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Fake News & Misinformation

What is fake news, misinformation and disinformation?

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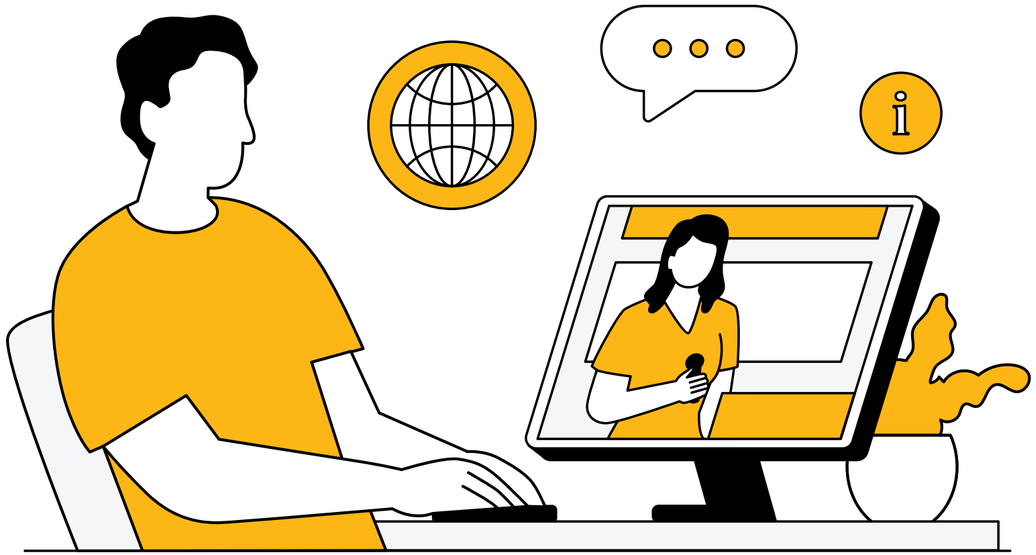


Fake News

This refers to false information that has been created in a way that makes it look like a trustworthy news report.

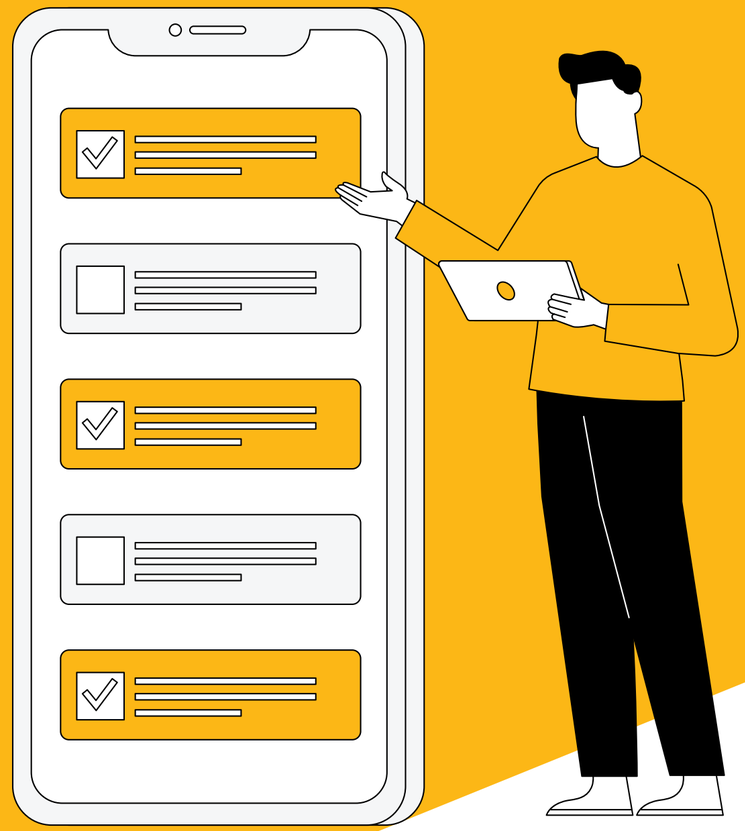
Misinformation

This is incorrect or misleading information presented as fact, either intentionally or unintentionally.

Disinformation

This is information that is deliberately incorrect. Disinformation can include made-up information, like statistics or scientific opinions.

Why is it important to identify?



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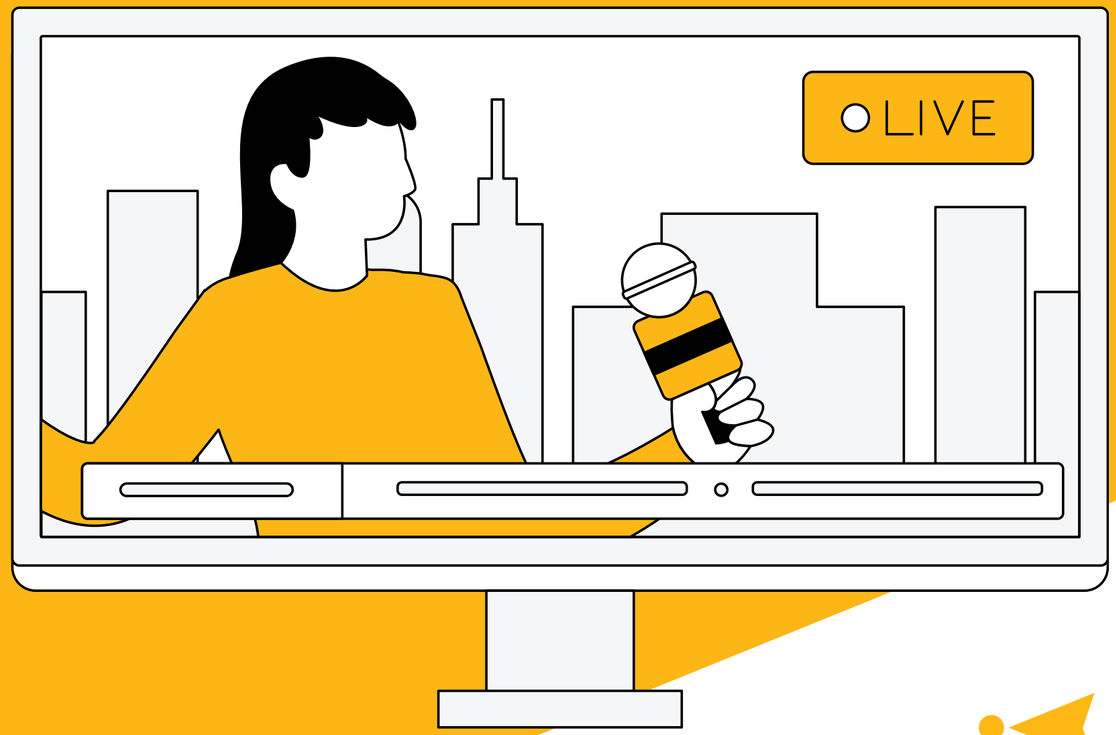
It’s everyone’s responsibility to identify and report fake news. A collective effort to prevent the spread of fake news can help to keep your community feeling safe, capable of identifying fake news and clear about what the truth is.

By calling out and reporting fake news, you can empower other members of your social media networks to think more critically about the content they are engaging with.

Why does it exist?



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Fake news can help a political agenda

A fictional piece of information can help certain political parties or figures validate their opinions, and can be used to convince people to vote for them.

Fake news can sometimes be easier to believe than real news

Other people might choose to engage with fake news as a more comforting version of the truth.

Fake news can get more people to engage with news content

In our click-driven world, controversial headlines also generate more attention, engagement and subscribers. That means there's ample motivation for some news websites to share or even create fake news – even if it hurts others.

Tips to spot fake news

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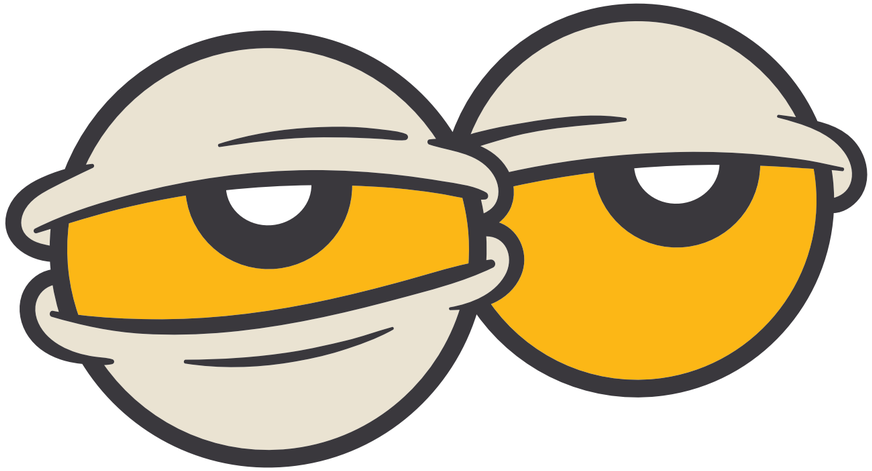
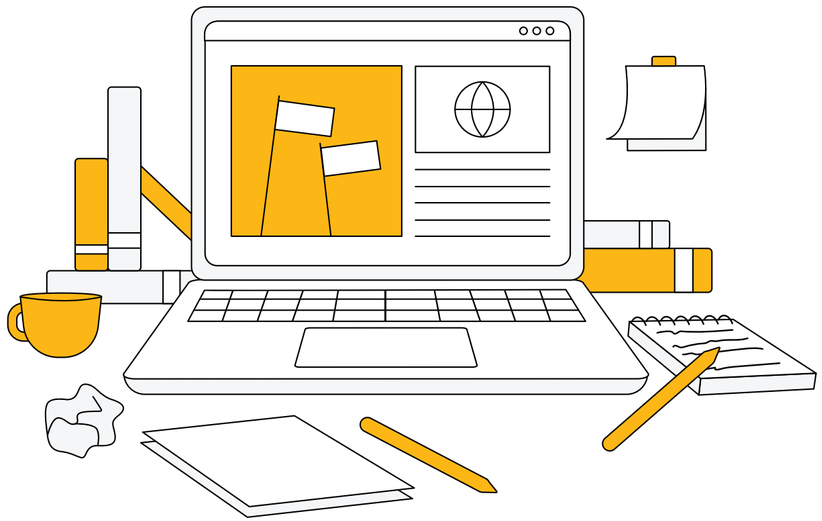


Check the story's source and credibility

The first thing you should do if you come across a fishy story on the timeline, is to check the story's credibility. Ask yourself:

1. Do you recognise the account or news site that's sharing the story?

2. Does the person who's reporting the information have the right credentials to tell this story?



Check for biases or an agenda

Understanding how or why the story was written can also tell you a lot about its facts.

If the story was shared onto your timeline by a specific account, try to figure out that account's intentions.

What do they want you to do or believe after reading the information they're sharing – and does that action or belief seem reasonable?

Consider how the story is written

If you're still unsure, it may be worth opening the article itself. The way a news story is written is often a giveaway to whether it's fake news.

The story may be fake news if it:

- uses simplistic terms or emotionally-charged terms for complex issues
- employs or references stereotypes without acknowledgement or context
- references incorrect or outdated information
- employs sensational headings rather than focusing on facts
- misspells words or uses incorrect grammar
- uses low-resolution pictures, or pictures that appear manipulated.

If you feel comfortable and want to engage, do a deeper dive

Fake news is getting more sophisticated by the day, which means it's harder to catch. If you're still unsure – but are mentally prepared to engage – it may be worth doing a deeper dive on what you're reading.

Zara's tips for navigating social media

With the wealth of knowledge at our fingertips, now more than ever we need to make sure we are checking our information.

It is important to remember to:

- Make sure you are doing your own research
- View multiple sources
- Check the facts
- Participate in discussion to understand different points on views.
- Be open to others perspective and opinions
- Do not lock yourself into one mind set

Bring yourself to the discussion table with the ability to not only listen but present what you know with sources.

Any Questions?

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