

Search engine results are selected by computer software, not by human experts. Use the following check list to carefully evaluate what you find.

Checklist for Evaluating Internet Resources

Authority:	Yes	No
Is there an author of the web site, as opposed to a webmaster?		
Is an email address or phone number provided for the author?		
Has the author stated his/her credentials? <i>Hint: Look up the author in a biographical reference source.</i>		
Is there a sponsor of the page that indicates the purpose and scope of the organization? <i>Hint: If you cannot tell if the site is sponsored by an organization, erase the address from the right down to the domain name to display the home page of the organization.</i>		
Is the purpose or goal of the resource clearly stated? <i>Hint: Look for links that say "About Us" "Philosophy" or "Mission."</i>		
Does the author provide references/bibliographies to support the facts or opinions expressed?		
Currency:		
Is the information current? <i>Hint: Have new facts superseded the information presented?</i>		
Has the page been updated or modified recently?		
Are the links on the site up to date and working?		
Accuracy:		
Does the page contain correct spelling and grammar? <i>Hint: Spelling and grammatical errors point to lack of quality control.</i>		
Can the information presented be verified with other reliable sources? <i>Hint: Verify questionable facts, statistics, etc. with a known reputable source. Don't depend on one source for all of your information, especially if you are not familiar with the topic.</i>		
Objectivity:		
Does the author use profanity or inflammatory words? Are there scare tactics, testimonials or overgeneralizations used on the site?		
Is the content biased or slanted? Does the author present both sides of an issue? <i>Hint: If the site deals with a controversial topic, look for an identification of the author's bias such as affiliation with an organization known for a particular point of view.</i>		
Is there a commercial or organizational interest associated with the site? <i>Hint: Organizations with a particular mission (e.g., environmental organizations) may publish only information that supports their point of view. Businesses may publish positive reviews of their own products. Personal websites may reflect strong political, religious, or social opinions of that individual.</i>		