

HOW TO IDENTIFY FAKE NEWS

(NC) The internet quite literally allows us to have all the world's information at our fingertips. Unfortunately, much of the material we find online is error-filled or outright wrong. Here are three ways to ensure that the things you're reading online are real.

Use trusted sources. If something sounds too good, or too outrageous, to be true, it probably is. For example, if you see something shocking in a social media post, check to see if the story has been covered by any of your trusted news sources.

Add news sites that you regularly visit to your bookmarks. That way, you'll know you're being directed to the right place. If you're being led to a site by a link, make sure that the URL is spelled correctly. Legitimate sites will also have a lock symbol and "https" in the address bar, indicating that they are secure.

Most reputable news sources credit the writers of their stories with an author's byline or the name of the wire service, such as Canadian Press or Reuters, indicating who wrote the story. A lack of a byline does not necessarily mean the story is fake, but it could warrant further investigation.

If a journalist makes specific claims, say in an article entitled, "Four ways to boost your lifespan", they will cite the source of their information, such as Health Canada or another recognized health authority.

Finally, check if the story is current. Sometimes older news articles resurface, but the information is outdated.

Don't get baited. Headlines are an important tool that editors use to catch readers' eyes but, oftentimes, the headline doesn't tell the whole story. It's always a

good idea to read an article in full to get the entire context instead of making assumptions from a headline.

You should also be aware of spoof websites that intentionally have the look and feel of a real news site, such as U.S.-based The Onion, which posts humorous news articles that some people mistakenly share for real news. There's also a Canadian equivalent called The Beaverton.

Check the source. While a site like Wikipedia might seem like an accurate source, information on lesser-known topics is less likely to be properly vetted.

If you are trying to verify whether something is true or fake news, a great resource is Snopes.com. For 30 years, the editors of this site have been reviewing images and articles and using rigorous fact-checking standards before rating them as true or false, or if the accuracy is undetermined.

If you're doing research for work or school, know that librarians are expert researchers. When in doubt, ask your local librarian for suggestions on other credible online information sources. They may also recommend you look into digital literacy resources and courses, such as those offered by ABC Life Literacy Canada.

Learn more about how to find trusted information online at abconnectforlearning.ca.

Cyber security for seniors

(NC) If you're in the 65 or older age bracket, the amount of technological change you've seen in your lifetime is truly astounding. You've gone from witnessing the introduction of colour television, VCRs, car phones and camcorders to having a smartphone that you can use to monitor your health, take high-quality photos and have video chats with your grandkids, or make a simple phone call if you want. But with every new technology, comes new risks. Here are three things you can do to protect yourself in this digital world.

Be scam aware. Knowing that many seniors only joined the digital world later in life and may still be unfamiliar with aspects of it, including cyber security, scammers frequently target older people. Cyber criminals use a common tactic known as the "grandparent scam" to impersonate grandchildren messaging or calling their grandparents in distress for urgent funds, often in the form of gift cards. If anything seems suspicious, contact your family member directly to verify the situation. Some families have chosen passwords (like a code word) that only their loved ones know so they can verify that the person who is contacting them is really who they say they are.

Be smart with your passwords. While you might want to reuse passwords on various websites so that you can remember them, know that if your login information is hacked on one site, your other accounts could also be at risk.

Create a unique password for every site you register on using a combination of at least 12 characters and uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers and symbols.

Alternatively, an easier-to-remember option is to use passphrases. These should be at least 15 characters and are a mix of four or more random words strung together that are easier for you to remember but nearly impossible for someone else to guess.

Protect your devices. To protect sensitive information, lock your phone, computer and tablets (and any other device) with unique passwords that you need to enter in order to open them. Use multi-factor authentication (MFA) for an extra layer of security on your device as well as an alternate form of logging in. If you get a notice of a software update, install it as soon as you can. These are often security-related and are intended to close loopholes that scammers can use. Better yet, set up your devices to automatically install updates.

For added protection, you can turn off features on your devices that you don't always need, such as the camera, microphone and location tracking services.

Find more cyber safety tips at getcybersafe.ca.



With every new technology, comes new risks. Make sure to protect yourself in this digital world.

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*Celebrate and Embrace
Multicultural
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SPRING HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

Eid al Fitr – March 29-30 Vaisakhi – April 14
Good Friday – Apr. 18 Easter Sunday – Apr. 20
Shavuot – June 2 Eid al-Adha – June 7

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BEST WISHES FOR THE Spring Holidays and Celebrations

Eid al Fitr – March 29-30
Vaisakhi – April 14
Good Friday – Apr. 18
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Shavuot – June 2
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