

Examining Our Sources

Source	Pros	Cons
Candidate's literature (website, brochures etc.)	Potentially more detailed, with information about candidate's position of issues.	Filled with spin—its purpose is to get you to support this candidate.
News media	While some news sources have political leanings (MSNBC—Democratic, Fox News—Republican), most work hard to be as objective as possible.	The sound bite—most news sources cut the position of a candidate down to seven seconds or less of airtime, hard to get into a lot of depth.
Blogs	A wide diversity of voices on what's happening.	The line between reporting and editorializing is significantly blurred. Don't necessarily follow journalist rules of fact checking and sourcing.
Non-partisan groups	Provide detailed accounts of candidates voting records and speeches.	Requires the public to sift through the information themselves and form an opinion. Fewer and fewer candidates are participating in the surveys groups like Project Vote Smart produce. Covers mostly national elections.
Interest group endorsements	Provides advice and shortcut to knowing who represents your interests. "If I like A, and A likes B, then I should like B."	Subjective. Often limited to one issue support. Can be broad and vague—you may differ on specific policy decisions.