



## Evaluate Information Checklist

Whether you are looking at the Internet, books, or scholarly journals in databases, complete this checklist to ensure your information needs are met:

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### Who Wrote It?

The author of the information (whether a person or organization) should have knowledge about the topic and/or expertise in analyzing and presenting information.

#### Authority

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Expertise: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact info: \_\_\_\_\_

Domain (.com .gov .org .edu): \_\_\_\_\_

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### Why Did They Write It?

There could be many reasons why a piece of information was created: to persuade, to inform you, to sell you something, etc.

Ask yourself: What does the author want me to do with this information?

#### Purpose

To inform

To persuade

To sell something

To entertain

Something else \_\_\_\_\_

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### Whom Was it Written For?

The intended audience impacts the quality, and range of what is presented. The more general the audience, the more general the information.

The reverse is also true: the more specific the audience (e.g. researchers) the more the information will be focused and detailed.

#### Audience

Anyone

Researchers or Professionals

Members of a trade or industry  
(e.g. educators)



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### How Old/New Is It?

Some topics are more time-sensitive than others. For example, information about the latest computer technology is more time sensitive than information about the first moon landing in 1969.

#### Currency

- Currency is important for this topic
- Currency does not matter
- The information is current
- The information is not current

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### Is It Accurate?

Some tip-offs to accuracy include the stated expertise of the author, whether the article cites the sources used, where the article was posted, and the care taken in presenting the information (e.g. no typos).

#### Accuracy

- Expertise of author is stated
- Sources are cited
- Text is free of grammatical errors

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### What Kind Of Information Do You Need?

Depending on your research project, specific information sources may be more appropriate than others.

For example, if you are writing an article about food blogging in the United States, blogs may be one type of information source you could use. If you are exploring a possible link between pesticides and cancer, scholarly journals and books may be more appropriate.

#### Relevance

- Scholarly sources (journal articles etc.) are appropriate
- Non-scholarly sources (magazines, blogs, websites) are appropriate
- A combination of scholarly and non-scholarly sources is ideal