

## CARRDS - Website Evaluation System

Use this chart to help you evaluate your online sources. Use the CARRDS system to evaluate free, open-source internet sites.

Title of the Site	
Site URL	

<b>Credibility</b> Who is the author? Is the author's contact information provided? What are the author's qualifications? Why do you trust this author?	
<b>Accuracy</b> Based on what you already know or have seen so far, does the information seem accurate? Is the information in this site different from that of other sources that I have come across?	
<b>Reliability</b> Does the site present an opinion, point of view, bias? Is this opinion stated? What is it? Does the site seem to promote a particular viewpoint or agenda?	
<b>Relevance</b> Does the information help to answer my question? Is there a depth of information? Is the text too difficult to understand, too easy, or just right?	
<b>Date</b> When was the information created? Was it revised? Is the information still relevant?	
<b>Sources</b> Does the site have a works cited list or a bibliography? Are there links to other quality websites/sources?	

THIS SITE IS:

Very Useful

Somewhat Useful

Not Useful

## Is this Website Shady?

*And other questions about web research...*

**On what kind of Web site does the information appear? The site can give you clues about the credibility of the source.**

Here are some types of Web sites:

- **Personal Home Pages** - maintained by individuals. They are often informal. Some personal Web sites also serve as professional sites. For example, many professors publish their syllabi, course material and, in some cases, their scholarship, on their personal Web pages. Entrepreneurs often advertise their services on "home" pages.
- **Special interest sites** - maintained by non-profit organizations or activists dealing with special issues, such as environmental concerns, legalization of marijuana, etc. They can be relatively mainstream or radical in interests and vary widely in credibility of information. Special interest sites are, by their nature, biased.
- **Professional sites** - maintained by institutions/organizations, sometimes by individuals. They can include research, reference sources, fact sheets. Many institutions provide such services to the public. The credibility of the institution or professional credential of the individual providing the facts gives clues as to the reliability of the information. Is the site just linking to sources? If so, the credibility of the information is connected to the originating sites.
- **News and Journalistic sites (E-zines)** - which include national, international news, online newspapers, magazines, and "homegrown" Web publications. Anyone can publish his or her own "news," on the Web. What do you know about, or what can you find out about, the reputation of the periodical? Is it an electronic version of a credible print publication? As in print - just because information is published does not necessarily mean it is true. If a periodical article has an ISSN number (International Standard Serial Number), it will probably have more authority.
- **Commercial sites** - Although many legitimate businesses have Websites, some are not legitimate. Companies, with good and bad reputations, are in the business of making money and acquiring and keeping customers. Can you track the reputation of the company?

### **Some Common Domain Names**

**.edu** - education sites

**.gov** - government sites

**.org** - organization sites

**.com** - commercial sites

**.net** - network infrastructures

There are other extensions, such as the abbreviation of a country, ie. **.jp** for Japan

