

## How to Evaluate Information

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Librarians suggest that you take a critical look at information that you decide to believe or use, especially Internet sources. The word “information” includes the good and the bad: Reputable information, bad information, dated information, misinformation, and propaganda. How can you distinguish? Rather than assuming something is trustworthy, look at it closely and ask yourself the following questions:

### Authority

- Is it in a reputable research database or book?
- If found by search engine, does the domain name or URL tell you anything? (.gov, .edu, .org, .com, etc.)
- Can you find the author’s name and learn about his or her credentials?
- What more can you learn about the author or the affiliated institution? Look for an author statement or “About Us.”
- Is the information verified by way of a bibliography or footnotes?

### Comprehensiveness

- What is the scope of the information, brief or in-depth?
- Is it written for a popular audience, or is it more technical and scholarly?

### Purpose

- Is it written to inform, explain, or persuade?
- Can you discover a bias to the perspective of the author?
- Does it correlate to information and facts you found in other sources?

### Accuracy

- How long ago was it created or revised?
- Is it up-to-date?

### *It’s your call!*

- Use this sheet to decide if a particular source credible. Yes, or No, not really!