Evaluating Websites in 5 Easy Steps

How do you know if a website is authoritative and good enough to use in your research? Follow these simple steps.

**Accuracy**
Is the information on the website correct?
- Is the source a trusted and credible source of information on the topic?
- Can the information be verified elsewhere?

**Authority**
Who sponsors the website?
- Is the author accredited or endorsed by a reputable organization?
- Is there helpful contact information?

**Currency**
When was the information produced or last updated?
- Is there a copyright or publication date?
- Is any of the information out of date?

**Purpose**
Is the information objective and unbiased or is it intended to persuade?
- Does the site link only to similar points of view?
- Does the site provide a comprehensive scope of thought and theory on the subject?

**Commercialization**
Is this a sponsored website that is trying to sell something?
- Are there any fees involved in using the information?
- Do you have to submit personal information?

Remember to always check with your instructor to verify if websites are permitted before using the Internet to conduct your research.
More Research Tools

Boolean Operators help you to manipulate your search by broadening or narrowing the results. Combine key terms with AND, OR, NOT and NEAR to refine your search plan and uncover different resources.

**Boolean or Logical Operators**

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<tr>
<th>Operator</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Effect</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AND</strong></td>
<td>Focuses your search for results that mention both cats and dogs. The more words you entered connected by AND, the fewer documents you get.</td>
<td>dogs AND cats</td>
<td>narrowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OR</strong></td>
<td>Searches for all possible combinations of one or both. Results mentioning 1) cats and dogs, 2) only dogs and 3) only cats. The more words you entered connected by OR, the more documents you get.</td>
<td>dogs OR cats</td>
<td>broadening</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NOT</strong></td>
<td>Eliminates unwanted results. Finds results that mention dogs but not cats. By using NOT, you will be excluding documents.</td>
<td>dogs NOT cats</td>
<td>narrowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEAR</strong></td>
<td>Searches results for instances terms are close to each other, within 16 words in the same document, reducing the number of results.</td>
<td>dogs NEAR cats</td>
<td>narrowing</td>
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For assistance, please contact the library reference desk.

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<td>(609) 894-9311 Ext. 1306</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mount Laurel Campus</td>
<td>(856) 222-9311 Ext. 2021</td>
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