

# WHAT IS AND ISN'T A RELIABLE SITE?

A reliable site:

- It is a site that has reputable sources and well researched information.

What Isn't A Reliable Site:

- Scam sites will typically ask you to provide sensitive info like your **Social Security Number, banking info, and other sensitive data.**

- Some scams use similar URLs:  
[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (real)

Vs

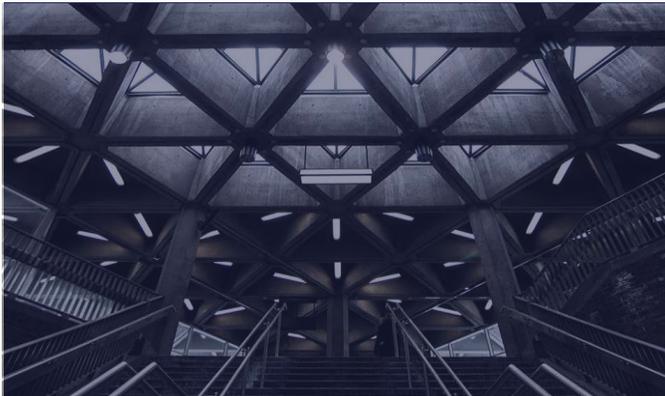
[www.amazon.com.accountcheck.com](http://www.amazon.com.accountcheck.com) (fake)

- There are fake news websites that have typos someone can make while typing in the name such as:  
[www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)

Vs

[www.washingtonpoost.com](http://www.washingtonpoost.com) (fake)

- Heavily biased and fake news websites will often attempt to push an extreme opinion forward.



# “GOOD” INFO VS “BAD” INFO

Good information comes from a reliable and credible source

- Examples:
  - A scholarly journal, where it was published by a reliable source
  - Looking at the credentials of the website and the author.

Bad information comes from an unreliable source. This could mean it was proven to have been tampered with or made as a joke.

- Example:
  - A satire page like *The Onion*, which is full of fake news

Additionally, sources with a URL ending in “html” or sometimes even “.com” can often be a hint of unreliability.

# HELPFUL TIPS FOR FINDING SOURCES

Places to go if you want to find scholarly sources/articles:

- Google Scholar
- Questia
- J-Store
- ebsco.com

(some of these may require a membership)

Sites to find reputable Primary sources:

- National archives
- DocsTeach
- Spartacus Educational
- Fordham University
- The Avalon Project

Websites to help make citations and bibliographies:

- Easybib
- Citation Machine
- Bibme
- Mybib

Free resources:

- Libraries
- Newspapers (be careful of bias, look for newspapers seeking to report unbiased truth).
- Proven accurate political polls from reliable and accredited sources.

## THINGS TO AVOID

### Online encyclopedias:

Anyone can edit online encyclopedias like Wikipedia, so they are not good sources. However, they can be good for finding sources

### Fake News:

Always do research on news if it seems extreme or comes from dubious sources. Make sure to visit reliable websites and check your source to make sure you don't fall prey to scams of fake news or theft.

### Avoid Spreading Fake News:

- Check source.
- Read the entire article first.
- Look at the design, logo, and URL.
  - Sometimes fake news companies try to copy real ones to lure readers in.
- Check for sloppy writing and poor grammar.
- Check for lack of quotes or citations.

## BEWARE OF...

### Scams:

Scams come in multiple forms, but all scammers will ask for personal information.

- Research who is contacting you.
  - Scam artists are unlikely to have credentials.
- You can report them online, usually ceasing their nefarious activities.

### Google:

Google search engines use your online history and key words to give you results based on what they think you want to see, but it might not be factual.

- Tip: instead of searching "Is coughing a symptom of pneumonia?" you could search "Symptoms of pneumonia" and read a list.

### Works Cited

Smith, Samantha. "The Quick Guide to Spotting Fake News." *Freedom Forum Institute*, [www.freedomforuminstitute.org/first-amendment-center/primers/fake-news-primer/](http://www.freedomforuminstitute.org/first-amendment-center/primers/fake-news-primer/). Accessed 14 Nov. 2019.

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