

1 MIND THE GAP

WHEN BIG NEWS BREAKS, EVERYONE WANTS THE DETAILS, but verified information can be tough to find. ⚡ BE MINDFUL that a deluge of **unconfirmed, misleading and completely bogus content** often rushes in to fill the gap between what's available and what the public wants to know.



2 BEWARE BAD ACTORS

BAD ACTORS NEED ATTENTION TO THRIVE, so they often capitalize on breaking news situations to spread sensationalized or false content for cheap likes and shares. In times of war, natural disasters and upheaval, **misinformation also acts as a tool to advance certain narratives and shape public opinion.**

⚡ **DON'T BE EXPLOITED.** Slow down and resist the urge to share unconfirmed claims or visuals.



3 DO A QUICK SEARCH

A QUICK INTERNET SEARCH IS OFTEN THE BEST DEFENSE AGAINST MISINFORMATION.

Hop off social media and do a simple search to investigate unsubstantiated claims and unfamiliar sources. ⚡ **BEWARE** of shocking news updates circulating among ordinary social media users but not in news coverage. Credible news sources will cover major updates.

⚡ **TIP**
It's common for old or unrelated visuals to circulate out of context in breaking news situations. **Reverse image searches** can help put repurposed visuals back in their original context.



4 LOOK FOR EVIDENCE

CLAIMS THAT MAKE BOLD ASSERTIONS BUT PROVIDE NO LINKS OR OTHER EVIDENCE should always be ⚡ **APPROACHED WITH CAUTION**, especially screenshots. If a social media post does include an outside link – to a news report, study or some other source – **make sure the link actually supports claims in the original post.**



⚡ **TIP**
Credible news sources aspire to **ethical guidelines and standards**, including accuracy, transparency and independence. Look for evidence that a source follows such standards.



News Literacy Project

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⚡ **What to do when information is scarce, falsehoods are rampant and the story is still unfolding**

CHECKLIST

BREAKING NEWS

6 PRACTICE PATIENCE

QUALITY JOURNALISM AND VERIFICATION TAKE TIME. Journalists have to interview people, gather documentation and confirm details with multiple sources. **It might take days or even weeks to untangle initial accounts or investigate claims involving a major story.** ⚡ **BE READY** to follow news developments over time, knowing that the story – and your understanding of it – will likely evolve as more verified information comes to light.

REMEMBER

Early details in news reports may turn out to be incorrect. What's important is how a news organization handles these mistakes. **Correcting errors** promptly and transparently is a strong signal of a news source's commitment to accuracy.



5 SEEK CREDIBLE SOURCES

IT'S IMPORTANT TO ACTIVELY SEEK OUT NEWS FROM CREDIBLE SOURCES and not rely on social media algorithms to bring you updates. ⚡ **BE INTENTIONAL** about following professional journalists on the ground.

Look for reputable news organizations and fact-checkers debunking falsehoods in real time. Compare coverage across multiple credible news outlets and pay special attention to attribution. Is information attributed to sources in a position to know? Does the report independently verify disputed details or simply repeat information from officials?