

## Can you trust them?

Here are some of the **most widely used and reputable services** for checking the **veracity, trustworthiness, and bias** of news outlets (newspapers, TV stations, websites, blogs, etc.). These organizations specialize in **fact-checking, media credibility analysis, or bias assessment**:

### 1. Media Bias/Fact Check (MBFC)

- **What it does:** Rates media outlets on **factual accuracy, political bias, and credibility**.
- **Strengths:** Very comprehensive database; covers mainstream media, niche sites, blogs, and questionable sources.
- **Use cases:** Quickly check if a site leans left/right, and how reliable its reporting is.

### 2. NewsGuard

- **What it does:** Trained journalists score news sites using **nine credibility criteria**.
- **Strengths:** More journalistic and less algorithmic; provides browser extensions and institutional-grade ratings.
- **Use cases:** Professional-grade reliability ratings for mainstream and fringe outlets.

### 3. AllSides

- **What it does:** Focuses on **political bias ratings** and features a “balanced news” feed showing left/center/right coverage.
- **Strengths:** Great for identifying bias, even in otherwise factual sources.
- **Use cases:** Understanding **ideological slant** and comparing how different outlets cover the same story.

### 4. PolitiFact

- **What it does:** Fact-checks **individual claims**, especially political ones.
- **Strengths:** Uses the well-known “Truth-O-Meter.”
- **Use cases:** Evaluating accuracy of statements made by public figures and news sources.

### 5. FactCheck.org

- **What it does:** Nonpartisan fact-checking focused on U.S. politics and national issues.
- **Strengths:** Run by the Annenberg Public Policy Center; academically rooted and highly credible.
- **Use cases:** Checking political claims attributed to news outlets.

## ☑ 6. Snopes

- **What it does:** Verifies viral stories, rumors, hoaxes, and misinformation.
- **Strengths:** Excellent for evaluating questionable stories that spread across blogs/social media.
- **Use cases:** Determining whether a sensational story is real or fabricated.

## ☑ 7. Poynter Institute / International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN)

- **What it does:** Provides **standards, certification**, and oversight for fact-checkers world-wide.
- **Strengths:** A **gold standard** for trustworthy fact-checking organizations globally.
- **Use cases:** Finding **certified** fact-checking organizations in specific countries.

## Bonus Tools

### 8. Reuters Institute Digital News Report

Shows long-term data about trust in major news outlets.

### 9. Ad Fontes Media (Media Bias Chart)

Visual chart placing dozens of outlets on a grid of reliability vs. bias.

### 10. Google Fact Check Explorer

Aggregates fact-checks from verified fact-checking organizations.

### 11. Tangle

An independent, nonpartisan, subscriber-supported politics newsletter that summarizes the best arguments from across the political spectrum on the news of the day.

## Sarasota Local News

### 12. Sarasota News-Leader

### 13. Suncoast Searchlight

### Recommended Reading:

**Attack From Within** – Barbara McQuade

**The Death of Truth** – Steven Brill

Thanks to Diane McFarlin for sharing this guide. Diane was President and Publisher of the Sarasota Herald Tribune 2000-2013. She then served as Dean of the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications 2013-2021.