

Surfing The Net

Always begin your research with library resources such as databases and books. If you decide to surf the Internet for possible resources, remember that the Internet contains good and bad information. Ask yourself the following questions when deciding whether to cite a Website for a class:

AUTHORITY: *Anyone can publish anything!*

- Is there an author?
- Is the author qualified or an expert?
- Who sponsors the site?
- Is the sponsor reputable?

ACCURACY: *Internet resources rarely have editors.*

- Is the information error free?
- Is the information reliable?
- Is an editor or someone who verifies information listed on the site?

CURRENCY: *Just because it is from the Internet does not mean it is current.*

- Is there a date on the site?
- Does it say when it was last updated?
- Are there links to other sites and are the links current or have they expired?

OBJECTIVITY: *Bias or Soapbox?*

- Is the information neutral?
- Is the site designed to sway opinion?
- Does the page contain advertising?
- Is the site being used to promote someone's opinion?

COVERAGE: *Internet sites are often not as comprehensive as databases or books.*

- What topics are covered?
- Does this page offer information that is not found in library resources?
- How in-depth is the material? (elementary, high school or college level)

URL: Remember to check the URL as an indicator of credibility.

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| .gov = government | .com = commercial business |
| .edu = education | .net = network organizations |
| .org = organizations (nonprofit) | |

