

Five criteria for evaluating Web pages

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 • The information on the page is outdated.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

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