



# CHECK YOURSELF!

A checklist on how to recognize real vs. fake information online

Tired of not knowing what is real and what is fake online?  
Here are some tips on how to tell the difference:

- Check the reputation of the source:** Who is telling you this information? A good rule of thumb is to look for well-known news organizations, colleges and universities, government agencies, and trustworthy websites.
- Check the author's credentials:** These list a person's background and what expertise they may have on the subject. Think twice about the accuracy of the information if the bio is empty, the author isn't listed, or you can't tell if the person is actually an expert.
- Check other sources:** Compare the information you find against other trustworthy sources to make sure it's real. If multiple reliable places are saying the same thing, it's more likely to be true. Be skeptical of information based on one person's experience instead of facts.
- Check that you're getting the whole story:** Look for signs of bias, like arguments that don't take the other side into account, language that would cause an argument at family dinner, or political agendas. If it seems like clickbait, it's probably clickbait.
- Check the date:** Information may become outdated or change over time. Experts are discovering new things constantly and the source you're looking at could have been written before new information came to light.

Learn more about how to teach yourself and those around you to spot fake information at [www.InformationLiteracy.gov](http://www.InformationLiteracy.gov).

Sources:

<https://www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources/lessons/evaluating-online-sources>  
<https://guides.lib.uw.edu/research/faq/reliable>