

Fact Checking & Bias - Check the Fact Checkers!

In a global climate where sharing fake news is commonplace, it's more important than ever to rely on trustworthy and vetted information.

Our job as **digital citizens** requires more than just being informed. We must also be vigilant about verifying information before posting it online. We must be able to evaluate the accuracy, perspective and validity of digital media and social posts to stay safe, solve problems and become a force for good.

While taking a second look at claims made by anyone who contributes to media is a start, we still can't outsource our brains and our judgment. We have to look as critically at the fact-checking sites as we do the news articles themselves.

A good fact-checking site uses neutral wording, provides unbiased sources to support its claims and reliable links. The same critical thinking/questioning skills should be applied to fact-check sites."



Here's a rundown of 10 of the top fact- and bias-checking sites of the 2020-21 school year.

AllSides. While not a fact-checking site, AllSides curates stories from right, center and left-leaning media so that readers can easily compare how bias influences reporting on each topic.

Fact Check. This nonpartisan, nonprofit project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania monitors the factual accuracy of what is said by U.S. political players, including politicians, TV ads, debates, interviews and news releases.

Media Matters. This nonprofit and self-described liberal-leaning research center monitors and corrects conservative misinformation in the media.

Truth or Fiction. This nonpartisan website where Internet users can quickly and easily get information about eRumors, fake news, disinformation, warnings, offers, requests for help, myths, hoaxes, virus warnings, and humorous or inspirational stories that are circulated by email.

Open Secrets. This nonpartisan, independent and nonprofit website run by the Center for Responsive Politics tracks how much and where candidates get their money.

PolitiFact. This Pulitzer Prize winning website rates the accuracy of claims by elected officials. Run by editors and reporters from the independent newspaper Tampa Bay Times, PolitiFact features the Truth-O-Meter that rates statements as “True,” “Mostly True,” “Half True,” “False,” and “Pants on Fire.”

ProPublica. This independent, nonprofit newsroom has won several Pulitzer Prizes, including the 2016 Prize for Explanatory Reporting. ProPublica produces investigative journalism in the public interest.

Snopes. This independent, nonpartisan website run by professional researcher and writer David Mikkelson researches urban legends and other rumors. It is often the first to set the facts straight on wild fake news claims.

The Sunlight Foundation. This nonpartisan, nonprofit organization uses public policy data-based journalism to make politics more transparent and accountable.

Washington Post Fact Checker. Although the Washington Post has a left-center bias, its checks are excellent and sourced. The bias shows up because they fact check conservative claims more than liberal ones.