



# How to Get Started on LinkedIn

Follow these simple steps to begin using LinkedIn for your professional networking purposes

**Step 1: Create a profile** DON'T STRESS. It can be minimal at first – include college classes, high school and college activities, summer jobs and internships if you've had them. Include a few details about your experiences that will help show people what you study and what interests you. You can begin using LinkedIn without a photo, but do add a photo when you are able. Please note that the picture used does not need to be professionally done, but one you are comfortable being viewed through professional networking. Career Services can take your photo to be used for your profile-stop in to see us.

Put in two email addresses. Use your @swarthmore.edu as your primary to be quickly approved in the *Swatties helping Swatties* group. You will be able to login with either email. At the primary address you'll get updates and notices from LinkedIn. That's where your networking emails will be forwarded.

**Step 2: Begin Exploring** Connect with people you know in real life. If you're nervous, begin by connecting with fellow Swatties, such as a classmate, campus group or team members, or study group partners. Also, think about students from other colleges with whom you've worked at internships and summer jobs and your high school friends. Remember these connections will reflect on you as an aspiring professional, so choose wisely.

Here are two ways to find people who can share first-hand information about their career field:

1. You can search by clicking on **My Network>alumni** (at the top of the page under the search bar). This will provide you with an interactive graph and allows you to adjust the search criteria based on your interests, such as *what they studied*, *what they do*, or *where they work*. You can then click on the profiles of the people who have careers which interest you. You will be able to click the 'connect' button with anyone who is a Swarthmore student or alum. When requesting to 'connect', be sure to write a message specifically to that person instead of the default generic message. If you get stopped trying to make connections, don't pay for a LinkedIn upgrade. Instead come to Career Services and we'll explore your LinkedIn networking options together.
2. By clicking on **Advanced** to the right of the search bar, you can filter people by school attended, keywords, employers (past and current), geographic location, industry and more. You can be as specific as you want to be, which allows you to be more targeted in your search. Again, when requesting to 'connect' write individual messages.

**Step 3: Join groups** – Groups can be a great way to connect with like-minded professionals. *Swatties helping Swatties Mentoring and Networking* can be your first group. It was created by

Career Services to connect students with alumni who are eager to talk with you about your career interests. Alums joining this group are essentially raising their hands and saying “Call me! Email me! I’d like to share information about my career with fellow Swatties.”

#### **Step 4: How to get “introduced”**

If you want to contact someone who isn’t in one of your groups nor connected to someone to whom you’re connected, DON’T pay money to upgrade to a premium account. Look to see on the bottom right of the screen if you have any other mutual connections who can introduce you. When you request an introduction via LinkedIn, be sure to add a personal message to your potential introducer. You may also call or email the mutual friend/connection to ask to be introduced. Also, you can Google the person to try to find an email address and attempt to reach out in a professional way other than through LinkedIn.

**Step 5: Have Fun!** As you have more time and get more comfortable using LinkedIn, join more groups such as the other Swarthmore affiliated groups (your academic interests, athletic teams, i20.) and groups outside the college which speak to your interests (social causes, your high school, national affiliations). Also, follow people and/or organizations which influence you, organizations where you like to get your news and organizations about which you’d like updates.

**Other Resources:** university.linkedin.com to find video tutorials, sample profiles and advice.

**Networking Safely:** See the Career Services [Networking Guide](#) and [website](#) (<http://www.swarthmore.edu/career-services/protecting-yourself-job-process>) for tips on safely conducting in-person networking meetings.