

Tips for Evaluating Online Resources

Adapted from: <http://help.library.ubc.ca/evaluating-and-citing-sources/evaluating-information-sources/>

Use the following criteria to evaluate web sources before using them as references

Authority

- Author/Organization is identifiable, i.e. biographical information about the author or institutional affiliation and address are offered.
- Sponsor/location of the site (identified by URL or web address) is appropriate to the website's material, i.e., .edu for educational or research material.
- Contact information for the author or producer is included in the document.
- Mail-to link is offered for submission of questions or comments.

Accuracy

- Document includes a bibliography.
- Author alludes to or displays knowledge of related sources, with proper attribution.
- Author provides both sides of the argument with no evidence of bias.

Scope

- Document includes a list of additional print and electronic sources.
- Links included appear relevant and appropriate to the site.

Currency

- Document includes a publication date or "last updated" date that is current.
- Document includes a date of copyright/publication.

Purpose

- Intended audience is easily identifiable.
- Intent of information (to inform, teach, sell, persuade, entertain or enlighten) is clearly stated or implied.

Usability

- Site is laid out clearly and logically with well-organized subsections.
- Site is easy to navigate, including clearly labeled *Back*, *Home*, *Go To Top* icons/links and internal indexing links on lengthy pages.
- Site loads quickly and is readily accessible.
- Graphics and art serve a function.
- All links to remote sites work.
- Writing style is appropriate for the intended audience.
- Text follows basic rules of grammar, spelling and literary composition.