

UK police learn how to follow crooks -- on Twitter

October 29 2010, By RAPHAEL G. SATTER , Associated Press

(AP) -- Trailing suspects is a staple of police work. Aspiring British detectives will soon be learning how to do it online.

Updated training for Britain's annual crop of 3,500 trainee detectives will include pointers on how to track criminals on micro-blogging site [Twitter](#) and mine [Facebook](#) pages for witnesses, a spokesman for the National Policing Improvement Agency said Friday.

"It's a way of tracking down criminals," the spokesman said. "Finding the sort of people they've contacted and the sort of groups they're a member of."

He spoke on condition of anonymity in line with official policy.

Facebook and Twitter are both enormously popular in Britain and online indiscretions regularly feature in accounts of how police and prosecutors secure convictions.

The new training, which will be available starting in January of next year, will also include information on how to gather clues from computers, cell phones and other [electronic devices](#).

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