Using the network features

Follow and talk to anyone from any server.

Browsing content through public timelines

Posts within a public timeline

Posts within a public timeline

To allow you to discover potentially interesting content, Streamz provides a way to browse all public posts. Well, there is no global shared state between all servers, so there is no way to browse *all* public posts. When you browse the **federated timeline**, you see all public posts that the server you are on knows about. There are various ways your server may discover posts, but the bulk of them will be from people that other users on your server follow.

There is a way to filter the federated timeline to view only public posts created on your server: The **local timeline**. Mind that "local" here refers to the server, not to a geographical location.

Interacting with people's posts

An expanded view can be loaded by clicking a status in the timeline.

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You can perform quick actions on a post directly from the timeline, or you can click on the post to load an expanded view that shows extra information, such as a full timestamp, interaction counts, and threaded replies, if any. The following actions can be performed on a post:

- **Reply** to a post by clicking the arrow icon. Your toot will show up in the thread below the post you are replying to.
- **Boost** a post by clicking the cycled-arrow icon. The post will be reshared on your profile.

- **Favourite** a post by clicking the star icon. The post will be added to your favourites list, and a favourite notification will be delivered to its author.
- **Bookmark** a post by clicking the ribbon icon. The post will be privately added to your bookmarks list without generating a notification.
- Access a **menu** of additional options by clicking the ellipsis icon.
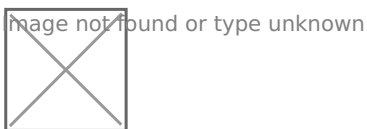
Notifications

Notifications column

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When other people interact with you or your posts, you will receive a notification depending on the type of the event. Your notifications column allows you to view all notifications in the same stream, or to filter for specific types of notifications:

- **Mentions:** received when someone has mentioned you in a post.
- **Favourites:** received when someone has favourited one of your posts.
- **Boosts:** received when someone has boosted one of your posts.
- **Polls:** Received when a poll that you have voted in or created has ended.
- **Follows:** Received when someone has followed your profile.

Following profiles

As long as you encounter a person within your app's user interface, e.g. the web interface on your home server, or your mobile app, you can just click "follow" and you won't notice a difference if that person is on your server or not.

However if you come across someone's public profile hosted on a different server, there's an obstacle: That server sees you as just another anonymous visitor. Not to worry! You can simply copy the URL of that profile, or of one of their posts, and then paste that URL into the search function.

If you are visiting a public page on another Mastodon site, see Using Mastodon outside of your site.

Search

The search function can be accessed from the sidebar.

Streamz's basic search allows logged-in users to find toots containing a specific hashtag, or to load a user or status directly if they know the URL or address. Searching for a term will show profiles whose username or display name contains that term, as well as hashtags that match or contain that term.

An example of a toot being loaded directly by its URL.

An example of accounts returned when searching for "cats".

An example of hashtags returned when searching for "cats".

The following operators are supported:

- **"exact phrases"** will try to find the term inside the quote marks. This allows looking only for direct matches, such as `"look at my cluckers"` to find posts explicitly telling you to look at someone's cluckers.
- **-exclude** will exclude the term prepended by a minus sign. This allows filtering out certain terms, such as `animals -cats` to find posts about animals without posts about cats.
- **+include** will include the term after the plus sign. This allows searching for multiple terms that must be included, such as `cat +dog` to find posts about both cats and dogs.

Direct conversations
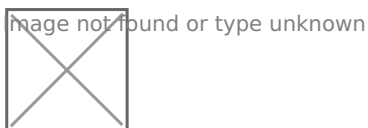
A list of conversations containing direct messages.

In Streamz, direct messages are simply toots that have the "direct" visibility selected. Visibility can be selected per-post, which allows changing the privacy level later in a thread. The direct messages column currently shows a list of all conversations containing a direct post. Clicking on a conversation will load the associated thread.

A direct message in a thread.

A direct message in a thread.

List timelines

Lists are subsets of your home timeline. You can create a list, give it a name, and add users that you follow to that list.

Opening a list will load that list's timeline. List timelines contain only posts by members of that list, as well as replies to you or to other members of the list.

A list timeline

A list timeline