

How to Detect Fake News

In the age of growing fake news, it is important to have a certain literacy competence referred to as *critical digital media literacy*. The main rule is to be curious and to run checks.

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Use sites that are dedicated to **exposing fake** or misleading news: [Google Fact Check Tools](#) | [Full Facts](#) | [FactCheckNI](#) | [Africa Check](#)

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Checkout the channels/sources/links to be sure that the web address or **domain name is not a cloned copy** of the original network or news organisation. Copy and paste the URL into a search engine and see if it is a real news source.

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Refer to the **'About'** area of the website to find out more about the source.

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Check several serious/mainstream news sources to ascertain if similar information is being aired.

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Read more than just the headline, because headlines are often 'clickbait' that exaggerate or have little relation to the actual content.

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Identify the author of the article. Fake news articles often do not include author names. If included, search the author's name online to see if she/he is well known and respected.

Follow the links; check if a link has other hyperlinks; and check to verify the claim(s) being made.

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If still in doubt, **perform reverse searches** on sources or images, to see whether the images have been altered or mischaracterised.

Check the date, to confirm that an old, previously debunked story has not been repackaged for fresh consumption; if a video, check for the timestamp to verify the original date of release.

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Be on the lookout for **inflammatory and foul language** with exaggerations.

Check your own biases: avoid the easy confirmation bias of believing an incredulous story because it fits your own ideological perspective .

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Assess the quality of the content. Fake news can be fraught with bad grammar and punctuation making it easy to uncover the news as fake.

Resist the bug of the breaking-news-breaker. Take the news item through a couple and/or combination of the highlighted checks before sharing the news report or documentary.

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