



# LifeSmarts

*Learn it. Live it.*

## Key Points

### NOT EVERYTHING ONLINE IS TRUE

False or misleading information can spread quickly, especially on social media, making it hard to separate facts from fiction.

### MISINFORMATION HAS REAL CONSEQUENCES

Sharing unverified information can harm reputations, influence decisions, or even impact public safety.

### FACT-CHECKING IS YOUR BEST DEFENSE

Knowing how to evaluate sources and verify information is key to becoming a responsible digital citizen. Developing this habit helps stop false information from spreading further.

## Core Concepts

### TYPES OF FALSE INFORMATION

Misinformation (shared by mistake), disinformation (shared to mislead), and satire or parody posts can all confuse readers. Knowing the difference helps you respond appropriately.

### HOW MISINFORMATION SPREADS

Algorithms, clickbait headlines, and emotional content often cause false information to go viral faster than facts.

### SOURCE EVALUATION SKILLS

Looking at who created the content, their expertise, and their motives can help you decide if information is trustworthy.

### CONFIRMING BEFORE SHARING

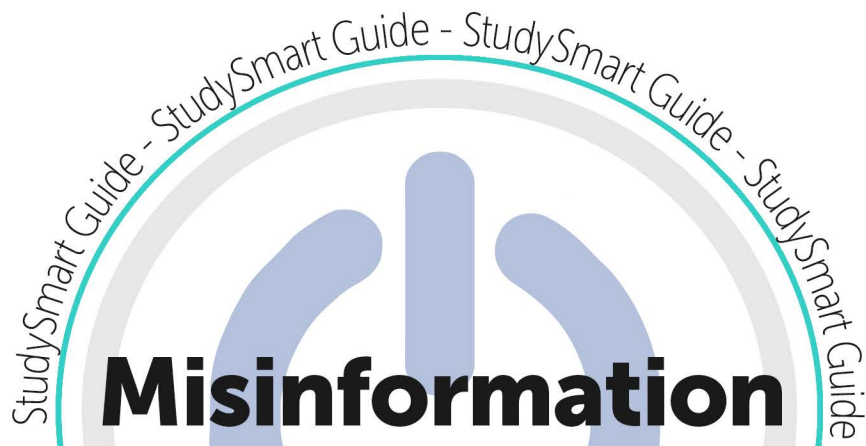
Pausing to check multiple reliable sources before reposting or reacting helps stop the spread of false claims.

### RECOGNIZING MANIPULATED CONTENT

Photos, videos, or statistics can be edited or taken out of context to mislead viewers. Tools exist to help spot altered media.

### THE ROLE OF BIAS AND OPINION

Some information is slanted or only tells part of the story. Understanding bias helps you tell the difference between news and commentary.



## Additional Resources

### SmartNews – A Nation on Edge: The Growing Fear of Misinformation

Survey showing how deeply Americans across political lines worry about misinformation

<https://bit.ly/3UqfUp4>

### News Literacy Project – Checkology

Interactive platform that teaches how to identify credible information and spot misinformation (Must register to access - Free)

<https://bit.ly/45dVUMJ>

### PolitiFact – Fact-Check Archive

Database of fact-checked claims covering politics, news, and viral social media content

<https://bit.ly/4fxwqgD>

### YouTube – CrashCourse: Navigating Digital Information

Video explaining how misinformation spreads and how to evaluate online content

<https://bit.ly/3Hs8X3N>

## Listen to the Podcast



## Explore and Explain

1. How can misinformation spread so quickly on social media and other online platforms?
2. What's the difference between misinformation, disinformation, and satire?
3. How can you verify if information you see online is accurate?
4. Why is it important to think critically before sharing information with others?

*Understanding misinformation helps you become a more informed reader, make better decisions, and avoid spreading false information.*

# Misinformation



**LifeSmarts**  
*Learn it. Live it.*

## Vocabulary

### **ALGORITHM**

A formula platforms use to decide which posts, videos, or ads you see online

### **BIAS**

A slant or preference that affects how information is presented

### **BOT**

An automated account that spreads content—often without human control

### **CONFIRMATION BIAS**

Believing information more easily when it matches what you already think

### **CREDIBLE SOURCE**

A source that's accurate, trustworthy, and based on facts

### **DEEPFAKE**

A fake video or image that makes it look like someone said or did something they didn't

### **DISINFORMATION**

False content that's purposely created to mislead or manipulate

### **INFORMATION LITERACY**

Knowing how to find, check, and use information responsibly

### **MISINFORMATION**

False or incorrect info shared by mistake or without trying to mislead

### **SATIRE**

A form of humor or exaggeration that imitates real news or events—sometimes mistaken for real information

### **SPONSORED CONTENT**

Ads made to look like regular articles or posts, often labeled “sponsored” or “promoted”

## Acronyms

### **AI**

Artificial Intelligence

### **OSINT**

Open-Source Intelligence

### **SEO**

Search Engine Optimization

### **URL**

Uniform Resource Locator

### **VPN**

Virtual Private Network

**Sponsored by:**  
 **SmartNews**