

Website Evaluation Checklist: For more, go to <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Evaluate.html>

Do	Determine credibility/lack of credibility	Example
Identify the Purpose of the Page	<i>May not be obvious. May be more than one purpose.</i>	
What's it trying to do? Sell something? Entertain? Persuade? Inform? Some pages combine purposes (effective!)	There's bias is the language like "weasel words" Not all points of view are represented fairly No credible sources cited to back up their info	Sometimes a site will look or try to look like it is pure information even though it is designed to push someone's point of view. Ask yourself if the author/publisher will benefit from convincing you.
Look at the URL	<i>Personal pages don't have editors. Anyone can make one. No one checks the facts so you must think critically.</i>	
Is it somebody's personal page?	Personal name, tilde mark ~, users From Geocities, Weebly, Angelfire, Homestead, etc.	http://pubweb.northwestern.edu/~abutz/index.html http://hubpages.com/profile/ethan2434 http://www.cobalt.net/users/davidson
Look at the country code	.us for USA, .ca for Canada,	These are not always strictly controlled. Is it appropriate?
Look at the end of the url (domain)	You can get an <i>idea</i> if the site is educational, nonprofit, commercial, government, etc. Note: If you go to a service like godaddy.com, you can see that some of these are not absolute since anyone can register them for any purpose.	.com /.biz are commercial sites, trying to sell something, anyone can get .org should be non-profit but anyone can get .net, anyone can get .edu is a university/college, must qualify to get .mil is U.S. military, must qualify to get .gov is an elected government entity, must qualify to get
Do you recognize the "Publisher"?	Sites you've heard of, with wide readership, from companies who are acknowledged experts, are more likely accurate	
Identify who's responsible for the information. Have you heard of this person or company before?	Is this person or company qualified to comment or present information? How do you know?	Arthur Butz was a Northwestern professor. BUT...he was an engineering professor, not a historian. NOT qualified to comment on the holocaust. Good web sites will freely provide information about who the authors are, who they represent, and how to contact them. A Whois? lookup tool like http://www.networksolutions.com/whois/index.jsp can give you some information about who owns the site.
Could this person/company be biased?	Do they have something to gain? Does it sound like a rant or an opinion?	The chairman of British Petroleum is not an unbiased source of information about the recent oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.
How is this site connected to others?	<i>Where does this sit fit in the internet? Is it listed as a hoax, a hate site, or do others challenge its credibility?</i>	
Who links to this site? Use the Altavista link search term to find out. Google the author and/or the title Use http://www.alexacom.com	Who links to this cite? How credible are they? What do people have to say about it? About the author?	Link:www.hitler.org (no space between colon and www) If you don't get results, try truncating (shortening) the URL. Use http://pubweb.northwestern.edu/~abutz/ instead of http://pubweb.northwestern.edu/~abutz/index.html , for example.
Is the Information Up to date?		
When was the last update?	Is it current enough for what you need?	Respectable, well-designed web sites have "last updated" dates. Not all older information is bad. You must consider your topic.
Could it be a fake, a spoof, or a parody?	Unscrupulous people can create spoofed urls. Sites like http://zapatopi.net/treeoctopus/ are very realistic fakes. The White House website has been parodied many times.	Phishing scams lure you to click on a link which appears to be real to take you to a site which appears to be real. They try to mislead you and steal your personal information. Banks, Facebook, and other agencies have been spoofed. Current White House spoof: http://whitehouse.gov1.info/ . Look at the URL!

