



# How to identify 'Fake News'

## What is 'Fake News'

It is false, often sensational, information disseminated under the guise of news reporting (Collins Dictionary)

## What's the difference?

	Real News	'Fake News'
Who is it written by?	Usually by a journalist who seeks to find out the truth	Can be anonymous
Why is it written	To inform	To sensationalise, provoke, cause a reaction and create propaganda
Where could the author/publisher get their information from	More likely from primary resources or by verifying secondary sources	They usually present 'alternative facts' and fail to verify what they publish.

## Take Note

1. Mainstream media have been accused of publishing "Fake News". While they may not always get it right, the more reputable ones will try to rectify their mistake. A published mistake is not the same as a "Fake News" story that is published with the aim of misleading people.
2. If you don't believe everything you hear you shouldn't believe everything you read.

## Some ways to spot a 'Fake News' story

1. Try to find out who the **author** is. You can do this by clicking on the copyright link, or going to the 'about us' or 'contact us' section of the website. If there is no information on the author, then there is no accountability.
2. A lot of 'Fake News' stories will come as '**Breaking News**' with very little verification of facts or events afterwards.
3. Check the **website address (URL)**. Be careful of anything that ends in com.co.
4. Check to see if **any other media sites** are reporting the story, if none are there's a risk the story could be fake.
5. Check the 'about us' section in the website, some websites purposely publish **satire** and will say they do.
6. Look out for **exaggerated headlines**. '*Man dies in helicopter crash*' might sound ok but if the website contains other headlines like '*Baby snatched by Eagle*' it is likely the original article has elements of sensationalism.
7. Be wary of some **clickbait** which is content whose main purpose is to attract attention and encourage visitors to click on the link. They can sometimes appear as thumbnails (reduced down pictures) on a website.
8. Every now and again try to read a point of view you don't agree with. '**Filter Bubbles**' are algorithms formed by social media sites to show users information based largely on their own beliefs and tastes. This means users are only seeing information based on their own bias.
9. Be mindful of stories that cause **emotional reactions**. This is what people who publish "Fake News" stories set out to do