

Evaluating a Web Site for Research Rubric

Directions: Use this rubric to determine if an Internet site is suitable for research.

You do *not* need to use this rubric for sources that are provided through our *subscription* databases.

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Check the author's credentials and affiliation. Is the author an expert in the field?	The author is named but is obviously a student. Spelling and other errors indicate that the author is not an expert.	The author is unnamed and/or no credentials are given.	The author is named but credentials and contact information is incomplete.	The author's credentials are given and indicate that he/she is an expert in the field. The author provides an email address and/or contact information.
Does the resource have a reputable organization behind it? (If you can't tell right away, strip the URL from the right side until you get to a home page.)	The page is hosted by an individual. (The home page is a personal page hosted by an Internet service provider such as AOL, Yahoo, or Juno.)	Any of these: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The home page is a K-12 site • The home page is a student's folder on a .edu site. • The home page is an unknown .com or .org 	The home page is sponsored by a known business, professional association, organization, museum, or university.	A United States government department or agency is the home page.
Are the site's sources of information stated? Are photos clearly labeled and sources cited?	No list of sources or works cited is given.	There is a general statement about the source of the information, but no specific works cited list.	There is a works cited list and/or a bibliography for further information.	There is a works cited list and/or a bibliography for further information. Photos are labeled and cited.
How current is the site?	There is no indication of when the site was created or revised.	The date given for the site's creation is over 3 years old and there is no date of revision or update.	The site has been created or updated within the last 3 years.	The site has been created or updated within the last 6 months. If there is a bibliography, the sources that are referenced are current.
What is the domain in the URL?	The domain is .com or .edu but it is clearly the work of students or individuals without authority.	The domain is .com and there are a lot of pop up menus and items for sale or the domain is .org and the organization behind the site is unrecognized.	The domain is .edu, .com, or .org and has been reviewed by a reputable subject directory such as The Internet Public Library, Dewey Browse, Yahoo.com subject directory, Ask Jeeves, etc.	Any of these: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .gov • The domain is .org or .com and is posted by a well-known, reputable organization or company. • The domain is .edu and university or college faculty, not students, maintain the site.
What is the purpose of the site? Is the information mostly fact or opinion ?	The purpose is personal.	The purpose is to sell something, persuade, offer assistance, or give a point of view. There may be some factual information or useful pictures but the focus of the site is to promote something.	The purpose is to offer factual information. Some opinion may be included.	The purpose is to support scholarly research with factual information.
Score Totals	Highly questionable source. 0 to 6 pts.	Site is useful for ideas or casual projects. Do not cite as a reference for a research paper or academic project. 7 to 10 pts.	Good source for a research paper or academic project. Confirm with other sources. 11 to 14 pts.	Excellent source for research. 15 to 18 pts.