

EFFECTIVE INTERNET RESEARCH

There's no doubt about it—internet research is challenging! How do you decide if something is real, trustworthy and applicable to your research? Asking the following questions when evaluating online sources can help ensure you're on the right track.



Where does the website come from?

Every website has an author. Look for those made by unbiased organizations you trust.

- Company (.com)
- Country-Specific (.uk or .ca)
- Educational (.edu)
- Government (.gov)
- Nonprofit Organizations (.org)



How does the website look?

Examine websites with a critical eye and use your best judgment. Websites that look amateurish or old fashioned probably are.

- Is it professional-looking?
- Are there any spelling or grammatical errors?
- Is the information up to date?
- Is the text clear and easy to understand?
- Is the site easy to navigate?
- Are the graphics good quality?



Is the website useful to your research?

Useful websites should include sources that speak about or offer information on the following aspects of your research:

- The research topic
- The time period you're researching
- The place you're researching
- The type(s) of people you're researching
- The question(s) you're trying to answer
- The evidence you need to support your research



What is the purpose of the website?

Think about why the website was made and what the author is trying to achieve by making it.

- To communicate personal opinions, ideas or passions
- To offer information about a company or organization
- To educate or share research
- To entertain
- To advertise or sell something
- To share social media
- To publish news



Does the website offer credible information?

Anyone can make a website, and unfortunately there is no oversight to guarantee what's being published online is true. Look for the following when deciding if a website offers credible information or not:

- Evidence
- Citations
- Quotes from known experts
- Information that can be verified from other sources (online or print)