• Evaluating Websites
Who made it: Authority
* Who is the author/producer of the document?
* Is the author/producer an expert on the subject, as indicated on the credentials page?
* Is the sponsor/location of the site appropriate to the materials as shown in the URL?
  For example:
.biz	for business organizations
.com	for commercial products or commercially-sponsored sites
.edu	for educational or research material
.gov	for government resources
.info	for unrestricted use
.int	for international organizations
.mil	for US Department of Defense
.name	for personal use
.net	for networks
.org	for nonprofit organizations
* There's some way to contact the people responsible for the site; usually an e-mail address, sometimes a phone number and street address, too.
* Pages within the website look similar: they may have the same background color, or there will be the same logo on every page.
* Pages within the website link back to the home page, and to elsewhere in the site.
* The website shows signs of being proofread; there are no spelling or grammar errors.

If you're going to use information from a website for a school project, think about getting it from a website that you already know will have good information, such as the website of a library, a school, or a museum. Often, libraries, schools, and museums will have links on their sites to other sites that they have already evaluated for quality and accuracy.

When was it last updated?
* Is there a date for when the information was first written?
* Is there a date for when the information was placed on the web?
* Is there a date for when the information was last revised?
* Do the links still work? If not, it may be an indication that the information has not been updated recently.

It's not always necessary for a website to have been updated recently for it to be valuable. For instance, if a website provides the full text of Shakespeare's sonnets, that text isn't going to change, so it's not necessary for it to be frequently updated.

Is it clear what it's about: Purpose
* Inform others of new research?
* Summarize the current status of a research interest?
* Advocate a particular position on the subject?
* Stimulate further discussion on the topic?
* Publicize a product?

You should be able to tell why a website exists, and what information it's trying to provide. If the purpose of the website is confusing or unclear, that's a good sign that you should look for a different site.

Is it easy to find the information you need: Style and Functionality
- Is the site designed clearly and logically with well organized subsections?
- Is the writing style appropriate for the intended audience?
- Is the site easy to navigate?
- Are the "Back" "Home" "Go to Top" icons and labels well labeled?
- Do any graphics enhance or clarify the information presented?
- Or do the graphics distract the user and slow down transmission?

You won't always be able to find exactly what you need right on the very first page of the first website you go to. Looking at different places and gathering information from them is what doing research means. But if it's very hard for you to find the information you need, and especially if it seems that information from one part of the website contradicts another part, you may want to try another site.

Sometimes, there is no good Website.
If you're having a really hard time finding anything for the topic you're interested in, you may want to look elsewhere: in books, magazines, or newspapers. Also, remember that you can always ask a librarian for help searching for any kind of information you need.

Adapted:
Multnomah Country Library: https://multcolib.org/homework-center/evaluating-websites
Boston College University Libraries: http://www.bc.edu/libraries/help/howdoi/howto/evaluateinternet.html