Information Source Evaluation Tips

Evaluate everything you find as you’re searching.

Remember not everything you find online is reliable. And, depending on your topic, you may need your information more current. Think about the types of resources you need and evaluate each one as you’re searching. With practice, this step becomes second nature!

Use an evaluation checklist.

Use the Currency, Relevance, Authority, Accuracy, and Purpose (CRAAP) evaluation checklist or another evaluation tool when selecting websites. These evaluation tools will help you identify the best possible resources for your assignment.

Evaluate journal articles critically.

Just because they are published in academic journals, does not mean they shouldn’t be evaluated for validity. Take a look at the article sections, and evaluate information shared by the authors critically. If a claim made in a journal article seems at odds with consensus, try to find other articles that back up or dispute the claims made. For example, one article may be published about the benefits of an alternative health method. However, consensus from various academic journals may dispute this claim and the first article can be ignored.

Consider content in open access journals.

Some open access journals are more reliable than others. Whenever using this type of information source, try to find out as much as possible about the journal itself, and its article selection process.

Source: College Libraries Ontario. (2022). *Evaluate Your Resources.* <https://tlp-lpa.ca/research/evaluate-for-quality>