

CREDIBLE SOURCE GUIDE

The internet is such an extensive source of information that it can be challenging to find credible information. A credible source is one that is balanced and is written with factual evidence. Credible sources can vary with the audience, topic, and discipline. To determine if a source can be trusted, consider the following characteristic of a credible source:

Author	Information that includes an author or additional contact information can be a good indicator of credible work. An author who is willing to identify him/herself as the writer validates this site or work. The author's credibility can also be verified through searches for their background as well as for additional articles by the author.
Date	The date of research information shows whether the information is recent. The validity of older information can be confirmed by considering whether more recent information supports it.
Sources	The information found on websites or articles should have citations, i.e., list sources of the information included in the article.
Domain	Many domains (ex: .com, .org, and .net) can be purchased and used by any person or group. The domain .edu is used by higher education schools, colleges and universities; the .gov domain is reserved for government websites. Information found on the .edu and .gov domains usually host credible information, but sometimes students are given a .edu address for their personal use by universities — be careful when citing). The .org domain is usually used by non-profit organizations that may host articles or information that supports a specific perspective and is not solely educational information.
Site Design	Often, a well-designed site can indicate reliable information (however, this is very subjective). A well-designed site or article helps make information more easily accessible.
Writing Style	Poor spelling and grammar indicate that the site or article may not be credible. Credible sites carefully review writing style and grammar to ensure that information is clear, concise, and accessible to its audience.

There are always exceptions to any rule; sometimes there are credible sites and articles that don't conform to these six categories. If you are unsure that the site you are using is credible, crosscheck the information with other sources that are known to be credible, such as an encyclopedia or another reliable source about the subject.

Adapted from <https://uknowit.uwgb.edu/page.php?id=30276>