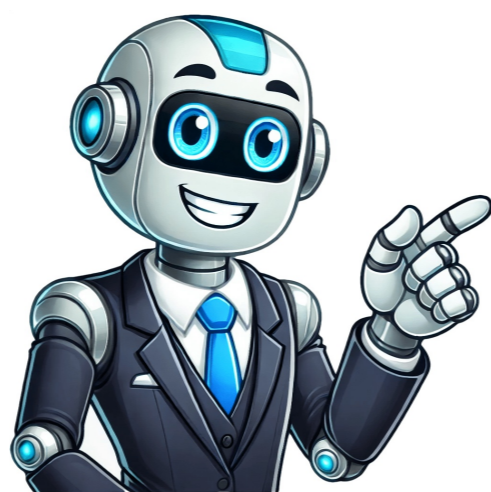


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Credit: Mamun sheikh K - Shutterstock In 2005, Steve Huffman and Alexis Ohanian launched a simple link-sharing site. Since then, Reddit has grown from a small community mainly made up of coders to a mega-hive with somewhere around half a billion active users across the world. If you're not one of the half billion, don't worry; it's never too late to hop in, poke around, and see if Reddit is something you like. Reddit can be daunting at first—it is massive and its norms and expectations aren't like other social networks. This guide breaks down the basics of starting a Reddit account, finding and joining relevant communities, posting content, and earning Reddit karma; you'll be upvoting, posting content, and making unfunny jokes in comment sections like a seasoned Redditor in no time. What is Reddit?At a basic level, Reddit is a community-driven platform made up of user-created message boards (called subreddits or communities) that cover any subject you can think of, from the broadest interest to the most niche concerns. Users can post pictures, text, videos, and links for other users to engage with and judge. That's the bare bones explanation, but it's a little like saying New York City is "a bunch of streets and buildings." At a deeper level, Reddit is the collective mind of the internet having a running conversation about everything, all the time. Internet forums have been around since the 1970s, but Reddit improved on the model with a voting system that any allows user to up-vote or down-vote content based on whatever criteria they choose. In theory, this leads to the most relevant, useful, engaging, and interesting content being highlighted, and low-effort, off-topic, less-useful content being hidden—all without the need of a central authority to choose what people see. (In theory.)How to make an account on RedditWith the basics out of the way, here's how to make a Reddit account:Navigate to Reddit.comClick the "... " on the upper right of your browser window Credit: Stephen Johnson - Reddit Choose "Login/Sign Up"Click "New to Reddit"Choose whether to make an account with an email address, a phone number, Google, or other service.Choose a username and password. Credit: Stephen Johnson - Reddit Reddit will autogenerate a username for you, but you might want to choose your own name instead of being stuck with a random word and some numbers. Don't sweat the first account too much either way. Reddit accounts can be created with any email address, so you can have a bunch of them. Once you've picked a name, you'll be guided through a series of questions about your interests. This is so Reddit can populate a homepage with forums/communities/subreddits you might be interested in. Don't worry about these choices too much—you can change all of it at any time. Once that's complete, you'll be greeted with a customized, scrollable page populated with posts from subreddits related to the interests you've chosen. Browsing Reddit anonymouslyReddit has become way more mainstream as its popularity has grown over the years, but the site still allows you to set up an account with only a burner email address. This is useful if you are an adult who wants to participate in Reddit's gargantuan collection of "NSFW" subreddits, but you don't want them showing up in your main feed. It's also useful if you want to try on a different online identity or you want to post ideas or thoughts that run counter to Reddit's conventional wisdom, and you don't want the downvotes to affect your karma. (More on karma below.)Navigating Reddit's homepageIf you scroll down on Reddit's homepage, you'll see the center is made up of content from subreddits devoted to your interests and content from subreddits that are similar to your interests. Credit: Stephen Johnson - Reddit I said I liked Baldu's Gate 3, so Reddit suggested r/DnD, a Dungeons and Dragons subreddit. Note the "Join" button. Hit it and you're a member of that subreddit. If you're no longer interested in a subreddit you joined, no worries. You can unsubscribe from any subreddit from the homepage by going to "Communities" on the left pane, clicking on the subreddit you want to leave, then clicking on the "joined" button on the top right of the screen. How you curate your communities determines how you'll experience Reddit, but it's really easy to join and leave communities as you hone in on what's useful or enjoyable for you. As a general rule, larger, more broad communities like r/pics tend to have lower-brow content and users, where communities devoted to specific, smaller interests often provide the best Reddit experience. All subreddit URLs begin with a lowercase "r" followed by a slash, then the name of the subreddit. Each subreddit was created by a Reddit user and is moderated by Reddit users. Creators and mods of subreddits set up their own rules. Finding interesting communities on RedditIf you want a look at the general vibe of Reddit as a whole, at the top-left of the homepage, you can choose "Home" (a feed of only the subreddits you're subscribed to and Reddit's suggestions), "Popular," and "All." "Popular" and "All" are very similar. Both are designed for new users or people who aren't logged in. "Popular" consists of the most upvoted content across Reddit, but filters out some things, like political content or anything not safe for work. "All" filters out most NSFW content, but leaves most everything else. You can use these to choose more communities to follow.Another important landmark when you're looking for relevant subreddits is the search bar at the top of the page. Search for anything you might be interested in, and there's probably at least one subreddit already there for you. Credit: Stephen Johnson - Reddit All about upvotes and downvotesOn the bottom left corner of each piece of content on Reddit, whether it's something posted to the site or a comment on a post, you'll see an up arrow and a down arrow. This is where users indicate how they feel, or what they think about this content, and it determines the content's placement on subreddits and affects the posters karma. There has always been debate on Reddit about the meaning of votes. The original idea was that users should upvote content that they feel adds to the site or to the discussion, but not vote based on their opinion of the content. But users tend to use the up arrow as an "I agree" button instead. This means that interesting, informative content that doesn't fit in with the hive-mind's opinion will generally be down-voted and hidden in larger subreddits. If you click on the rectangle/text bubble that's second from the left on a piece of content, you'll be taken to a comment section devoted to that content, where you can express your thoughts, feelings, reactions, or whatever. Like posted content, your comment can be voted up or voted down (or ignored). It varies from subreddit to subreddit, but generally highly up-voted comments are pushed to the top of the comment section. Posting content to RedditOnly using Reddit to find and enjoy things other people post is totally acceptable, but if you want to engage further in the site, you're welcome to post your own content to a subreddit, whether it's a link to a website, a photo, a video, or a text-post. Here's how:Read the rules of the subreddit you want to post to. This is Reddiquette 101 (more on that below) and will save you time, as most subreddits have specific rules about the kinds of content they allow. Click the "create" button at the top right of reddit's homepage. Credit: Stephen Johnson - Reddit Click "select a community." This list is populated by the subreddits you've joined.Choose the content type.Add relevant tags (if the sub you're posting to has them).Fill in the description or commentary on the content you're posting.Now that you've entered the Reddit gladiator pit, it's time for your content to be judged, which brings us to karma. How does Reddit karma work?Reddit's karma is a number attached to a Reddit account that represents the account's reputation on the site. There are two kinds of karma: Content karma from upvotes and downvotes on content you post, and comment karma, based on the votes on your comments. There are various tricks and strategies for boosting karma, like subreddits and mods that have a "no karma" rule. If you participate on Reddit in a way people enjoy, your karma will rise organically. It's not a perfect system, but it's generally okay at determining which kinds of accounts Reddit likes. What is reddit karma used for? More than just an internet-person high score, karma is often used as a way to keep the riff-raff from stinking up the joint with useless posts and comments. Many subreddits only allow posts from Redditors with karma scores above a certain level. What is "Reddiquette"?Reddiquette is the catch-all description of the Reddit community's ever-shifting values. You can get fairly granular about expectations from users, but it's put simply: Reddit is made up of people, and people generally don't like jerks (unless they're very amusing) so treat other people well, don't troll, don't post identifying information, etc. In terms of posting content, make sure you read a community's rules before posting, check to make sure your content hasn't already been posted, post relevant content from primary sources, label content that NSFW as such, etc. It's pretty common sense, but if you want to dig in deeper, here's a link to Reddit's official word on Reddiquette.The deeper levels of RedditThe above information (and a little trial-and-error) are enough to get almost anyone going on Reddit, but the site goes way deeper than that. Reddit lets users start and moderate their own subreddits, claim "dead" subreddits as their own, follow other users, chat privately and send messages, become moderators in existing communities, access Reddit content outside of the website or app, and way, way too much more to get into, but I'll be posting a series of Reddit guides in the future that cover these and other topics, so watch this space. Post The community can share content by posting stories, links, images, and videos. Reddit is one of the most popular sites in the U.S. and the sixth-most-visited worldwide, beating out the likes of Facebook, Amazon, and Instagram. Increasingly, it's also experienced a huge jump in traffic through its increased visibility in Google Search. But what exactly is Reddit? It's a social network, but it's more like a collection of old-school forums than the follower-based platforms of other social spaces. It focuses on bringing people together around topics and interests. These "subreddits" allow people to share text, images, video, and links to outside sources, and discuss them in the comments below. Interested and want to learn more? Here's everything you need to know about Reddit. The jargon and design of Reddit Reddit is broken into more than a million communities known as "subreddits," each of which covers a different topic. The name of a subreddit begins with "r/," which is part of the URL that Reddit uses. For example, r/nba is a subreddit where people talk about the National Basketball Association, while r/boardgames is a subreddit for people to discuss board games. Those are straightforward subreddits, but they can get extremely niche, such as r/birdswitharms, a subreddit devoted to pictures of birds ... with arms. The homepage (or "front page") of Reddit shows you various posts that are currently trending on the site, pulled from a variety of the best subreddits. If you have an account, these will be a mixture of subreddits you have "joined" that registers your interest in the topic, popular topics and conversations on the site in general, and topics and posts from subreddits that the site thinks you'll like. That can be because they're similar to tother topics you've been viewing lately, based on your geographic location, or a mix of factors. You can sort these posts by using the drop-down menu under the horizontal display of popular posts. You have the option of Best, Hot, New, Top, or Rising if you're logged in. Or it will sort them by your chosen location(s) (instead of Best) along with Hot, New, Top, or Rising, if you're not logged in. Digital Trends There is a search bar near the top that you can use to find posts and subreddits related to a particular term, too. This can be good if you're trying to find a subreddit for one of your interests, or just want to see where people post about certain topics. Subreddits are managed by moderators ("mods," for short), volunteers who can edit the appearance of a particular subreddit, dictate what types of content are allowed in the sub, and even remove posts or content or ban users from the subreddit. Reddit as a whole is governed by the admins, employees of Reddit who have vast powers across the site, including the ability to strip moderators of their privileges, and even ban entire subreddits from the site. Next to a post, you'll likely see up and down arrows, as well as a number. Users click the arrows to upvote or downvote posts, increasing or decreasing their visibility, and the number reflects the current sum of upvotes and downvotes. Reddit users can also upvote and downvote other users' comments, and every account has a karma number tied to it, which indicates how much karma their comments have received in total. Karma doesn't get you hip Reddit swag or anything like that, but it does help to boost your standing in the Reddit community. Be proud of your karma! Like most online communities, Reddit has its own language. Redditors tend to talk in abbreviations such as OP, TIL, IAmA, and AMA. OP just refers to the "original poster" in a thread, while TIL means "today I learned" and is one of the most common abbreviations you'll see. Many posts are simple TIL observations and realizations. Both IAmA and AMA refer to what might very well be Reddit's most popular feature: The Ask Me Anything thread. In an AMA, a well-known person such as former President Barack Obama or Nick Offerman, or someone who's had a unique life experience (or a harrowing one, such as the woman who was mauled by a bear, fought it off, and drove four miles down a mountain with her face hanging off), submits themself to the inquisitive minds of Reddit. The resulting threads are some of the most insightful, humorous, and fascinating interviews you'll ever read. Hey, everyone: I'll be taking your questions online today. Ask yours here: -bo — Barack Obama (@BarackObama) August 29, 2012 Users can give awards to other users to recognize and highlight posts the giver really enjoyed. Giving an award costs Reddit Coins, which you can buy as a way of supporting the community. Another way to support the community is by purchasing Reddit Premium, the site's membership program. For \$6 a month, Premium users don't see ads and it gives you access to r/lounge, a super-secret subreddit where the brightest minds on Reddit assemble to engage in witty banter (or something), along with other benefits. Premium membership also comes with a regular supply of Coins to spend on Awards. You don't need to buy Reddit Premium to have fun on Reddit, but it's a way to support the site, get some perks, and be invested in the community. Is Reddit safe? Like all social networks, Reddit has its fair share of trolls and bad actors, and it has in the past been home to some truly toxic communities. Reddit has cleaned up some portions of this over the years, and today it doesn't have (many) subreddits that are downright illegal. Mods and admins also actively discourage brigading — large quantities of users invading other subreddits — trolling, personal attacks, and abuse. However, Reddit is also a site designed with adults in mind, so there are many subreddits that are not safe for work (NSFW) and maybe even morally questionable. If you don't want to do something like that, stick to the mainstream subreddits and don't sort comments by "Controversial." Just remember, Reddit is a group of people meeting on the internet, sharing stuff, and talking to one another. That's it. Act as you would if you were hanging out with old friends or new ones. Be mindful of your language and where you post (some subreddits are unfriendly to off-topic posts). Reddit has become a popular hub for many topics, both good, bad, and niche. And the community has also taken steps to make the site more inclusive by eliminating explicit content from its public homepage. How to sign up for Reddit If Reddit sounds like your kind of place, you can sign up by clicking on the orange Log In button in the top-right corner of the main Reddit page. Then, follow the on-screen prompts to create an account. Reddit doesn't limit you to just one account, either. You can set up multiple usernames and choose which one to log in with, depending on which subreddits you plan to participate in. Some subs encourage personally revealing posts, for example, and you may find it useful to have one persona there and another one in a sports subreddit. Some people create throwaway accounts when asking for relationship or professional advice, among other topics. Digital Trends After signing in, Reddit will offer you recommendations on finding popular boards that may match your interests. If you currently have a particular community in mind that you want to join, go ahead and enter its name in the search field. Alternatively, you can hunt for applicable words and investigate that way. When you encounter a subreddit you want to revisit, you have the opportunity to "join" it. Your homepage will show posts from your subscribed subreddits. You can look at all your subscriptions in the navigation bar's drop-down menu; this lets you switch between communities easily. You can also link comparable subreddits into customized feeds — for instance, you may organize r/nba, r/nbadiscussion, and other team subreddits into a basketball multireddit. If you want to do this, just head to the proper subreddit and click the Three dots symbol next to About community. From here, you'll see a menu pop up where you will need to select Add to Custom Feed. After this, follow the prompts to add the subreddit to an existing feed or make a new one. You can even decide to make your multireddit public so other Redditors can become a subscriber. You can join as many subreddits as you want, and the ample number of topics assures your continued interest. Maybe Reddit's most engaging feature is that you can be as incognito or otherwise socially low-key as you desire. With all these cool features, it's not surprising that it interests so many subscribers. Skip to main content Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. There are many specialized discussion boards on the internet, but if you are looking for a one-stop-shop then it's hard to look beyond Reddit. The site offers news, debate, answers, and entertainment across just about every subject you can imagine.Reddit claims to be "the front page to the Internet", and over the last decade and a half, it's proved to be just that. Its users seem to have the ability to detect trends and news before anyone else, and then comment on them, often with extraordinary wit or illuminating knowhow. If you're not familiar with the site, here's a guide to everything about Reddit, how best to enjoy it and how to participate.What's Reddit?Reddit is basically a large group of forums in which registered users can talk about almost anything you can imagine, from news, to pop culture, to technology, to comics, to film, to literature, to the weirdest things in the world, including some very NSFW (Not Safe For Work) stuff. You may like Those specialized forums are called "subreddits," which are referred to as r/"topic" (example: r/gadgets). There are more than 130,000 active subreddits. You can read and participate in all of them freely except private subreddits, which require an admission process. You can also subscribe to the subreddits, so their most popular posts appear on your personalized Reddit front page.The latest figure — from October 2021 — is 430 million active unique users each month, which makes it the No. 7 most-visited site in the United States and No. 19 in the world, according to Wikipedia. By the way, Reddit users call themselves "redditors."According to the latest subscriber figures, the top five most popular subreddits — excluding the No. 1 default r/announcements — are r/funny with 37.7 million subscribers, r/AskReddit (33.8 million), r/gaming (30.8 million), r/aww (29.5 million) and r/music (28.2 million). But with more than 138,000 active subreddits, the list doesn't stop there. There is a community dedicated to just about every single hobby, interest, fandom, and general aspect of daily life. From subreddit covering popular TV shows like r/DunderMifflin (1.8 million) to the more niche interests like r/pottery (71k)Some of our favorite mainstream ones are r/gadgets, with 18.7 million subscribers; r/todayilearned (26.2 million); r/movies (26 million); and r/soccer (3 million).(Image credit: Reddit)Other not-so-mainstream favorites are r/oddllysatisfying, which features videos and photos that are oddly satisfying; r/CrappyDesign, dedicated to the many crappy designs that surround us; and r/EarthPorn, which has stunning images of our Pale Blue Dot, not actual porn. And that's just the tip of the iceberg. The subreddits go through every hobby and topic imaginable all the way to the most extremely strange things like r/wolveswithwatermelons (which is exactly that, although it includes dogs, too), r/birdswitharms (people photostopping arms on birds), or r/thomasthedankengine (which is full of people remixing the Thomas the Tank Engine theme with hip-hop tracks)If you are registered, yes. If the subreddit of your dreams doesn't yet exist, you can make it yourself. You need to follow the community guidelines as subreddits have been removed in the past for being dedicated to illegal activities or used as a rallying place for hate groups. There's a search field at the top of any page on the site. Just enter any topic you want and you will likely find it. If you are looking for NSFW topics, you will need to be registered and tick the "include NSFW results" checkbox. Reddit is open to anyone to navigate and read freely. You can also register and become more involved.Registered users can make submissions to any of the public subreddits. They can also join the subreddits, an action that will affect how Reddit's front page will look for you (more on this later). They can also comment on other people's submissions by just clicking on the open comment field right under the submission. In the same way, you can reply to people's comments by clicking reply.And finally, registered users can upvote or downvote any of the submissions, which is the way that Reddit makes submissions surface to the front page.How does the front page work?Reddit has a front page in which certain submissions are featured, thanks to different algorithms. This front page has different tabs.If you are not registered, the default tab is "Hot," which is basically a view of the submissions with the highest scores over a period of time. The score is determined by subtracting the downvotes from the upvotes.(Image credit: Shutterstock)If you are registered, then the default tab is called "Best." It features the most-voted posts from all the subreddits but it takes into account other things, like the submissions in which you have spent time before or the subreddits you have joined. This is a personalized view that will also eliminate things that you have already clicked through the next time you load the front page. This is done to ensure that the Best page remains fresh. There are other tabs, like "Rising" — which features posts that are new and are getting upvotes quick — and "Controversial" — which uses an algorithm to determine which posts are the subject of conflicting opinions by looking at the fluctuation of the upvotes and downvotes.There are four basic submissions: link, image, video and text. All of the submissions require a title, which Reddit encourages to be interesting but devoid of hyperbole and self-promotion.Are there any Reddit rules?As a general rule, reddiquette dictates that you should be a civilized person and remember that there's always a human being on the other side of the screen. Of course, no spam or trolling is allowed. While self-promotion is permitted, it's only tolerated in moderation. Just be mindful about what you do, try to be respectful of others, and you will be fine.Yes, beyond the logical etiquette, each subreddit has its own rules that you should read and abide by when posting or commenting. Some subreddits — like r/pics — may only accept image submissions and no external links, for example. Others will require you to be more descriptive in your posts, like r/science. It's always a good idea to read a subreddits rules before you make a submission. What's a "flair"?Some subreddits will require you to apply a "flair" to your submission, which roughly identifies what it is about. Example: The subreddit r/gadgets has flairs like Phones, Desktop/Laptop, TV/Projectors, Music or Transportation, among others.Some subreddits even allow you to add a personal flair that will appear alongside your username. This can be used to show off your personality or interests. For example in r/fn/, you can set your flair to be your favorite team so whenever you submit everyone knows who you support. Do upvotes have any other effect, and what is karma?As people upvote or downvote your posts and comments, these get added to your "karma." The higher karma you have, the better regarded you may be by the community. However, Reddit karma cannot be redeemed and there are no prizes or rewards for amassing a certain amount of it. It's really just a score that shows how active you are on the website. Can you lose karma on Reddit?Anytime someone votes negatively to one of your post, you lose points on your global karma. But you shouldn't worry too much. The point of Reddit is not to accumulate karma points but to learn, have fun, waste time or add to the conversation in a constructive or funny way.Can I get banned from Reddit?(Image credit: Shutterstock)Yes, you can definitely get banned from Reddit if you are a spammer or attempt to use the platform to spread hate and negativity. It won't ban you from reading, but from participating. And once you are banned, you are done for good. Again, just be mindful and play according to the rules. If you follow the rules of each subreddit and are a friendly person, you have nothing to worry about. Yes, moderators can ban you for not following the rules. There are different kinds of moderators. Some are more strict than others, but any moderator will quickly ban you if you don't follow the rules on a regular basis. Being banned from a single subreddit only prevents you from posting on that particular forum, you can still browse even when banned. Plus, you can still submit to other subreddits on the website. Can I get unbanned?You can always contact the moderators and ask. If you tell them you didn't read the rules or you didn't know about something, they may reinstate you. But there are no rules for this. It's at the discretion of the moderators who are just other members of the community not paid workers. Is there any specific Reddit lingo?Yes, there is. Aside from the usual internet acronyms like As Far As I Know or In My Opinion, Reddit has a lot of specific acronyms and expressions. Here are some useful ones: AMA: Explain Like I'm 5 years old). If you have a question about a complex subject, use this to ask it. There's a whole subreddit for this, too.EDIT and ETA: Edit and Edited To Add are expressions added to comments when people edit them.TL;DR: Too Long; Didn't Read. This is used at the end of long text posts or comments to criticize an article or comment as being too long to read. It can also be used to provide a summary of the main point of the text in case people don't have time to read the entire thing. Can people see my activity in Reddit?People can see your posts and your comments on your user profile. They can't see your likes or your subscriptions. Users can also follow you.Are there any mobile apps for surfing Reddit?Yes. In fact, the experience is much better when using the apps on both smartphones and tablets. There are official apps for Android and iOS. If you want a different experience, you can try any of the third-party apps for iOS and Android.Anything else I should know?If you've read through everything above, then you should be ready to start surfing Reddit. Just jump in, start exploring, and get ready to spend hours going down the Reddit rabbit hole. It's one of the best and most interesting places on the internet. Connect with the right redditorsComplement organic activity with paid Reddit adsEssential tools for successUse these success stories from other brands to inspire and guide your Reddit ad strategy. Learn from businesses that have effectively connected with the Reddit community, adapting their approaches for authentic engagement and building trust.

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