

Evaluating Websites requires two actions:

- be suspicious
- think critically about every page you find

1. LOOK AT THE URL (WEB ADDRESS) FOR CLUES ABOUT AUTHORSHIP:

a company	<input type="checkbox"/> (.com)
an academic institution	<input type="checkbox"/> (.edu)
a U.S. Government agency	<input type="checkbox"/> (.gov)
a U.S. military site	<input type="checkbox"/> (.mil)
a personal Web page	<input type="checkbox"/> (~/name, %, users, members, people)
Personal page or site?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I couldn't tell.

2. SCAN THE PERIMETER OF THE PAGE, LOOKING FOR ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS:

Who wrote the page?	Name:	<input type="checkbox"/> I couldn't tell
Does the author have credentials?	Evidence:	<input type="checkbox"/> I couldn't tell
Is it published by a logical entity? Hint: Use whois.net or register.com	Owner:	

3. LOOK FOR THESE INDICATORS OF QUALITY:

<input type="checkbox"/> Arguments are well supported.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete (not "under construction").		
<input type="checkbox"/> Links to more resources.	Do the links work?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Balanced, objective or factual information.		

4. WHY WAS THE PAGE PUT ON THE WEB?

<input type="checkbox"/> Inform with facts or data	<input type="checkbox"/> Sell
<input type="checkbox"/> Explain	<input type="checkbox"/> Share or disclose
<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

5. WHAT DO OTHERS SAY?

Who links to the site? Hint: use Google advanced search	Many or few? High or low opinions of site?
Search for the author's name online.	High or low opinions of author?

6. IS CURRENCY IMPORTANT TO THE TYPE OF INFORMATION FOUND ON THIS WEB SITE?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Please explain:
<input type="checkbox"/> No	Please explain:
<input type="checkbox"/> Date last updated:	<input type="checkbox"/> I couldn't tell.

BOTTOM LINE: Is the website as good as (or better than) what you could find via library resources?
Adapted from Joe Barker, The Teaching Library, University of California, Berkeley 2002