

Easy Steps to Evaluate Web Sites

To evaluate whether a site is reliable (meaning you can trust it) or credible (meaning you can believe what it says), think of yourself as a detective. Say you're leading an investigation and various Web sites are your witnesses. You want to gather information from these Web sites, but how can you tell if they are reliable witnesses? In other words, how can you tell if they will give you accurate information that you can trust?

Start by asking these questions:

- Who is the author of the Web site? Why should I listen to this person?
- Who runs the site? Why did they create this site? (Is it to sell you something? Is it from the government? Was the site created for entertainment?)
- When was the information first published? Is it up-to-date?

Here are a few good places find the answers to these questions:

- The “About Us” or “Our History” page of a Web site often has good information about the author, date of publication and where the content is coming from.
- Check for a “Last Updated” date on the Web site find out how recent the information is.
- If a page is copyrighted, scroll to the bottom to find the year of publication so you can make sure that the material is up to date.



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