

# HOW TO FACT-CHECK WITH A SMARTPHONE



TRAINING FOR **TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL**  
IN CONJUNCTION WITH **ROTH COMMUNICATIONS**

Presented by Raymond Joseph

# CHECK 101



## FACT CHECKING

Sometimes fact-checking a photo, video or a story is as simple as doing an online search using relevant keywords + 'fact-check'.

You may find that a fact-checking organisation has already done the work for you.

Five sites where you can search for existing fact-checks by keyword:

### Snopes

[www.snopes.com](http://www.snopes.com)

### Wafflesatnoon.com

<https://goo.gl/v8Z8V7>

### Hoax of Fame

<https://goo.gl/z3xfXS>

### AfricaCheck

<https://africacheck.org>

### COVID-19: Poynter Resources

A searchable database of worldwide COVID-19 fact-checks by members of the International Fact-Checking Network

<https://bit.ly/3qe1Dem>

# ADD TO SCREEN

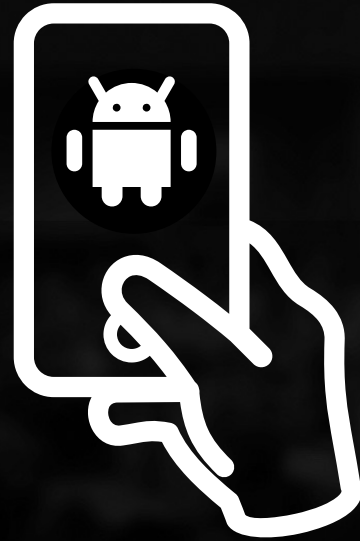


## ADDING A WEBSITE TO YOUR PHONE'S HOME SCREEN

Some tools are available as apps that you can download to your phone, but sometimes it's much simpler to add a link to your home screen.

Doing it this way adds an icon to your desktop. This will take you to the site when you tap on the icon.

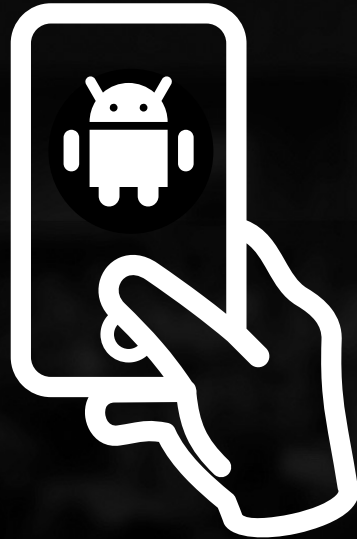
# FOR ANDROID



## ANDROID – STEP 1

Open the website you want to add in your phone's browser. On Chrome and Firefox (for mobile), press the three dots on the top or bottom right of your screen.

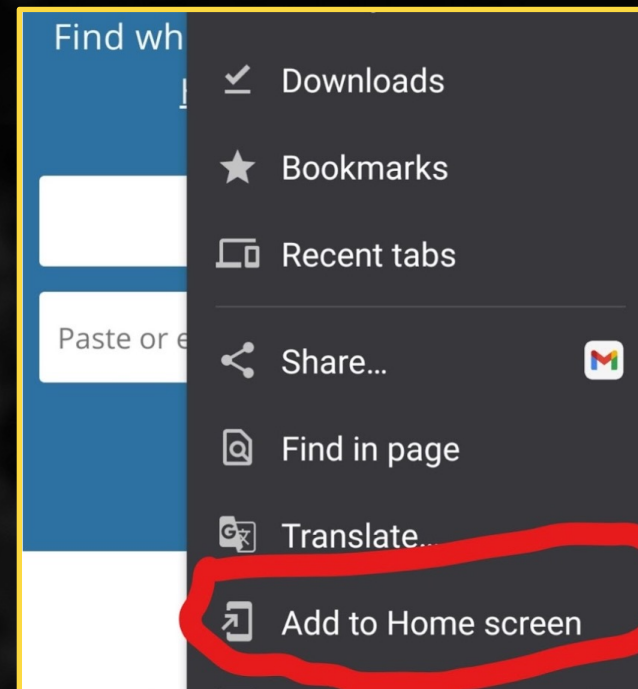
# FOR ANDROID



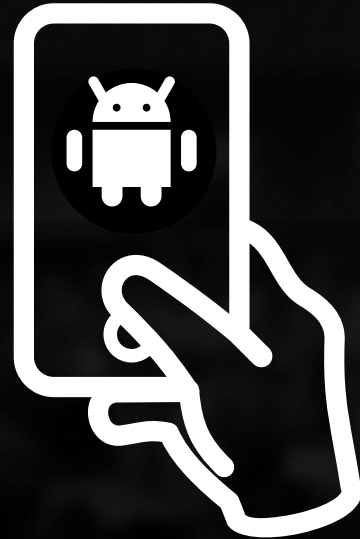
## ANDROID – STEP 2

A drop-down menu will appear. Press 'Add to Home Screen'.

With some sites, you may first have to press 'Open in Chrome or Firefox' and then 'Add to home screen'.



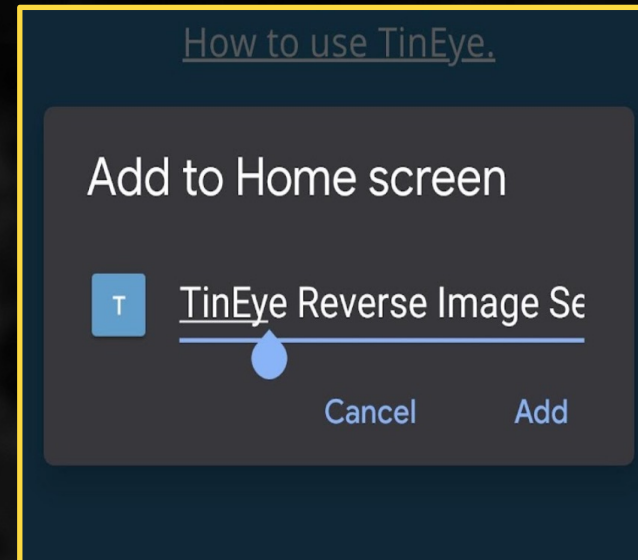
# FOR ANDROID



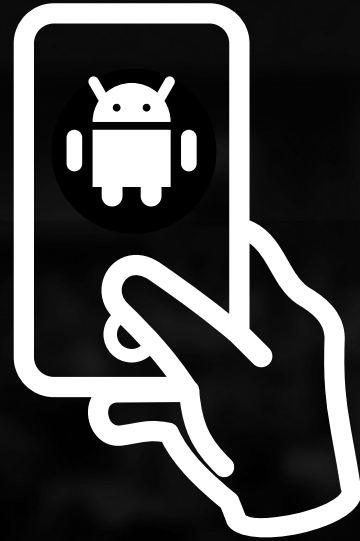
## ANDROID – STEP 3

Edit the name of the shortcut according to personal preference. Press 'Add'.

You now have an icon on your home screen that will take you directly to the website you have added.

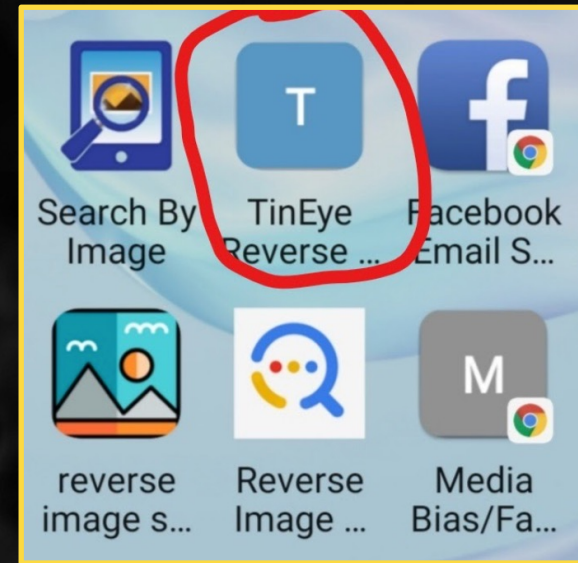


# FOR ANDROID



## ANDROID – STEP 4

The shortcut to the website is now on your phone screen, ready to use when you need it.



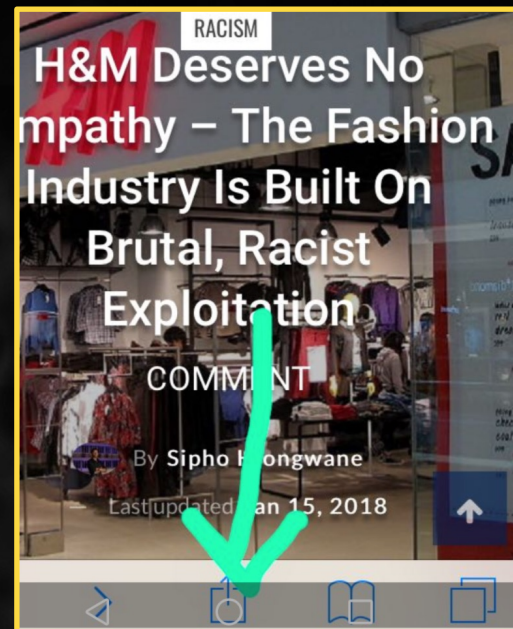
**FOR  
IPHONE**



## IPHONE – STEP 1

Navigate to the site you want to save to your phone. Press the icon that shows a box with an arrow.

**Note:** The location of this icon may differ according to your iPhone model.



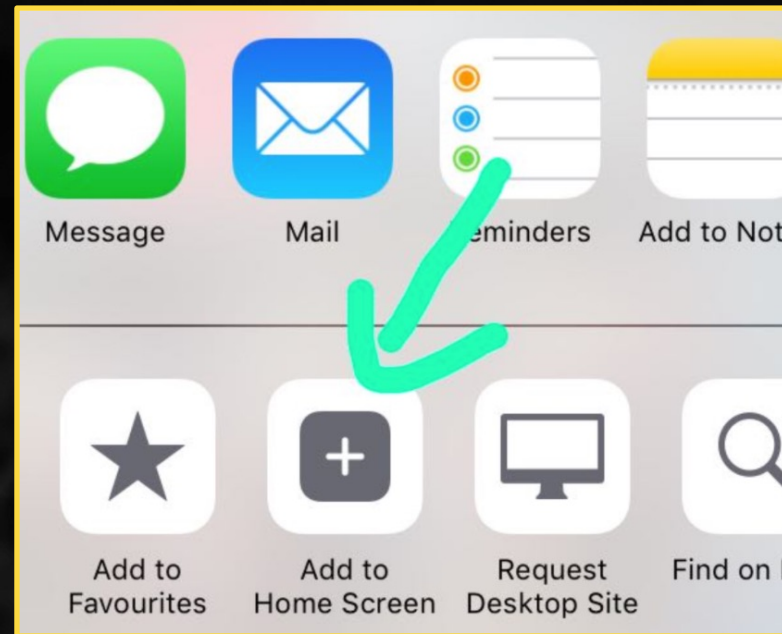


**FOR**  
**IPHONE**



## iPHONE – STEP 2

Now press the 'Add to Home Screen' icon.



# FOR IPHONE

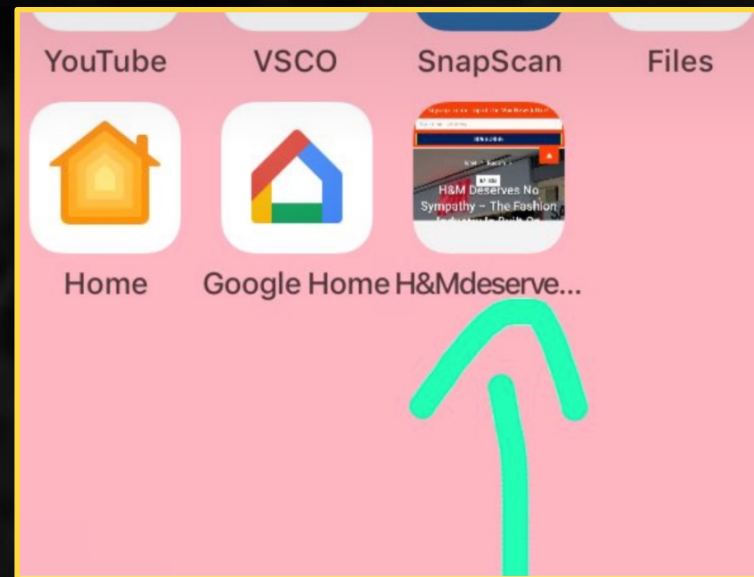


## IPHONE – STEP 3

The shortcut to the site is now on your home screen, ready to use when you need to access the site.

**Note:** Using Safari? You can find detailed instructions on how to add a website to your home screen for iPhone or iPad [here](#).

If you're using Chrome on your Apple device, follow [these](#) instructions.



# HEAVY LIFTING



## SOME FREE TOOLS THAT WILL HELP YOU DO THE HEAVY LIFTING

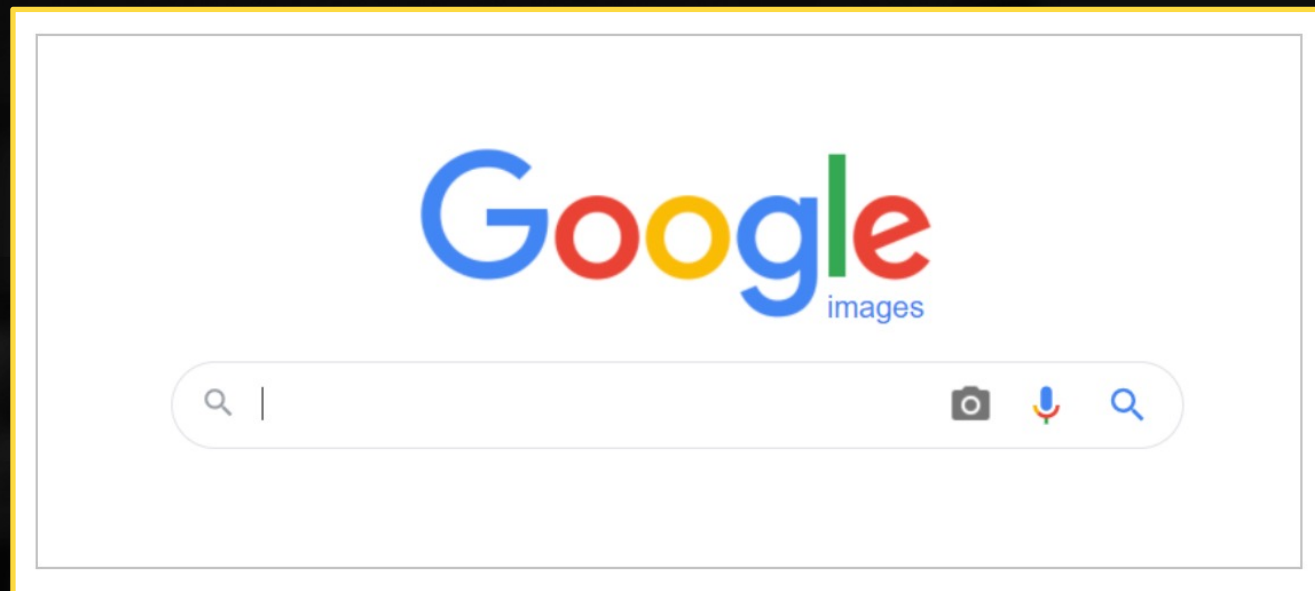
**NB:** Tools can help you do the heavy lifting, but you've still got to do the journalism. One of the most powerful tools of all is your own common sense. Be wary of sharing something that wasn't found via a credible source, or something you haven't checked for yourself.

Remember that it takes years to build credibility, but you can easily harm your reputation by unintentionally sharing 'fake news'.

If you're not sure, don't share it!



# GOOGLE REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH



# REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH



## DOING A GOOGLE REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH

1. Add <https://images.google.com/> to your phone's home screen.
2. Save or download the picture you want to verify. You can also copy the web address of the picture. (NB: It must be the URL of the actual photo, not of the entire web page.)
3. Open the browser menu and in the dropdown select 'Request Desktop Site'. In Google Chrome, the menu is found by pressing the three dots at the top right (or at the bottom right in Firefox). In Safari, it's usually in the centre at the bottom of the screen.
4. Now press the camera icon in the search bar.
5. You now have the following options:
  - a) Paste the URL of the photo in the search bar
  - b) Select the 'Upload An Image' tab to upload the image from where you've saved it on your phone.

# REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH



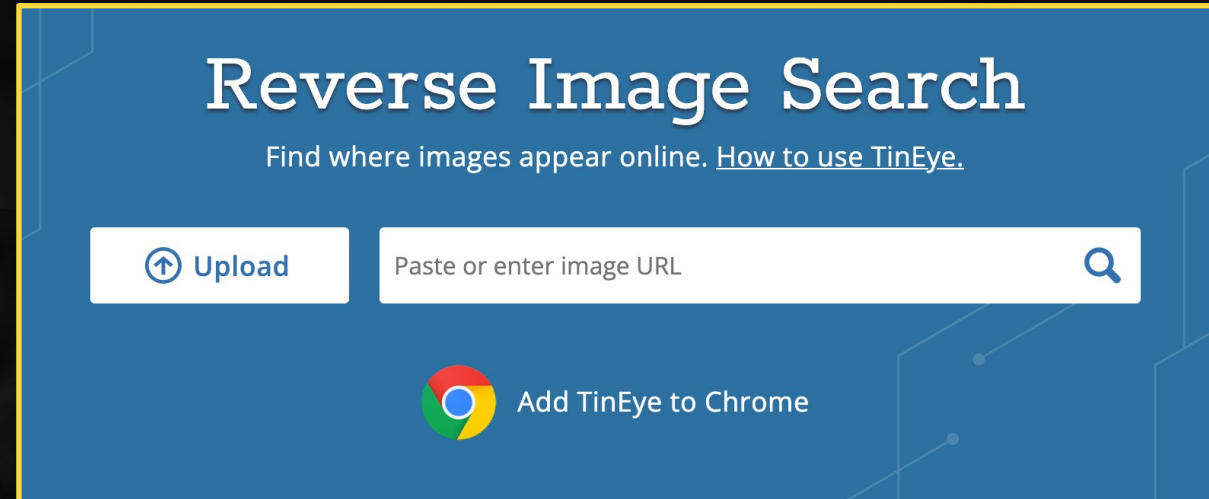
## DOING A GOOGLE REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH CONT.

6. The tool has done the heavy lifting. Now you need to work through the results, checking for when and where else the image may have been used. Also check the context of any previous usage. If you go back far enough, you may be able to find when it was first used and, sometimes, even the owner of the photo.

**Tip:** If you're using Google Chrome as your default mobile browser, long-press on a photo and a drop-down menu will appear. Select 'Search with Google Lens' to do a reverse image search. (Older versions may say 'Search Google with this Image'.)

**Tip:** If you've downloaded an app, you can often access it by using the 'Share' function and looking for the tool in the results. These results would also include sharing to Facebook, email, WhatsApp, Twitter etc.

# TINEYE REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH



The screenshot shows the TinEye website interface. At the top, the title "Reverse Image Search" is displayed in white on a blue background. Below the title is the subtitle "Find where images appear online. [How to use TinEye.](#)". The main search area features a white "Upload" button with an upward arrow icon, followed by a search input field containing the placeholder text "Paste or enter image URL" and a magnifying glass search icon. Below the search field is a Chrome extension icon with the text "Add TinEye to Chrome".

# REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH



## HOW TO SEARCH USING TINEYE

1. Go to [www.tineye.com](http://www.tineye.com) in your phone's browser and save a shortcut to the site on your phone's home screen
2. With Chrome, you can save or download the picture you want to verify by long-pressing on it until a drop-down menu appears. Press on the 'Save' option to save it to your phone's photos folder.
3. You could also take a screengrab of the picture before cropping and saving it to your photos folder.
4. OR copy the web address of the picture you want to verify by tapping on the photo and copying its URL. (NB: It must be the URL of the actual photo, not of the entire web page on which it appears.)
5. Now open TinEye on your phone using the shortcut.
6. You now have two options:
  - a) Select 'upload image' and search for the saved copy of the picture in your phone's picture gallery.
  - b) Paste the URL of the photo into the TinEye search bar.



# REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH



## HOW TO SEARCH USING TINEYE CONT.

7. Once the search is completed, click on the 'Sort By' box on the top left and choose one of the options in the drop-down menu ('Oldest', 'Most Changed' etc.)

8. Choosing the 'Most Changed' option will find instances in which the photo you're checking has been published previously. Now work through the results, as you would with a Google search. Click on those you want to look at.

9. Toggle between 'Your Image' and 'Image Match' to see how the photo has been altered.

10. If you choose the 'Oldest' option and go back far enough, you will often find the first time the photo was used, as well as the context and the person who shot it.

**Note:** TinEye, as with other reverse image search tools, can only find photos posted online. If a picture was only posted on WhatsApp, Telegram or Signal and never shared online, you won't get a hit.

# LABNOL REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH

## Reverse Image Search

With Reverse Image Search by Google, you can quickly discover visually similar photos from around the web on your mobile phone and iPad.

# REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH



## HOW TO USE LABNOL REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH

Navigate to [www.labnol.org/reverse/](http://www.labnol.org/reverse/)

Save it to your desktop to create a shortcut.

Press 'Upload Image'. You can choose an image from your photo library, iCloud, Dropbox or Google Drive. You can also choose a new photo you have taken with your phone's camera.

Select the image you want to check and press 'Done'.

Press 'Show Matching Images'.

Now check through the results for other uses of the photo and any additional information about it.

If you find an earlier use of the picture you searched for, chances are good that the new use is out of context.

# PHOTO SHERLOCK



# TIME TO CHECK



## VERIFYING PHOTOS WITH PHOTO SHERLOCK

- 1) Download the app to your phone (Android: <https://bit.ly/3bB1cGE> & iPhone: <https://apple.co/2ldpszo>)
- 2) Open the app. You now have two choices:
  - a) Save or download the picture you want to verify, or capture a screengrab of it.
  - b) Press the small square icon with two triangles in it. You will see various folders, including photos, camera, screenshots etc.
- 3) Find the photo you want to check.
- 4) You also have the option to edit the photo. For example: If it's from Facebook, you might want to edit out any text or comments accompanying the post.

# TIME TO CHECK



## VERIFYING PHOTOS WITH PHOTO SHERLOCK CONT.

5) Press 'Use This Picture'.

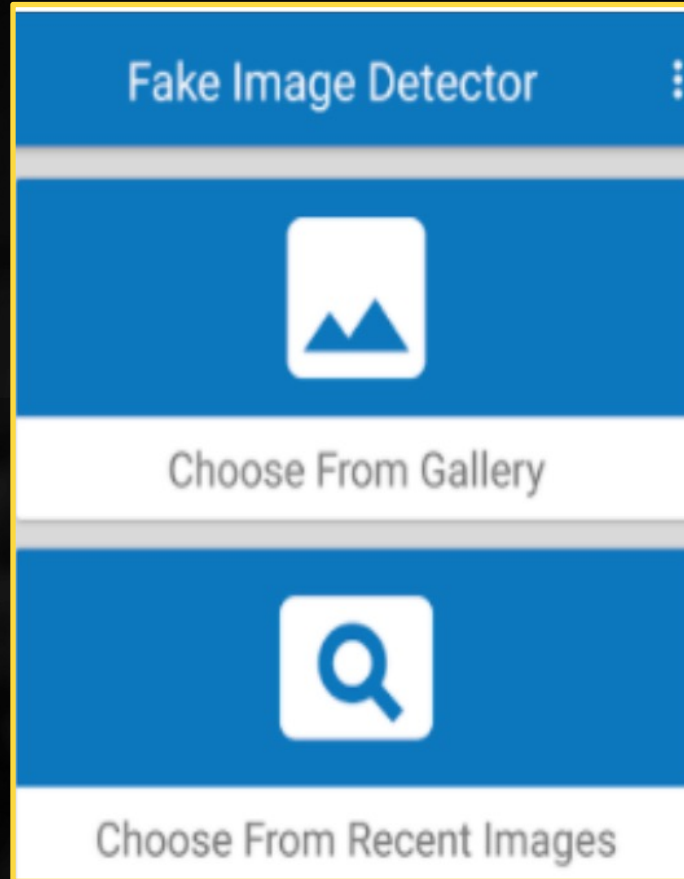
6) It will use Google Search as a default. You also have the option to use Yandex. This is another powerful search engine focused on Russia and Eastern Europe, where a lot of the fakery, as well as dis- and misinformation on social media is created.

7) Once the search is completed, work through the results.

8) Look for previous uses of the photo, the date when it was used and the context in which it was used.

**Tip:** When you open the app, you'll also find an option to take a photo. Use it to photograph a poster or a photograph in a magazine or newspaper. You also have the option to crop the picture you took. Press 'Use This Picture' and it will run a search.

# FAKE IMAGE DETECTOR



**TIME TO  
CHECK**



## HOW TO USE FAKE IMAGE DETECTOR

- 1) Download and install the Fake Image Detector app from the Chrome Play Store (<https://bit.ly/3nBlnWd>).
- 2) Fake Image Detector interrogates the metadata of a photo and will tell you whether the photo has been edited or manipulated. While it is fairly accurate, be aware that it is not foolproof. Take the response of possible manipulation as a red flag rather than a conclusive result. Be sure to conduct additional research.
- 3) Open the app and select one of two options:
  - a) Choose from gallery: this provides access to places where photos are stored on your phone, so you can perform a reverse image search.
  - b) Choose from recent images: select the photograph you've taken of a poster or a picture in a magazine or newspaper.



# TIME TO CHECK



## HOW TO USE FAKE IMAGE DETECTOR CONT.

4) Fake Image Detector also allows you to check the [EXIF data](#), including the date the picture was taken, as well as the geolocation and make of the camera or smartphone used. Sometimes you can even find the name of the person who owns the equipment used to shoot the picture.

Tip: Unfortunately, Fake Image Detector is only available for Android devices. Try Veracity Reverse Image Search (<https://apple.co/3plzRv!>), which is available for free in the Apple App Store for iOS devices.

Note: Twitter, Facebook and some other platforms strip out the EXIF data before they publish it.

# FIRSTDRAFTNEWS VERIFICATION TOOLKIT

The screenshot displays the First Draft News Verification Toolkit website. The header includes the First Draft logo and navigation links for ABOUT, PROJECTS, RESEARCH, TRAINING, and LATEST, along with a search icon. The main content area is organized into several functional sections:

- Provenance:** Contains two search tools: "REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH" and "REVERSE YOUTUBE SEARCH", each with an input field for the respective URL and a "Go" button.
- Date and Time:** Includes a "WOLFRAM ALPHA WEATHER CHECK" tool with fields for "City" and "Date", and an "EXIF DATA" tool with an "Entire Image URL" field. A "YouTube DataViewer" link is also present.
- Source:** Features three identification tools: "REAL NAME" (with "First Name" and "Last Name" fields), "TWITTER USERNAME", and "FACEBOOK ID" (with a "Facebook ID Number" field). A "Get Facebook ID Number" link is provided below.
- Location:** Lists several mapping services: Google Maps, Wikimapia, OpenStreetMap, Yandex Maps, Baidu Maps, and Naver Maps.
- Browser Extensions:** Lists five recommended extensions: RevEye, Google Translate, Wayback Machine, InVID Verification Plugin, and Session Buddy.

**TIME TO  
CHECK**



VISIT THE SITE TO LEARN MORE

[firstdraftnews.org/verification-toolbox](https://firstdraftnews.org/verification-toolbox)

# TOP TIPS



## ASK YOURSELF

- Am I looking at the original version of the photo?
- When was the photo first used and does this usage predate the one I am verifying?
- What is the context in which it was used? Be aware that genuine, unedited photos are often used out of context with the intention to mislead.
- Do I know who took the photo? Knowing who took it means you may be able to contact them to ask for further info and context.
- Do I know the intent of the person who shot the photo? Does the photo make me sad or angry, or evoke other strong feelings? Often, manipulated or out-of-context photos are intended to play on people's emotions.

# TOP TIPS



## ASK YOURSELF

- Do I know where the photo was taken?
- What are people wearing? Do their clothes fit the style of the country where the picture was supposedly shot?
- Are there other clues? Look out for traffic signs and other signage, including number plates and anything else that may help you to work out where the photo was taken.
- What is the weather like in the photo? If you know the date a photo was taken, use WolframAlpha (<https://bit.ly/3ajvywh>) to search for the prevailing weather conditions on the day. To get an idea of how it works, check out the weather on the day you were born.
- What is the lighting like? Look for inconsistent lighting in the photo. Are objects close to one another lit in the same way, or do some seem brighter or duller? If so, there's a good chance they've been added in or digitally manipulated.
- Do people or objects in the photo have unsharp outlines? If so, they have probably been manipulated.

# TOP TIPS



## KEEP CHECKING

- Check the shadows in the photo. Shadows are often absent from poorly manipulated photos.
- Look out for non-standard image shapes or sizes. This is often an indication that the photo has been edited to change the context (see <https://bit.ly/2ZfDB6X>).
- In nature, there are always subtle variations in light and colour. If large areas of a photo are identical in colour, it might indicate that image-manipulation software has been used to add or remove something.
- If you're looking at a reasonably sharp photo with more than one person in it, look at their eyes to see if the light reflected in them is consistent.

# TOP TIPS



## CHECK AGAIN

If a photo seems too good to be true, it often is. In the early days of the worldwide COVID-19 outbreak, when Italy was in hard lockdown, strange photos (<https://bit.ly/3aj4TPY>) began circulating. These were of swans and dolphins swimming in the canals of Venice, which are normally murky because of pollution caused by motorboat engines. But it was ‘fake news’ (<https://on.natgeo.com/37enqv1>).

Swans are regularly seen in parts of the canals, and the dolphin pictures were taken in Sardinia. Another giveaway was that the original photos were found in a Tweet (which has since been deleted) by someone in India. Considering that Italy was in hard lockdown, it is highly unlikely that an Indian tourist would be visiting Venice at that time. As it turns out, the photos were taken from the internet. The fabricated story went viral, with some large mainstream media falling for it (<https://bit.ly/3jP4NTwf>).

**Bottom line: if you’re not sure, don’t share. You can be part of the solution to ‘fake news’, or part of the problem. It’s your choice.**

# BROWSE RESOURCES



## EXPLORE

- A few more reverse image search tools worth checking out: <https://bit.ly/37duc4g>
- This FirstDraftNews all-in-one verification toolbox helps you easily check the provenance of photos and YouTube videos. The toolbox also includes a few other simple-to-use fact-checking tools: <http://bit.ly/2lcdZjv>
- You'll find some very useful fact-checking tools and resources on the FirstDraftNews site: <https://bit.ly/3qmuhKf>
- FullFact guide on how to spot misleading and manipulated online images: <https://bit.ly/2XASMqn>
- FirstDraftNews downloadable resource on verifying photos (print it out for quick access when you need it): <https://bit.ly/3ahjKuf>
- FirstDraftNews video about photo manipulation: <https://bit.ly/2ZfDB6X>
- 'How to Geek' guide to spotting misleading images online: <https://bit.ly/3ol2ngU>
- AfricaCheck's downloadable 5-step fact-check poster: <https://bit.ly/3jMcOIK>



# RESOURCES & TOOLS



## EXPLORE

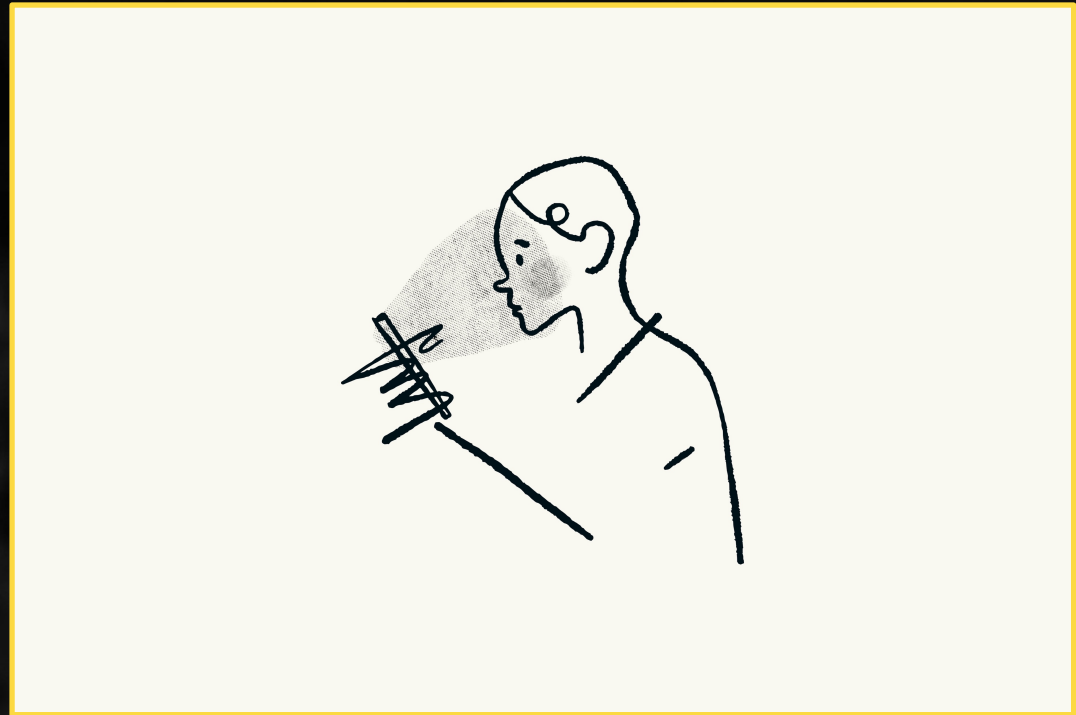
- Raymond Joseph's fact-checking toolkit: [bit.ly/2VC7T0j](https://bit.ly/2VC7T0j)
- FirstDraftNews fact-checking resources: [bit.ly/3b4I9Cy](https://bit.ly/3b4I9Cy)
- Mallachy Brown's OSINT (Open Source Intelligence) toolkit: [bit.ly/2lbgMtj](https://bit.ly/2lbgMtj)
- OSINT Essentials: [bit.ly/2mGA9CH](https://bit.ly/2mGA9CH)

**REAL  
OR FAKE?**



## CHECK YOUR SKILLS

Now go to [bit.ly/2Z4zEzI](https://bit.ly/2Z4zEzI) and test your photo-verification skills.



# A USEFUL DOWNLOAD



## ADD TO YOUR TOOLKIT

It's worthwhile downloading and trying out other reverse image search tools. If they work for you, add them to your fact-checking toolkit. If they don't, dump them.

**Tip:** Often a downloaded reverse image search app will end up in 'Share' on your phone. To use the app to check a photo you've saved, get the photo on your screen and go to 'Share'. Then select the reverse image tool you want to use. The tool will then search for similar photos.

# THANK YOU

As journalists, we are committed to open-source tools and sharing, so please feel free to share this presentation with colleagues.

All I ask is that you attribute the source. Thank you!

**Raymond Joseph**

[rayjoe@iafrica.com](mailto:rayjoe@iafrica.com)

Twitter: @rayjoe

In conjunction with **Roth Communications**

[www.rothcommunications.co.za](http://www.rothcommunications.co.za)