

# PRACTICING INFORMATION HYGIENE



**Information Hygiene** is having the personal tools and skills to carefully evaluate the information that we consume and spread.

How do we know what is fact and what is fiction? How do we know that what we read or hear is the truth? How can we decide what is relevant or irrelevant information? Below is a guide to help you develop the tools and skills to practice information hygiene.

## Before You Share, Check Your Facts

- If there is no source, check with reliable news agencies and or government sources.
- Don't rely on a single source of information. Take the time to review different and varying news sources.
- Be aware of forged, or photoshopped images or webpages.
- Check to see if there are mistakes in spelling, grammar, or word usage. This may tell you if this is a reliable source or not.
- Try to reverse search information.
- Be skeptical of shocking claims or headlines.
- Ask yourself why you want to share the story.
- Is an old story still accurate?
- Only pass on information, if you have checked your facts.



## Guide to Critical Thinking

Ask these questions below

- Is this fact or is this someone's opinion?
- Who benefits from this?
- Who is being disadvantaged?
- Whose perspective is being portrayed?
- What other perspectives are there?
- Where is the evidence coming from?
- Are sources being cited (how many sources and are they official or expert sources)?
- What assumptions are being made?
- Are there faults or fallacies in the reasoning?



## Fact Checking Websites

Check these sites for further investigation

- Snopes.com
- Politifact.com
- Factcheck.org
- Flackcheck.org
- OpenSecrets.org
- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/>
- <https://reporterslab.org/fact-checking/> (global fact checking site)

