

1. Stop! How do you know it is true? What's the evidence? *Remember, the more outrageous the story, the higher the bar should be before you trust or share anything on social media.*
2. Check whether the story actually supports the headline, and beware of headlines all in capital letters.
3. Always ask, "Says who?" We tell children not to take candy from strangers. Well, don't take information from strangers. Who is responsible for the story? Is it a known journalist or news outlet? If not, how many friends, followers does the source have? What have they posted in the past?
4. If you follow a link to a website, do all the links seen there work? What does the "About Us" page say? When was the information updated?
5. Check whether fact-checking websites such as Snopes.com or FactCheck.org have investigated the information, or just type the claim into a Google search and add the word "hoax."
6. Cut and paste images into reverse search engines like TinEye.com. Startling images often are not fake, but rather have appeared before in a different context.
7. Beware of stories that come from people you trust — even from your friends and relatives. Don't confuse the sender with the source of the information.