

# Five criteria for evaluating Web pages

Basic Evaluation Criteria	What the Criteria Means
<p><b>1. Accuracy of Web Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who wrote the page? Can you contact him/her?</li> <li>What is the purpose of the document and why was it produced?</li> <li>Is this person qualified to write this document?</li> <li>Have you checked our <a href="#">library</a> databases, googled the author, or used a <a href="#">Who is</a> search to determine who owns the domain name?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accuracy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site author is accessible.</li> <li>The page supports the truth of its information (quoted sources, bibliography).</li> <li>There aren't any obvious grammar or spelling errors.</li> <li>You can verify the information from other sources (print, as well as online).</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Authority of Web Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who published the document and is it separate from the "Webmaster"?</li> <li>Where is the document published (the domain) and who owns the domain?</li> <li>Does the publisher list his/her qualifications, or can they be verified?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Authority</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The author is well established in his or her field &amp; the author's credentials are listed on the site..</li> <li>The author's credentials can be verified and they are current</li> <li>The author provides an e-mail or a contact address/phone number.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Objectivity of Web Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the site reflect a particular bias or viewpoint? What opinions (if any) are expressed?</li> <li>What goals/objectives does this page meet?</li> <li>How detailed is the information?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Objectivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You don't see any obvious advertising .</li> <li>You don't sense "hidden" advertising.</li> <li>You are not asked to purchase something or donate money to a cause.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Currency of Web Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When was it first published?</li> <li>When was it updated?</li> <li>How up-to-date are the links (if any)?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Currency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The information on the page is outdated.</li> <li>Generally all the links are accessible. .</li> <li>The links are current.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Coverage of Web Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do links complement the page's theme?</li> <li>Are images overwhelming or balanced?</li> <li>Is information cited correctly</li> <li>Is the document easy to navigate? Can you easily get back to the previous page?</li> <li>Is it easy to get back to the home page?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Coverage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You don't need special software to view the information.</li> <li>You don't need to pay money for information.</li> <li>You have an option for text only or for a suggested browser.</li> </ul>

## Putting it all together

- **Accuracy.** If your page lists the author and institution that published the page and provides a way of contacting him/her, **then** . . .
- **Authority.** If your page lists the author credentials and its domain is preferred (.edu, .gov, .org, or .net), **then** . . .
- **Objectivity.** If your page provides accurate information with limited advertising and it is objective in presenting the information, **then** . . .
- **Currency.** If your page is current and updated regularly (as stated on the page) and the links (if any) are also up-to-date, **then** . . .
- **Coverage.** If you can view the information properly—not limited to fees, browser technology, or software requirement, **then** . . .

**you may have a higher quality Web page that could be of value to your research!**

Also see

[ABC's of Web Site Evaluation](#) by Kathy Schrock

Adapted from: Cornell University Library