

# False Information

The ability to assess and determine what is reliable information online is a valuable and lifelong skill. False information refers to information, stories and hoaxes created to mislead, misinform or deceive readers, viewers and listeners.

“Fake News” is a kind of false information which refers usually to political stories and movements. False information, however, captures everything.

Below are five types of false information you should be aware of online:

## Clickbait

Headlines that grab reader’s attention and curiosity. The title may not reflect the contents of the page/article accurately.

Example: You Will Never Believe What Happened Next!

## Satire

Articles posted strictly for entertainment or parody purposes but in the guise of a ‘news’ article or similar.

Example sites: Waterford Whispers.

## Sloppy Journalism

When reporters or journalists publish their articles or information without fact checking each point, this is called sloppy journalism. These articles may contain false or inaccurate information.

## Propaganda

Stories that are written deliberately to promote bias views, political standpoints or agendas.

Example: World War flyers and posters.

## Bias/Slanted News

Information written, produced or presented which may be factually correct but may infer particular meanings or viewpoints of the author/organisation.

Factual information should be impartial.

# How to assess information

It takes time and practice to determine what is reliable information and what is fake. When searching for information online, always ask yourself the following:

## Who?

Who wrote it?  
Do they have the qualifications or credentials to be writing on this topic?

## Why?

Why was this article written?

## When?

When was the article written?  
Is the information up to date and accurate?  
When was it last updated?

## Where?

Where was the information published?  
Is this information being published on other sites too?

## What?

What is the piece about?  
Does it contain purely factual information or does it contain personal opinions (bias)?

## How?

How is this information presented?  
Does it contain references/citations to other sources?  
Is there any spelling or grammatical errors?  
Is the information exaggerated?