

SIFT: A One-Page Guide to Quick, Reliable Verification

Stop · Investigate the source · Find better coverage · Trace to the origin

The Four Moves (Use with lateral reading*)

* Open new tabs and check what trustworthy, independent sources say about the site, author, and claim.

 **STOP** — Pause before you share or believe. Define the claim. Ask who made it and what they want you to think or do.

 **INVESTIGATE THE SOURCE** — Open a new tab. Search for the site/author. What do reliable sources say about their credibility and track record?

 **FIND BETTER COVERAGE** — Look for independent, higher-quality reporting or fact checks. Prefer strong editorial standards or  IFCN-Verified outlets.

 **TRACE TO THE ORIGIN** — Click through to the original study, dataset, or full video. Check dates, methods, sample size, and whether it actually supports the claim.

Quick Checks (60–90 seconds)

- Search the organization and add 'site:wikipedia.org' for a fast profile snapshot.
- Scan Google News for the same claim—who else reported it and how?
- Use reverse image search on key visuals; chase the first appearance date.
- Look for replication: one dramatic study isn't consensus.
- Check regulators and registries (FDA, NIH, ClinicalTrials.gov) for safety/approval context.

Common Red Flags

- Miracle, secret, or guaranteed language; urgency that pressures a decision.
- Testimonials in place of data; missing methods or tiny samples.
- Cherry-picked studies; conflicts of interest undisclosed.
- Screenshots of 'research' with no links to full sources.