With all of the information out there, how do you decide what’s good information? The CRAAP Test can help you evaluate and think critically about your sources.

The acronym CRAAP reminds you to look at a source’s currency, relevance, authority, accuracy, and purpose.

**Currency: Information is timely.**
- Can you locate a publication date or posted date?
- Are there revisions or updates to the information?
- Is the information current enough for your topic?

**Relevance: Information connects to your research needs.**
- Does the information answer your research question?
- How does the information compare to other sources you found?
- Is the information appropriate for college-level courses?
- Have you explored a variety of sources to find the most relevant information?

**Authority: Information comes from a trusted source/expert.**
- Is there a clearly identified author, organization, and/or publisher?
- Does the author have notable credentials, affiliations, or additional publications?
- Can the author be seen as an authority or expert on the topic?
- Does the URL (.gov, .org, .com, .edu, .net, .mil) suggest an affiliation?

**Accuracy: Information is correct, reliable, and factual.**
- Can you identify the original source(s) of information?
- Is the information supported by evidence?
- Has the information been peer reviewed or fact checked?
- Is the information supported by other sources?
- Is the information error-free and well edited?
- Is the information free from logical fallacies or emotionally charged language?

**Purpose: Information has a clear reason or intent.**
- Is there an identifiable bias (political, personal, ideological, institutional)?
- What is the source’s agenda (inform, persuade, sell, mislead, provoke)?
- Is the information factual, opinion, propaganda, or satirical?
- Does the source clearly identify a purpose or editorial standards (About section)?
- Is the source speaking to a specific audience?
Digging Deeper into the CRAAP Test

Here are a few more things to think about when you conduct research and evaluate your information.

Pay attention to your own personal bias or reaction.
- **Confirmation bias**: Limiting yourself to research that confirms your views.
- **Cognitive dissonance**: Discomfort from opposing perspectives, which leads to becoming more entrenched in your own position/belief.
- **Emotions**: Be wary of information that feeds into emotions or anger.

Have an eye for details, big and small.
- **Website Domains**: Look for .com.co or .su, domains popularly used for fake sites. Some fake news websites try to appear legitimate (ABCnews.com.co vs. abcnews.go.com).
- **Typosquatting**: Preying on user typos or spelling errors in a URL or accidental use of the wrong domain (.com instead of .gov).
- **Verified Accounts**: Avoid fake social media accounts. Twitter and Facebook include a blue badge checkmark for verified accounts.
- **Search Results**: Identify sponsored sites that appear as part of your results.
- **Clickbait**: Do catchy or sensationalized titles reflect content?
- **Satire**: Don’t be fooled by humorist sites, such as *The Onion*.

Use Internet tools to your advantage.
- **Google Scholar**: Track citations and discover additional author publications.
- **Google Advanced Search**: Limit search results by site or domain.
- **Reverse Image Search Engines**: Check if images are used in their proper context or manipulated.
- **Fact-Checking Websites**: Snopes.com and FactCheck.org help to debunk fake news.
- **Quotes**: Use a search engine to discover if quotes are misattributed, edited, or taken out of context.
- **Internet Archive**: Its Wayback Machine and News Archive help to verify info.

The library is your ally.
- **Librarians**: Any questions about a source’s credibility? Ask a librarian.
- **Fake News Guide** (https://library.cscc.edu/fakenews)
- **Bias in the Media Guide** (https://library.cscc.edu/mediabias)

Questions? Ask a Librarian!
Columbus Campus: Library, Columbus Hall  Reference Desk:  614.287.2460
Delaware Campus: The Learning Center, Moeller Hall  Service Desk:  740.203.8183
http://library.cscc.edu