



Spotting Fake News & Misleading Headlines



License: This guide is provided to paying members for personal use only. You may print it for yourself or your household. Public redistribution, posting online, or commercial use is not permitted without written permission from Simple Virtues LLC d/b/a Don't Get Bunked!

How to recognize fabricated stories, clickbait, and manipulative headlines — and the tools that help you cut through the noise.

(Designed to keep you in control, not caught in outrage or fear cycles.)



Trusted Fact-Checking & Credibility Resources

FactCheck.org — Political and non-political claim fact-checking.

✓IFCN-Verified

(Also listed in Political Claims section)

 <https://www.factcheck.org/> ↗

PolitiFact — Covers viral rumors, memes, and misleading stories beyond politics. ✓IFCN-Verified

(Also listed in Political Claims section)

 <https://www.politifact.com/> ↗

Snopes* — One of the oldest and most widely trusted debunking sites, covering news, urban legends, and hoaxes.

 <https://www.snopes.com/> ↗



Spotting Fake News & Misleading Headlines



* I am aware of the kerfuffle at Snopes—One of the founders was caught plagiarizing to boost rankings. They discovered it, retracted the posts, and he is not allowed to publish anything anymore. If you heard something else, e.g., if you heard that he made things up to find rumors incorrectly true or false, I'm afraid you got bunked. Snopes is still widely considered to be a reliable general purpose debunking site.

Reuters Fact Check — Global scope, especially strong on visual misinformation and breaking news claims. ✓IFCN-Verified

(Also listed in Political Claims section)

 <https://www.reuters.com/fact-check/> ↗

AP Fact Check — Concise, plain-language fact checks across a wide range of stories. ✓IFCN-Verified

(Also listed in Political Claims section)

 <https://apnews.com/hub/ap-fact-check> ↗



How to Use These Resources

1. **Check the site's reputation** — Does the site appear in NewsGuard, MBFC, or IFCN-linked directories?
2. **Reverse-search headlines** — See if multiple credible outlets report the same story.



Spotting Fake News & Misleading Headlines



3. **Look at the language** — All-caps, emotional buzzwords (“shocking,” “furious,” “destroyed”) = red flag.
4. **Scan the “About” page** — Many fake sites hide ownership, funding, or location.
5. **Check the date** — Old stories often resurface and spread as if they’re new.



Sam’s Tips

“If it makes you furious, pause.” Outrage is the #1 tool of manipulators.

“Check more than one site.” A real story will usually be verified by multiple outlets — even if with different perspectives.

“Skip the clickbait.” If the headline asks a question (“Did X really happen?”), the answer is usually “no.”