

Fact or Fiction?

Don't be duped by misinformation on the internet!
Use Freddie's 10 tips to "ferret" out fake news.



- 1 Read beyond the headline.** What's the whole story? Outrageous headlines, called "clickbait," are designed to grab your attention. Clicking them may lead to questionable content, such as ads disguised as news.
- 2 Consider the source.** What is the purpose of the website? Is it objective, impartial, unbiased? Read the "About Us" section to learn about its mission. Look for contact information. Pay attention to the URL; be wary of websites with unusual domains such as .com.co. Not sure? Check FactCheck.org, PolitFact or Snopes.
- 3 Check the author(s).** Are they real? What are their credentials? What qualifies them as experts on the subject they are writing about?
- 4 Check the date.** When was the information published? Has it been revised or updated? Some websites repost old news stories, but that doesn't make them relevant to current events.
- 5 Check the links.** Are they working? Do they take you to other credible websites? Don't trust an article or website with a lot of broken links.

- 6 **Check the comments.** Clickbait stories generate a lot of comments, especially on social media, and many call out the article for being fake or misleading.
- 7 **Evaluate supporting quotes.** Who or what is being quoted? Are they real? Are they credible? Does the information they've given reinforce the story's claims?
- 8 **Ask yourself: "Is this a joke?"** Writers often use satire to expose and criticize foolishness and corruption of an individual or a society. Satirical articles are not reliable sources for research.
- 9 **Ask yourself: "Are my own beliefs affecting my judgment?"** Confirmation bias leads people to accept information that confirms their beliefs and ignore information that doesn't. Seek contrasting viewpoints to develop a more well-rounded understanding of the issue.
- 10 **Conduct a reverse image search.** A photo should accurately reflect what the article is about. To be sure, conduct a reverse image search on Google. Visit images.google.com. On your computer, click the image you want to search for. While holding down the mouse, drag the image into the search box. If the same image appears in a lot of stories about many different topics, it's likely not an image of what the article claimed it to be.



When in doubt, use library databases.

They contain the reliable information you need to complete research quickly and accurately.

Need help? Ask a librarian.

