

STETSON UNIVERSITY

Writing Center Handouts

A Guide to Finding Sources

Before you Begin Searching for Sources:

- Determine what type of paper you are going to be writing (research, analysis, etc.)
- Determine if your teacher requires any specific type of sources (peer-reviewed journal articles, book, etc.)

Where to Search for Credible Sources:

- The Stetson Library Databases <https://guides.stetson.edu/az.php>
- Purdue Owl (for writing related sources) https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html
- Academic Search Engines like Google Scholar <https://scholar.google.com/>
- A basic internet search using a few key words

Key Tips for Evaluating Sources:

- Check first for the relevancy of the article
 - How long ago was it written? Is it information that could have changed since it was published?
- Determine if the source has an author or publisher
 - Is the author credible? Does the author back up their claims?
- What type of source is it?
 - Is it a blogpost or an article written by someone with credibility? If it is an article, is it peer-reviewed?
- If the source is a website, is it credible?
 - When websites end with .edu, .org, .gov this gives a good indication that the website is credible.
- Determine who has access to the article.
 - Is it easily editable by unreliable contributors (i.e. Wikipedia)
- Is the source well written? Are there any errors?
- Did they back up their claims with researchable support?
 - Ensure the references the original sources are using are also credible.

Effective Searching Tips:

- Use specific keywords.
- Use Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) to refine your search results.
- Use the Stetson University Writing Center Tutors to help you identify what search engines might be the best for your research topic.