General Guidelines

General Guidelines Overview

Welcome to the Domain Quality Rating Program!

As a Domain Quality Rater, you will work on many different types of rating projects. The General Guidelines primarily cover Domain Quality (DQ) rating.

For brevity, we refer to "Domain Quality Raters" as "raters" in these guidelines.

Tip: If you are looking for information belonging to a specific topic or category which you believe to be featured in these guidelines, we recommend that you use the "search" function of your device to find key terms and phrases. For example, this would be actioned by pressing the buttons "ctrl" + "F" on some laptops.

Note: In several of the examples(screenshots) you will notice a slider where you will be able to make your rating selections. Please note in the production environment you will be provided a check box setting where you can select your ratings.

Introduction to Domain Quality Rating

0.1   The Purpose of Domain Quality Rating

As a Domain Quality Rater, you will help evaluate domain quality around the world.

Ratings are used to measure how effectively a domain is working to deliver helpful content to people around the world. As part of your role in the domain quality rating program, it is important that you are familiar with and comfortable using a website.

0.2   Raters Must Represent People in their Rating Locale

It is very important for you to represent people in the locale you evaluate. You must be very familiar with the task language and location in order to represent the experience of people in your locale. If you do not have the knowledge to do this, please inform your employer/company.

Unless your rating task indicates otherwise, your ratings should be based on the instructions and examples given in these guidelines. Ratings should not be based on your personal opinions, preferences, religious beliefs, or political views. Always use your best judgment and represent the cultural standards of your rating locale.

0.3   Browser Requirements

Check with your employer/company for browser requirements. You may use helpful browser add-ons or extensions, but please do not use add-ons or extensions that interfere with or alter the user experience of the website.

0.4   Ad Blocking Extensions

Do not use add-ons or extensions that block ads for rating. These add-ons or extensions may cause you to give incorrect ratings. As a rater, only use an ad blocking extension or add-on if specifically instructed to do so in the project-specific instructions.

Important: Some browsers such as Chrome automatically block some ads. As a rater, you are required to turn off any ad blocker capabilities of the browser you use to view websites for rating tasks. Check your browser settings before rating tasks to ensure your ratings accurately reflect how people experience the website without ad blocking settings and extensions. For more information about Chrome Ad Blocking, see Chrome Support Page for Ad Blocking Settings.

0.5   Internet Safety Information

In the course of your work, you will visit many different websites. Some of them may harm your computer unless you are careful. Please do not download any executables, applications, or other potentially dangerous files, or click on any links that you are uncomfortable with.

It is strongly recommended that you have antivirus and antispyware protection on your computer. This software must be updated frequently or your computer will not be protected. There are many free and for-purchase antivirus and antispyware products available on the web .

See here for a Wikipedia page on antivirus software and here for a Wikipedia page on spyware.

We suggest that you only open files with which you are comfortable. The file formats listed below are generally considered safe if antivirus software is in place.

- .txt (text files)
- .ppt or .pptx (Microsoft PowerPoint)
- .doc or .docx (Microsoft Word)
- .xls or .xlsx (Microsoft Excel)
- .pdf (PDF files) (Adobe Acrobat)

If you encounter a website with a warning message, such as "Warning-visiting this web site may harm your computer," or if your antivirus software warns you about a website, you should not try to visit the website to assign a rating.

0.6   The Role of Examples in these Guidelines

The rating concepts in these guidelines apply to all types of content. The examples throughout these guidelines are very important to illustrate how the concepts defined in each section should be applied in rating tasks for different types of websites and different types of content.

Please view each example and keep the following in mind:

- Websites change rapidly, so we use images or "snapshots" of websites in most of our examples.
- Because some types of content are difficult to view in "snapshot" form, a description of the website is provided for each example.
- The information in the examples was accurate at the time it was added, but content and websites may change over time.
- Some examples show pages on desktop and some show pages on mobile devices.

Part 1: Domain Quality Rating Guideline

1.0   Introduction to Domain Quality Rating

A Domain Quality (DQ) rating task consists of a URL and a list of attributes to record your observations, as you explore the website associated with the URL. **The goal of DQ rating is to evaluate how well the domain / website achieves its purpose.**

Here's what you'll need to be a successful Domain Quality rater:

- Your experience using the web as an ordinary user in your rating locale.
- In-depth knowledge of these guidelines.
- And most importantly—practice doing DQ rating tasks!

2.0   Understanding Webpages and Websites

Domain Quality rating requires an in-depth understanding of websites. We'll start with the basics. Along the way, we'll share important information about Domain Quality rating, so please read through this section even if you are a website expert! <mark>A good quality domain consists of good quality pages throughout the domain</mark>.

2.1   Important Definitions

Here are some important definitions:

In these guidelines, the word " **user** " refers to a person trying to find information or accomplish a task on the Internet. Users are people from many different backgrounds, whose experiences and needs may differ from your own: people of all ages, genders, races, religions, political affiliations, etc.

A **webpage** is connected to the World Wide Web and can be viewed or "visited" using a web browser (e.g., Chrome), a browser on your phone, or a search app. In the 1990s, webpage content was mostly text and links. Today, webpage content includes many forms of media (such as images, videos, etc.) and functionality (such as online shopping features, email, calculator functionality, online games, etc.).

A **URL** is a string of letters, numbers, and punctuation that your web browser uses to "find" and display a webpage. Domain Quality rating doesn't require you to have in-depth understanding of the structure of URLs, i.e., you don't need to know the difference between host, domain, etc. But if you are interested, see here to read more.

A **website** or **domain** is a group of World Wide Web pages usually containing hyperlinks to each other and made available online by an individual, company, educational institution, government, or organization. Popular websites include Facebook, Wikipedia, Yahoo, YouTube, etc.

> **Note** : In these guidelines, we will use the word "website" to refer to a domain / collection of webpages owned and controlled by a single entity (individual, business, etc.). But we will also use "website" to refer to major "independent" sections (or hosts) of some websites that were created to achieve separate purposes. For example, the Yahoo website is organized into different sections (or hosts), such as Yahoo Finance (finance.yahoo.com), Yahoo Mail (mail.yahoo.com), Yahoo Sports (sports.yahoo.com), etc. Each of these has its own purpose. It's OK to refer to each of these sections as a website; for example, the Yahoo Finance website and the Yahoo Sports website. You may also refer to pages on Yahoo Finance or Yahoo Sports as belonging to the Yahoo website.

A **homepage** of a website is the main page of the site. It is usually the first page that users see when the site loads. For example, http://www.apple.com is the homepage of the Apple site, http://www.yahoo.com is the homepage of the Yahoo

company site, and http://finance.yahoo.com is the homepage of Yahoo Finance. You can usually find the homepage of a website by clicking on a "home" link or logo link on subpages of a website.

A **website owner** is the person, company, or organization who is responsible for a website.

A **content creator** is the individual(s) or entity (business, organization, etc.) who created the content on a webpage.

Generative AI is a type of machine learning (ML) model that can take what it has learned from the examples it has been provided to create new content, such as text, images, music, and code. Learn more here . Different tools leverage these models to create generative AI content. Generative AI can be a helpful tool for content creation, but like any tool, it can also be misused.

MFA (made for advertising) sites are websites that exist primarily to serve ads, often relying on artificial traffic or clickbait rather than providing genuine useful content. MFAs are designed to maximise the number of ads that users are exposed to by including lots of ads on each page and manipulating user journeys so that visitors must click through multiple pages to access content. Because of these characteristics, they offer poor usability for visitors and focus on ad revenue over experience and quality of content.

Important *:* You must be very comfortable exploring websites, both by clicking links and modifying URLs in the address bar of your web browser. Become a website detective and explorer!

2.2 Understanding the Purpose of a Website - the first step of rating

The purpose of a website is the reason or reasons why the website was created. Every website on the Internet is created for a purpose, or for multiple purposes. Most websites are created to be helpful for people, thus having a beneficial purpose. Some websites are created merely to make money, with little or no effort to help people. Some websites are even created to harm users. The first step in understanding a website is figuring out its purpose.

Why is it important to determine the purpose of the website for DQ rating?

- The goal of DQ rating is to determine how well a website and its pages achieves its purpose. In order to assign a rating, you must understand the purpose of the website.
- By understanding the purpose of the website, you'll better understand what criteria are important to consider when evaluating that particular website.
- Websites and pages should be created to help people. If that is not the case, a rating of **Lowest** may be warranted. More on this later.

As long as the website is created to help people, we will not consider any particular website purpose or type to be higher quality than another. For example, encyclopedia websites are not necessarily higher quality than humor websites.

Important: There are highest quality and lowest quality websites of all different types and purposes: shopping websites, news websites, forum websites, video websites, websites with error messages, PDFs, images, gossip websites, humor websites, homepages, and all other types of websites. The type of website does not determine the DQ rating—you have to understand the purpose of the website to determine the rating.

Common helpful or beneficial website purposes include (but are not limited to):

- To share information about a topic.
- To share a personal experience, perspective, or feelings on a topic.
- To share pictures, videos, or other forms of media.
- To demonstrate a personal talent or skill.
- To express an opinion or point of view.
- To entertain.

- To offer products or services.
- To allow people to post questions for other users to answer.
- To allow people to share files or to download software.
- To allow people to support a charity or other cause they care about.

Here are a few examples where it is easy to understand the purpose of the website:

Type of website	Purpose of the website
News website homepage	To inform users about recent or important events.
Shopping page	To sell or give information about the product.
Video page	To share a cute video of a cat.
Currency converter page	To calculate equivalent amounts in different currencies.

Here is an example (OmNomNomNom Page) of a helpful website where the purpose of the website is not as obvious. At first glance, this website may seem pointless or strange. However, it is a webpage from a humorous site that encourages users to post photos with mouths drawn on them. The purpose of the website is humor or artistic expression. This website has a helpful or beneficial purpose. Even though the About page on this website is not very helpful, the website explains itself on its FAQ page.

> **For non YMYL domains - your main focus should be on whether the domain has achieved its purpose.**

2.3   Your Money or Your Life (YMYL) Topics

Websites on the World Wide Web are about a vast variety of topics. Some topics have a high risk of harm because content about these topics could significantly impact the health, financial stability, or safety of people, or the welfare or well-being of society. We call these topics "Your Money or Your Life" or YMYL.

YMYL topics may significantly impact or harm one or more of the following:
- the person who is directly viewing or using the content
- other people who are affected by the person who viewed the content
- groups of people or society affected by the actions of people who viewed the content

YMYL topics can directly and significantly impact people's health, financial stability or safety, or the welfare or well-being of society, because of the following reasons:
- **The topic itself is harmful or dangerous** . For example, there is clear and present harm directly associated with topics related to self-harm, criminal acts, or violent extremism.
- **The topic could cause harm if the content is not accurate and trustworthy** . For example, mild inaccuracies or content from less reliable sources could significantly impact someone's health, financial stability, or safety, or impact society, for topics like: symptoms of a heart attack, how to invest money, what to do if there is an earthquake, who can vote, or needed qualifications for obtaining a driver's license.

To determine whether a topic is YMYL, assess the following types of harm that might occur:
- **YMYL Health or Safety**: Topics that could harm mental, physical, and emotional health, or any form of safety such as physical safety or safety online.
- **YMYL Financial Security**: Topics that could damage a person's ability to support themselves and their families.
- **YMYL Society**: Topics that could negatively impact groups of people, issues of public interest, trust in public institutions, etc
- **YMYL Othe**r: Topics that could hurt people or negatively impact welfare or well-being of society.

It's possible to imagine a hypothetical harmful website for any non-harmful topic, such as the science behind rainbows or shopping for pencils: for either of these topics, someone could build a website that has a malicious computer virus download. However, for a specific topic to be YMYL, the topic itself must potentially impact people's health, financial stability, or safety, or the welfare or well-being of society.

> **Tip: Many or most topics are not YMYL and <u>do not require a high level of accuracy or trust *to prevent harm*</u> .** Because YMYL assessment is a spectrum, it may be helpful to think of topics as clear YMYL , definitely not YMYL or something in between. Websites on clear YMYL topics require the most scrutiny for Domain Quality rating.
>
> **However, for domains which are clearly not YMYL - you should focus on whether the <u>purpose</u> of the domain has been met, rather than its reputation and/or trustworthiness. We will talk about E-E-A-T later!**

Type of Topic	Clear YMYL Topic	May be YMYL Topic	Not or Unlikely YMYL Topic
Information Could significant harm result from inaccurate information?	**Evacuation routes for a tsunami** **Explanation**: Inaccurate information on evacuation routes could cause significant harm to people.	**Weather forecast** **Explanation**: In most situations, slightly inaccurate information about the weather forecast will not cause harm. People often ask family members "what's the weather today".	**Music award winners** **Explanation**: This topic is unlikely to cause harm.
Advice about an activity Could significant harm result from poor advice?	**When to go to the emergency room** **Explanation** : Bad advice on when to go to the emergency room could cause significant harm.	**How often to replace a toothbrush** **Explanation**: This is a casual health topic people commonly discuss with friends. A slightly imperfect suggestion is unlikely to significantly impact health or safety.	**How frequently to wash jeans** **Explanation**: This topic is unlikely to cause harm.
A personal opinion What impact could this opinion have on other people and society?	**Personal opinion about why a racial group is inferior** **Explanation**: websites on this topic have been used to justify or incite violence against groups of people.	**Personal opinion about why an exercise is inferior** **Explanation**: While there may be a health concern if the exercise is extreme or risky, most discussions of jogging vs swimming, etc. involve personal preference.	**Personal opinion about why a rock band is inferior** **Explanation**: This topic is unlikely to cause harm, although there may be strong opinions involved!

News about current events Could this topic significantly impact people and society? For societal impact, consider issues such as elections and trust in public institutions that benefit society.	**News about ongoing violence** **Explanation**: People need accurate information to stay safe. Society may also be impacted by information about ongoing violence, as citizens and governments make civic decisions accordingly.	**News about a car accident** **Explanation**: The accident itself may have been harmful, but there is likely little risk of future harm from small inaccuracies in reporting about an incident.	**News about a local high school basketball game** **Explanation**: This topic is unlikely to cause harm.
Sharing on social media Could the social media post cause significant harm? Could it hurt individuals? Could it damage society if widely shared?	**A tide pod challenge post** **Explanation** : This harmful social media challenge was responsible for deaths.	**A hot sauce challenge** **Explanation** : While some people may experience some discomfort by tasting various hot sauces, it is unlikely that sharing about such challenges would cause significant harm.	**A music video** **Explanation** : This type of content generally has little risk of harm.
Online commerce and product reviews Consider the product. Could the product cause significant harm?	**Purchasing prescription drugs** **Explanation** : Prescription drugs have the potential to cause harm and require purchase from licensed pharmacies.	**Review of a type of car** **Explanation** : While cars are big purchases, many people ask friends and family about cars.	**Purchasing pencils** **Explanation** : Pencils and other everyday items are unlikely to cause harm.

If you are having trouble deciding whether a topic is YMYL, consider the following questions:
1. Would a careful person seek out experts or highly trusted sources *to prevent harm* ? Could even minor inaccuracies cause harm? If yes, then the topic is likely YMYL.
2. Is the specific topic one that most people would be content with only casually consulting their friends about? If yes, the topic is likely not YMYL.

Important: For websites about clear YMYL topics, we have very high Domain Quality rating standards because low quality websites on such topics could potentially negatively impact a person's health, financial stability, or safety, or the welfare or well-being of society.

2.4   Understanding Website Content

All of the content on a website can be classified as one of the following: Main Content (MC), Supplementary Content (SC), or Advertisements/Monetization (Ads). In order to understand the purpose of a website and do DQ rating, you will need to be able to distinguish among these different parts of the website. In order to determine a DQ rating, we need to take into consideration the MC of pages throughout the website that affect the quality overall.

Website design can be complicated, so make sure to click around and explore the website. See what kind of content is behind the tabs and test out the interactive website features. Content behind the tabs may be considered part of the MC, SC, or Ads, depending on what the content is.

2.4.1 Identifying the Main Content (MC)

Main Content is any part of the website that directly helps the website achieve its purpose. MC can be text, images, videos, website features (e.g., calculators, games), and it can be content created by website users, such as videos, reviews, articles, comments posted by users, etc. Tabs on websites lead to even more information (e.g., customer reviews, about us information, additional information on services provided) and can be considered part of the MC.

The MC also includes the title at the top of the website (example) . Descriptive MC titles allow users to make informed decisions about what pages to visit. Helpful titles summarize the MC on the website.

Type of website and Purpose	MC Highlighted in Yellow
News website homepage: the purpose is to inform users about recent or important events.	MC - News Homepage
News article website: the purpose is to communicate information about an event or news topic.	MC - News Article
Store product website: the purpose is to sell or give information about the product. ● Content behind the Reviews, Shipping, and Safety Information tabs are considered to be part of the MC.	MC - Shopping Page
Currency converter website: the purpose is to calculate equivalent amounts in different currencies.	MC - Currency Converter
Blog post website: the purpose is to share music used on a TV show.	MC - Blog Post Page
Bank login website: the purpose is to allow users to log in to bank online.	MC - Bank Login Page

2.4.2 Identifying the Supplementary Content (SC)

Supplementary Content contributes to a good user experience on the website, but does not directly help the website achieve its purpose. SC is an important part of the user experience. One common type of SC is navigation links that allow users to visit other related domains. Sometimes the easiest way to identify SC is to look for the parts of the website that *are not* MC or Ads.

Type of website and Purpose	SC Highlighted in Blue
News article website: the purpose is to communicate information about an event or news topic.	SC - News Article
Store product website: the purpose is to sell or give information about the product.	SC - Shopping Page
Blog post website: the purpose is to share music used on a TV show.	SC - Blog Post Page

2.4.3 Identifying Advertisements/Monetization (Ads)

Ads may contribute to a good user experience. Advertisements/Monetization (Ads) is content and/or links that are displayed for the purpose of monetizing (making money from) the website. The presence or absence of Ads is not by itself a reason for a **High** or **Low** quality rating. Without advertising and monetization, some websites could not exist because it costs money to maintain a website and create high quality content.

There are many different ways to monetize a website, including advertisements and affiliate programs. See here for more information on website monetization. Note that monetization on mobile websites may be more subtle than monetization on desktop websites.

The most common type of monetization is advertisements. Ads may be labeled as "ads," "sponsored links," "sponsored listings," "sponsored results," etc. Ads may change when you reload the website, and different users may see different Ads on the same website. **Therefore, remember not to become distracted by Ad content, even if it looks deceptive (appears similar to Main Content).**

Website owners can choose to display Ads on their website (such as by joining an advertising network), but they may not always directly control the content of the Ads. However, we will consider a website responsible for the overall **placement** of the Ads displayed.

Important: For the purpose of these guidelines, we will consider monetized links of any type to be "Ads." See here for different types of website monetization.

Type of website and Purpose	Ads Highlighted in Red
News article website: the purpose is to communicate information about an event or news topic.	Ads - News Article
Blog post website: the purpose is to share music used on a TV show.	Ads - Blog Post Page
Store product website: the purpose is to sell or give information about the product.	No ads – Shopping Page

2.4.4 Summary of the Parts of the Website

Let's put it all together.

- **Main Content (MC)** is any part of the website that directly helps the website achieve its purpose. MC is (or should be!) the reason the website exists. The quality of the MC plays a very large role in the Domain Quality rating of a website.
- **Supplementary Content (SC)** is also important. SC can help a website better achieve its purpose or it can detract from the overall experience.
- Many websites have **advertisements/monetization (Ads)** . Without advertising and monetization, some websites could not exist because it costs money to maintain a website and create high quality content. The presence or absence of Ads is not by itself a reason for a **High** or **Low** quality rating (do not judge Ad content).

On some websites, user reviews and comments may be considered MC, and on other websites they may be considered SC. Use your best judgment and think about the purpose of the website.

> **Do not worry too much about identifying every little part of the website. Think about which parts of the website are the MC. Next, look for the Ads. Anything left over can be considered SC.**

Type of Website and Purpose	MC, SC, & Ads Highlighted
News article website: the purpose is to communicate information about an event or news topic.	Summary - News Article
Store product website: the purpose is to sell or give information about the product.	Summary - Shopping Page
Currency converter website: the purpose is to calculate equivalent amounts in different currencies.	Summary - Currency Converter
Blog post website: the purpose is to share music used on a TV show.	Summary - Blog Post Page
Bank login website: the purpose is to allow users to log in to the bank online.	Summary - Bank Login Page

2.5   Understanding the Website?

The criteria in Domain Quality rating are based on understanding the collection of pages that belongs to a website.

To understand a website (in particular, for those who cover YMYL topics), start by finding out who is responsible for the website and who created the content on the website (more information provided in Section 2.5.2). Then, look for information about the website and/or content creators on the website itself. Website owners and content creators are usually very eager to tell you all about themselves!

You must also look for reputation information about the website and/or content creators. What do outside, independent sources say about them? When there is disagreement between what the website or content creators say about themselves and what reputable independent sources say, trust the independent sources.

> **Remember: If a domain does not fall under the criteria for YMYL - finding creator and reputation information should not impact your final rating as significantly as whether the purpose of the domain has been met.**

2.5.1 Finding the Homepage

The homepage of a website usually contains or has links to important information about the website. Website owners usually make it easy to get to the homepage from any page on the site.

Here's how to find the homepage of a website:

1. Examine the landing page of the URL in your DQ rating task.
2. Find and click on the link labeled with the name or logo of the website (occasionally labeled as "home" or "main"), which usually appears at the top of the page.

Sometimes, you may be given a website that appears to have no navigation links, no homepage link, and no logo or other means to find the homepage. Even some **High** or **Highest** quality pages lack a way to navigate to the homepage. If you can't find a link to the homepage, modify the URL by removing everything to the right of ".com," ".org," ".net," ".fr," etc. and refresh the page.

Occasionally, your rating task will include a URL for which there are two or more justifiable "homepage" candidates. For example, you may not be sure whether the homepage of the URL https://finance.yahoo.com/calendar is http://finance.yahoo.com or http://www.yahoo.com .

Important: When you have more than one homepage "candidate," please use whichever one offers the most information about the specific website in the rating task. Use your judgment. The goal is to understand the website and the website(s) it is associated with, not find the one unique, correct homepage.

In the following examples, we have included the URL of the page to be evaluated in the rating task, as well as the URL of its associated homepage. We have also included an image that shows where to click on the landing page to navigate to the homepage. In the image, you will see a red box around the link or logo you would click to navigate to the homepage.

URL of the Task Page	Homepage of the Website	Where to click to get to the Homepage
http://www.williams-sonoma.com/products/shun-premier-7-piece-knife-block-set	http://www.williams-sonoma.com	Williams-Sonoma Homepage **WILLIAMS SONOMA** This "WILLIAMS-SONOMA" logo shown in the upper center of the page is clickable and takes users to the homepage of the website.
http://hms.harvard.edu/about-hms/facts-figures	http://hms.harvard.edu In this case, we will consider the Harvard Medical School page at http://hms.harvard.edu to be the homepage, rather than http://www.harvard.edu (which is the homepage of Harvard University). Clicking the logo at the top of http://hms.harvard.edu/about-hms/facts-figures takes users to http://hms.harvard.edu , not to http://www.harvard.edu .	Harvard Medical School Facts and Figures Page HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL This "Harvard Medical School" logo in the upper left part of the page is clickable and takes users to the homepage of the Harvard Medical School website.

2.5.2 Finding Who is Responsible for the Website and Who Created the Content on the Website

For any website which can be categorized as **YMYL**, it should be clear:

- Who (what individuals, company, business, organization, government agency, etc.) is responsible for the website.
- Who (what individuals, company, business, organization, government agency, etc.) created the content on the website you are evaluating. Note that for pages on websites such as forums and social media platforms, people may post content using an alias or username in order to avoid sharing personally identifiable information online. In these cases, the alias or username is an acceptable way to identify the content creator.

Websites are usually very clear about who is responsible for the website and who created the content on the website. There are many reasons for this:

- People may want to showcase their own personal talent, experiences, and perspectives.
- Artists, authors, musicians, and other original content creators may want to be known and appreciated.
- Commercial websites may have copyrighted material they want to protect.
- Businesses and organizations may want people to know who they are and what they do.
- Stores want customers to feel comfortable buying their products online.

Most websites have "contact us" or "about us" or "about" pages that provide information about who owns the website. Many companies have an entire website or blog devoted to who they are and what they are doing, what jobs are available, etc. Here are some examples:

- [Google Official Blog](#)
- [Marriott Blog](#)
- [Southwest Airlines Blog](#)
- [Netflix Tech Blog](#)

In DQ rating tasks, you will need to identify who created the MC on the **YMYL** website. To help you do so, the table below describes the primary content creators for common website types. These types can overlap (e.g., a website may have multiple articles, some written by individual authors or journalists and others written by the website owner).

Website Type	Examples	Primary Content Creator(s)
The website owner created the pages and much of the MC on those pages The page may have comments, reviews, or other content posted by users, but the page itself is the responsibility of the website.	- Homepage of a business website - Introductory page on a personal website - Product page on an online merchant website	The website itself can be viewed as the primary content creator. Website owners may have content created on their behalf (e.g., a small business may hire a professional web developer to build their website), but they are ultimately responsible for the MC. User comments and reviews may play a significant role on the page. As long as the website creates and actively maintains the page, the website is considered to be the primary content creator.

The website owner created the page, and the MC on those pages is produced by authors or other content creators identified by the website The website decides what to publish and is responsible for the content, but there are distinct authors or content creators who provide the MC on the page.	• Newspaper opinion piece written by the editorial board • Magazine article written by an individual journalist • Scientific journal paper written by a team of academic researchers	The primary content creators are the journalists, scientists, etc. listed as authors of the content. Often the content creators are individuals, but an organization, company, or institution may also be the content creator. User comments may be present, but they typically are not the focus of the page.
The website consists of social media post(s) from a single account representing an individual content creator or organization The social media website owner enables people and organizations to create accounts to post text, images, videos, and other types of content under their account.	• Social media post • Local business profile page on a social media website • Video channel on a video sharing website	The primary content creator is the person or organization who created the account and is posting the MC. There may be information about the content creator on a profile page found on the website. Other user comments and reactions such as "likes" may be considered part of the MC.
The website is created by multiple users engaging in discussion or posting on social media The website owner enables people to post text, images, and videos or have conversations with other users of the website.	• Forum discussion thread • Q&A question page • Search results page on a social media website showing content from many different users	The people posting are the content creators. There is no single primary content creator, and people may be identified only by aliases or usernames.

Domains which are **NOT YMYL** do not require this level of scrutiny - focus on whether purpose has been achieved

2.5.3 Finding About Us, Contact Information, and Customer Service Information

Many websites are interested in communicating with their users. There are many reasons that users might have for contacting a website, from reporting problems such as broken pages, to asking for content removal. Many websites offer multiple ways for users to contact the website: email addresses, phone numbers, physical addresses, web contact forms, etc. This contact information may even be organized by department and provides the names of individuals to contact.
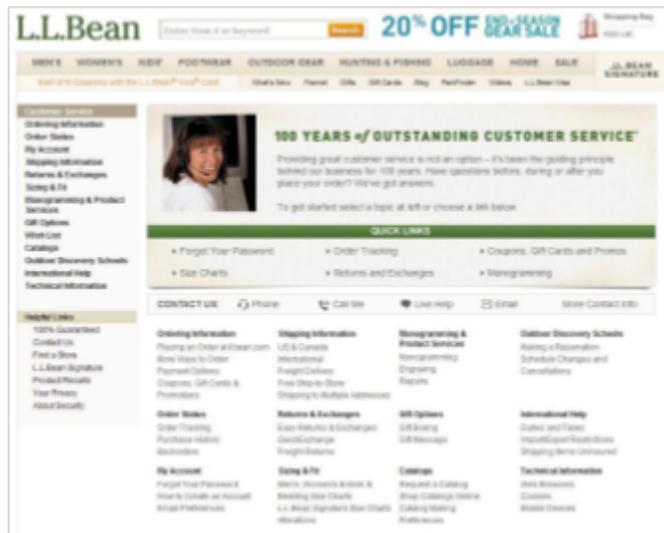
The types and amount of contact information needed depend on the type of website. Contact information and customer service information are extremely important for websites that handle money, such as stores, banks, credit card companies, etc. Users need a way to ask questions or get help when a problem occurs.

For shopping websites, we'll ask you to do some special checks. Look for contact information—including the store's policies on payment, exchanges, and returns. Sometimes this information is listed under "customer service."

Some kinds of websites need fewer details and a smaller amount of contact information for their purpose. For example, humor websites may not need the level of detailed contact information we would expect from online banking websites.

Occasionally, you may encounter a website or content creator with a legitimate reason for anonymity. For example, personal websites may omit personal contact information such as an individual's home address or phone number. Similarly, websites with user-generated content may allow the author to identify themself with an alias or username only.

To find contact or customer service information for a website, start with the homepage. Look for a "contact us" or "customer service" link. Explore the website if you cannot find a "contact us" page. Sometimes you will find the contact information on a "corporate site" link or even on the company's official social media page. Be a detective!
Note that different locales and different social media platforms may have their own conventions and standards for what information should be available on the website. Please use your judgment and knowledge of your locale.

> Domains which are **NOT YMYL** do not require this level of scrutiny - focus on whether purpose has been achieved

2.5.4 Made for Ads (MFA) Domains

Signs that a domain is MFA:
- Lots of ads which interfere with navigation
- Not dedicated to any particular topic: MFA websites often display a wide variety of topics and sub-headings, with little to no connection to each other. This is to attract visitors with a wider variety of search terms and intents.
- Content related to these topics and sub-headings are often generic, non-sensical, copied or clearly AI generated.
- There is no benefit to any user to utilize this domain, as interaction does not result in anything meaningful.
- Domains which are assigned a **Lowest** rating can sometimes be categorized as MFA - as they are deliberately misleading.

Examples:

Website type	Examples	Content
Quizzes	quiztest.me	The purpose of this domain appears to be to provide the user with a variety of quizzes they can take. The categories vary from "Gaming" to "Psychology", The ads content for these pages is high. Many of the quiz topics are quite non-sensical and appear like clickbait, for example "Who Will Have a Secret Relationship With You?" and "Your Religious Preferences Will Reveal Your True Autism %". When a user takes one of the quizzes, it is clear that there is little to no effort involved in the question creation, and the results are not meaningful in any way. The MC is clearly only created to distract from the true purpose of the domain - which is to host ads, and not to produce a meaningful user experience.
Life tips	www.tips-and-tricks.co	The purpose of this domain is portrayed to be to provide the user with a variety of pieces of advice that will be useful for them in life. In reality, the site hosts a number of random articles with features of clickbait in their titles - and the content within these articles appears unoriginal. In order to read any of the articles in full, the user must continue to click through more ad-filled pages, which are very disruptive to the content. As above, the MC is clearly only created to distract from the true purpose of the domain - which is to host ads, and not to produce a meaningful user experience.

3.0   Overall Domain Quality Rating

Now that you are an expert in understanding websites, here are the high-level steps of Domain Quality rating:

1. Assess the true purpose of the website. If the website has a harmful purpose or is designed to deceive people about its true purpose, it should be rated **Lowest** .
2. Assess the potential of the website to cause harm as described in these guidelines. Websites that are harmful to people or society, untrustworthy, or spammy as defined in these guidelines should be rated **Lowest** .

3. Otherwise, the DQ rating is based on how well the website achieves its purpose as described in these guidelines.

Important: There are harmful websites that are seemingly "official", "expert", or "authoritative". Any type of website may have pages with harmful MC, from user-uploaded videos and forum posts to harmful products sold online to websites that mimic the look of scientific papers or encyclopedia entries. All websites should be evaluated for harm—including government websites, academic institutions, reputable online stores, charities, or other types of generally helpful websites.

Your final rating for the entire domain. In order to make your rating, we want you to:

3.1   Website Quality Rating Considerations

The following table summarizes the things that you should consider in Domain Quality rating. Upcoming sections of these guidelines will elaborate on these considerations and explain how they apply to websites across the DQ rating scale.

Consideration	Why it's Important for Domain Quality Rating
The purpose of the website	If the website has a harmful purpose, or if it is designed to deceive people about its true purpose or who is responsible for the content, it should be rated **Lowest** . **Otherwise, DQ rating is the process of determining how well a website achieves its purpose.**
The potential for the website to cause harm as described in these guidelines	Websites that are harmful to people or society, untrustworthy, or spammy as described in these guidelines should be rated **Lowest** .
The topic of the website and the extent to which that topic is YMYL	The topic of the website helps determine the standards for your overall DQ assessment. **Websites on YMYL topics have higher standards than websites on non-YMYL topics.**
The type of website	Different types of websites have different expectations for DQ rating. For example, DQ expectations may differ for: ● Small hobbyist websites vs. large corporate websites ● Websites involving financial transactions vs. websites that do not require payment or collect personal information ● Websites with content created by ordinary people on a volunteer basis vs. websites with content created by professionals
Information provided by the website and content creator	While the information that websites and content creators provide about themselves isn't always trustworthy, it can provide an important starting point.

Quality of the MC	Consider the extent to which the MC is satisfying and helps the website achieve its purpose.
The title of the website	The title of the website is considered part of the MC. Descriptive MC titles that summarize the website allow people to make informed decisions about what websites to visit.
The role of Ads and SC on the website	Consider the ways in which the Ads and SC contribute to how people experience the website. **Remember**: Many websites need monetization to share content with users. The presence or absence of Ads alone is not a consideration for DQ rating.
Reputation of the website and content creator	Research the reputation of the website and the content creator to learn about how others view the website and who is behind it, for YMYL sites.
Trustworthiness of the website: E-E-A-T	Assess how trustworthy the website is. Experience, Expertise and Authoritativeness can help with your assessment of Trust. Some types of websites require a high level of Trust **(YMYL sites).** **Sites which are not YMYL, do not require a high level of scrutiny.**
Site Maintenance	Assess if a site is being maintained. The importance of this consideration will be dependent on the type of domain you are reviewing, for example, if the topic of the site is **YMYL** it will be highly important for articles, information & the overall domain to be well maintained and up to date.

Important: Please note when evaluating the domain, please take into consideration the ads located within the page. Some questions to ask: Are the ads too distracting? Do the ads not allow me to review the content of the page? **NOTE:** We do not consider the content of the Ad, but rather the location of the ad within the domain pages. The ad content is irrelevant when evaluating the quality of domain pages but only locations that hinder domain.

Important: These considerations overlap. For example, while examining the quality of the MC, you may notice factual inaccuracies that lower your assessment of Trust. While conducting reputation research, you may find information about the expertise of the content creator which increases your level of Trust. This is how DQ rating is designed to work!

3.2   Quality of the Main Content

The quality of the Main Content (MC) is one of the most important considerations for DQ rating. The MC plays a major role in determining how well a website achieves its purpose.

The unifying theme for evaluating the quality of the MC is the extent to which the MC allows the website to achieve its purpose and offers a satisfying user experience. For most websites, the quality of the MC can be determined by the amount of **effort** , **originality** , and **talent or skill** that went into the creation of the content. For informational websites and websites on YMYL topics, **accuracy** and consistency with well established expert consensus is important.

	Effort: Consider the extent to which a human being actively worked to create satisfying content. Effort may be direct, such as a person translating a poem from one language to another. Effort may go into designing website functionality or building systems that power a website, such as the creation of a website that offers machine translation as a service to users. On the other hand, the automatic creation of thousands of websites by running existing freely available content through existing translation software without any oversight, manual curation, etc., would not be considered to have effort. For websites like social media posts or forum discussions, the level of participation and depth of conversation is an important part of effort. Contributions from multiple individuals on such websites can add up to a significant amount of total human effort.
	Originality: Consider the extent to which the content offers unique, original content that is not available on other websites. If other websites have similar content, consider whether the website is the original source.
	Talent or Skill: Consider the extent to which the content is created with enough talent and skill to provide a satisfying experience for people who visit the website.
	Accuracy: For informational websites, consider the extent to which the content is factually accurate. For websites on YMYL topics, consider the extent to which the content is accurate and consistent with well-established expert consensus.

The purpose of the website, topic of the website, and type of website all play a role in how to evaluate the quality of the MC. For example, consistency with well-established expert consensus is important for medical advice. Skill is important for how-to videos. Talent and originality is important for artistic expression. The amount of effort expected for a short video shared on social media is less than for a full-length, professionally produced documentary on a streaming video website, but both need sufficient effort to create satisfying content for their purpose. Think about what effort, originality, talent, or skill looks like for the type of website that you are evaluating and the relevant tabs that contribute to your overall Domain Quality rating.

For each website you evaluate, spend a few minutes examining the MC before drawing a conclusion about it. Read the article, watch the video, examine the pictures, use the calculator, play the online game, etc. Remember that MC also gameincludes website features and functionality, so test the website out. For example, if the website is a product website, put at least one product in the cart to make sure the shopping cart is functioning. If the website is an online game, try to play the game yourself. Do your best to imagine that you are someone who's very interested in the topic, functionality, or purpose served by the website, then think about how satisfying the MC would be for that person.

High and low quality MC comes in all formats (e.g., text, audio, video, images) and all lengths (e.g., short-form videos and full-length professional documentaries). High and low quality content also exists on all types of websites, from small personal sites to large corporate sites, from forums and social media to websites that handle financial transactions. Think carefully about what helps the website achieve its purpose and what makes the MC satisfying for users.

3.3 Reputation of the Website and Content Creators (YMYL domains)

An important part of DQ rating is understanding the reputation of the website, if it meets the threshold for **YMYL**. If the website is not the primary creator of the MC, it's important to research the reputation of the content creator as well.

Reputation research should be performed according to the topic of the website. For example, if the website contains medical information, research the reputation of the website and content creator for providing medical information. It's possible for a website to be a go-to source for one type of content (e.g., humorous videos), but an untrustworthy source for a different type of content (e.g., financial information).

A website's or content creator's reputation can also help you understand what a website or content creator is best known for. For example, newspapers may be known for high quality, independent investigative reporting while satire websites

may be known for their humor. An individual journalist (content creator) may be known for the clarity of their scientific articles while a food blogger (content creator) may be known for the deliciousness of the recipes they post online.

Note that a company or person may create content on many different websites. For example, a newspaper might have their own website, upload their video content to a video sharing website, post updates on social media, and contribute content to a TV channel. An expert on a topic might publish research papers, have a lengthy blog, and share short updates on social media. In these cases, you should research the underlying company or content creator.

Reputation research is especially important for detecting untrustworthy websites and content creators. Content may look great on the surface, but reputation research can expose scams, fraud, or other signs of harm. You never know what you will find unless you look!

3.3.1 Reputation of the Website

A website's reputation is based on the experience of real users and the opinions of people who are experts. Websites may represent real companies, organizations, and other entities. Reputation research applies to both the website and the actual company, organization, or entity that the website is representing.

Many websites are eager to tell users how great they are. Your job is to independently evaluate the Domain Quality of the website, not just accept information that appears on one or two pages of the website without further verification. Be skeptical of claims that websites make about themselves, particularly when there is a clear conflict of interest.

Instead, look for independent reviews, references, recommendations by experts, news articles, and other sources of credible information about the website. Look for information written by a person or organization, not statistics or other machine-compiled information. News articles, Wikipedia articles, blog posts, magazine articles, forum discussions, and ratings from independent organizations can all be great sources of reputation information.

For **YMYL** topics, the reputation of a website should be judged by what experts in the field have to say. Recommendations from expert sources, such as professional societies, are strong evidence of a positive reputation.

Sources of reputation information will also vary according to the topic or type of company/organization/entity that the website represents. For example, you might find that a newspaper (with an associated website) has won journalistic awards. Prestigious awards or a history of high-quality original reporting are strong evidence of positive reputation for news websites.

Note that some types of information about a website is not related to its reputation. For example, websites like Similarweb have information about Internet traffic to the website, but do not provide evidence of positive or negative reputation. You can ignore this type of information since it's not helpful for DQ rating.

3.3.2 Customer Reviews as Reputation Information

Customer reviews can be helpful for assessing the reputation of a store, business, or any website that offers products or services to users. You may consider a large number of detailed, trustworthy, positive user reviews as evidence of positive reputation for a store or business.

However, you should interpret customer reviews with care, particularly if there are only a few. Keep the following in mind:
- **Be skeptical of both positive and negative reviews.** Anyone can write them, including the website owner or someone whom the store or business hires for this purpose.
- **Try to find as many reviews as possible.** Any store or business can get a few negative reviews—this is completely normal and expected. Large stores and companies receive thousands of reviews, and most receive some negative ones.
- **Read the reviews because the content of the reviews matter, not just the number or star rating.** Credible, convincing reports of fraud and financial wrongdoing is evidence of extremely negative reputation. On the other

hand, a single encounter with a rude clerk or the delayed receipt of a single package should not be considered negative reputation information. Please use your judgment.

3.3.3 How to Search for Reputation Information about a Website

Here is how to research the reputation of the website:

1. Identify the "homepage" of the website. For example, for the IBM website, ibm.com is the homepage. You may need to identify the content creator, if it is different from that of the overall website.

2. Using ibm.com as an example, try one or more of the following searches on Google:

   - [ibm -site:ibm.com] - A search for IBM that excludes pages on ibm.com.
   - ["ibm.com" -site:ibm.com] - A search for "ibm.com" that excludes pages on ibm.com.
   - [ibm reviews -site:ibm.com] - A search for reviews of IBM that excludes pages on ibm.com.
   - ["ibm.com" reviews -site:ibm.com] - A search for reviews of "ibm.com" that excludes pages on ibm.com.

   Note: When searching for reputation information, try to find sources that were not written or created by the website or the company itself. For example, IBM might have official social media pages that it closely maintains, which would not be considered independent sources of reputation information about the company. See here for a Wikipedia article on identifying and using independent sources.

3. Look for articles, references, recommendations by experts, and other credible information written by people about the website.

   High quality news articles and informational articles may be good sources of reputation information. Search for such articles. For example, try [ibm site:en.wikipedia.org]. News articles and informational articles can help you learn about a company and may include information specific to reputation, such as awards and other forms of recognition, or also controversies and issues. Note that some informational articles include a message warning users that there are disagreements on some of the content, or that the content may be outdated. This may be an indication that additional research is necessary.

4. Make sure the information you find is appropriate for judging the reputation of the website. For example, reputation information for YMYL topics should come from sources that have expertise in the associated YMYL topic.

Here are some examples of reputation information:

Website	Reputation Information About the Website	Description
annualcreditreport.com	Search results for [annualcreditreport.com -site:annualcreditreport.com] Wikipedia article about annualcreditreport.com Reputable article about annualcreditreport.com	**Positive reputation information**: Users in the U.S. can obtain free credit reports on this website by providing their Social Security Number. Note that the Wikipedia article tells us that "AnnualCreditReport.com is the only federally mandated and authorized source for obtaining a free credit report."
clevelandclinic.org	Search results for [clevelandclinic.org] Wikipedia article about clevelandclinic.org Reputable article about the best hospitals in the U.S.	**Positive reputation information**: According to Wikipedia, the Cleveland Clinic "is currently regarded as one of the top 4 hospitals in the United States" which can be confirmed by reputable news articles cited in the references section. Users can trust medical information on this website.

csmonitor.com	Search results for [csmonitor.com -site:csmonitor.com] Wikipedia article about The Christian Science Monitor	**Positive reputation information**: Notice the highlighted section in the Wikipedia article about The Christian Science Monitor newspaper, which tells us that the newspaper has won several prestigious awards. From this information, it can be inferred that the csmonitor.com website has a positive reputation.
kernel.org	Search results for [kernel.org –site:kernel.org] Wikipedia article about kernel.org	**Positive reputation information**: According to the Wikipedia article, "Kernel.org is a main repository of source code for the Linux kernel, the base of the popular Linux operating system. It makes all versions of the source code available to all users. It also hosts various other projects, like Google Android. The main purpose of the site is to host a repository for Linux kernel developers."
Site selling children's jungle gym	Search to find reputation information Search to find reviews Negative review on a business review page 1 Negative review on a business review page 2 Negative news article	**Extremely negative reputation information**: This website appears to be a perfectly fine-looking store; however, much evidence of negative reputation can be found. The business has a very low rating on a business review site. There is a news article about financial fraud. There are many reviews on different websites describing users sending money and not receiving anything.
Site selling products related to eyewear	Search to find reputation information Negative review on a business review page Wikipedia article Article about business' criminal behavior	**Extremely negative/malicious reputation information**: This website engaged in criminal behavior such as physically threatening users.
Organization serving the hospitalized veteran community	Negative review 1 Negative review 2 Negative review 3 Negative review 4	**Extremely negative reputation information** : There are many detailed negative articles on news sites and charity watchdog sites about this organization describing fraud and financial mishandling.

3.3.4 Reputation of the Content Creators

For individual authors and content creators, biographical information articles and online discussions can be a good source of reputation information. Expect to find more formal reputation information about people who create content in a journalistic, scientific, academic, or other traditionally professional capacity, as they often need online credibility for professional success. Educational degrees, peer validation, expert co-authors, and citations can be evidence of positive reputation information for professionals who publish their work. Employment history can also support a positive reputation for topics where training, credentials, or experience are important.

Influencers and other individual content creators who earn income on social media platforms often have reputation information available as well, ranging from from biographical details or news articles to less formal reputation sources such as comments by other influencers in their fields.

For non-professional content creators including ordinary people who post on social media or forums, you may find informal reputation information on the website itself such as comments by other people about the creators. For example, you may find comments or posts from other users helpful to see what other people think about a particular content creator.

3.3.5 What to Do When You Find No Reputation Information

You should expect to find some reputation information for large websites and well-known content creators. People or businesses who create content in a professional capacity typically have some reputation information available.

However, small websites may have little or no reputation information. This is not indicative of high or low quality. Many small local businesses or community organizations have a small "web presence" and rely on word of mouth.

Furthermore, many ordinary people participate in forum discussions or post on social media websites in a personal capacity. People may use an alias or username to post in order to avoid sharing personally identifiable information online. There may be no reputation information available for some individuals. A lack of reputation about people who post personal content is neither a positive nor a negative sign in your assessment of the website.

Finally, remember that there are several important considerations involved in DQ rating (refer back to Section 3.1). Reputation is important, but if reputation information is not available for a website or content creator, pay extra attention to other DQ considerations, especially when assessing websites on YMYL topics.

3.4   Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trust (E-E-A-T)

Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness and Trust (E-E-A-T) are all important considerations when rating **YMYL** domains. The most important member at the center of the E-E-A-T family is Trust.
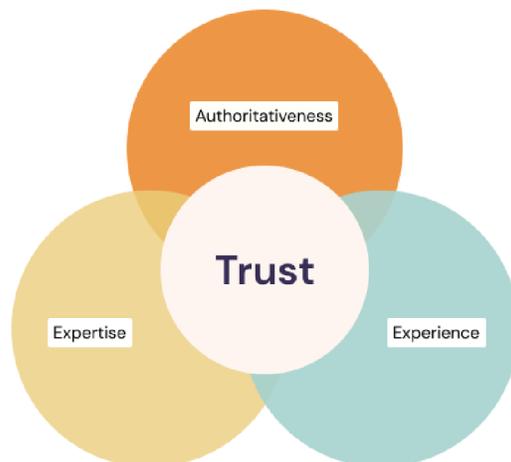
Trust: Consider the extent to which the website is accurate, honest, safe, and reliable.

The type and amount of **Trust** needed depends on the website, for example:
- **Online stores** need secure online payment systems and reliable customer service.
- **Product reviews** should be honest and written to help others make informed purchasing decisions (rather than solely to sell the product).
- **Informational websites on clear YMYL topics** must be accurate to prevent harm to people and society.
- **Social media posts on non-YMYL topics** may not need a high level of Trust, such as when the purpose of the post is to entertain its audience and the content of the post does not risk causing harm.

Experience, **Expertise** and **Authoritativeness** are important concepts that can support your assessment of Trust:

👥	**Experience**: Consider the extent to which the content creator has the necessary first-hand or life experience for the topic. Many types of websites are trustworthy and achieve their purpose well when created by people with a wealth of personal experience. For example, which would you trust: a product review from someone who has personally used the product or a "review" by someone who has not?
🎓	**Expertise**: Consider the extent to which the content creator has the necessary knowledge or skill for the topic. Different topics require different levels and types of expertise to be trustworthy. For example, which would you trust: home electrical rewiring advice from a skilled electrician or from an antique homes enthusiast who has no knowledge of electrical wiring?
🛡️	**Authoritativeness:** Consider the extent to which the content creator or the website is known as a go-to source for the topic. While most topics do not have one official Authoritative website or content creator, when they do, that website or content creator is often among the most reliable and trustworthy sources. For example, a local business profile page on social media may be the authoritative and trusted source for what is on sale now. The official government website for getting a passport is the unique, official, and authoritative source for passport renewal.

Experience , **Expertise** , and **Authoritativeness** may overlap for some website types and topics (for example, someone may develop Expertise in a topic due to first-hand Experience accumulated over time), and different combinations of E-E-A may be relevant to different topics. You should consider the purpose, type, and topic of the website, then ask yourself what would make the content creator a trustworthy source in that context.

Trust is the **most important member of the E-E-A-T family** because untrustworthy websites have low E-E-A-T no matter how Experienced, Expert, or Authoritative they may seem. For example, a financial scam is untrustworthy, even if the content creator is a highly experienced and expert scammer who is considered the go-to on running scams!

When it comes to Domain Quality rating of **YMYL** domains, your assessment of E-E-A-T should be informed by one or more of the following:
- **What the website or content creators say about themselves:** Look at the "About us" page on the website or profile page of the content creator as a starting point. Is the website or content creator a trustworthy source based on this information?
- **What others say about the website or content creators:** Look for independent reviews, references, news articles, and other sources of credible information about the website or content creators. Is there independent, reliable evidence that the website or content creator is experienced, has expertise, is authoritative, or is otherwise considered trustworthy? Is there independent, reliable evidence that the website or creator is untrustworthy?
- **What is visible on the website, including the Main Content and sections such as reviews and comments:** For some types of websites, the level of experience and expertise may be clear from the MC itself. What evidence can you gather from examining the MC or testing the website out? For example, you may be able to tell that someone is an expert in hair styling by watching a video of them in action (styling someone's hair) and reading others' comments (commenters often highlight expertise or lack thereof).

Important: The website or content creator may not be a trustworthy source if there is a clear conflict of interest. For example, product reviews by people who own the product and share their experiences can be very valuable and trustworthy. However, "reviews" by the product manufacturer (*"Our product is great!"*) or "reviews" from an influencer who is paid to promote the product are not as trustworthy due to the conflict of interest.

Finally, there are many aspects of Trust, some which are not captured by Experience, Expertise and Authoritativeness. Please consider other aspects in your overall Trust assessment, such as customer service information for online stores or peer-reviewed publications for academic authors. If a website is untrustworthy for any reason , it has low E-E-A-T.

3.4.1 YMYL Topics: Experience or Expertise?

Websites on YMYL topics can be created for a wide variety of different purposes. If the purpose of a website on a clear YMYL topic is to give information or offer advice, **a high level of expertise may be required for the website to be trustworthy.**

However, sometimes websites on YMYL topics are created to share personal experiences, often regarding difficult life challenges. People turn to each other in times of need to share their own experience, seek comfort or inspiration, and learn from others. Factual information from experts and authoritative sources may not satisfy this need.

Websites that share first-hand life experience on clear YMYL topics may be considered to have high E-E-A-T as long as the content is trustworthy, safe, and consistent with well-established expert consensus. In contrast, some types of YMYL information and advice must come from experts.

Here are some examples:

YMYL Topic	Valuable sharing of life **Experience**	Information or advice best left to **Experts**
Sleep challenges when pregnant (YMYL Health or Safety)	Safe and non-medical tips and tricks for sleeping in the last trimester of pregnancy, provided by people who have personally struggled with this challenge, for example: how to use pillows to sleep comfortably in a position that is safe for babies	Sleep medications that are safe during pregnancy
Liver cancer treatment (YMYL Health or Safety)	A sincere and respectful forum discussion where people are describing how they're coping with liver cancer treatment	Different treatment options for liver cancer and the associated life expectancies under each treatment
Filling out tax forms (YMYL Financial Security)	A humorous video from a non-expert content creator about the frustration of doing taxes	Instructions on how to fill out tax forms
Saving for retirement (YMYL Financial Security)	Reviews of retirement saving services by people with first-hand experience using these services	Advice on how to invest for retirement: how much to save, what kinds of assets to invest in, how much money you will need to retire by a specific age, etc.
How to vote (YMYL Society)	A social media post by an ordinary citizen describing why they personally believe it's important to vote in local elections	Information about who is eligible to vote or how to register to vote

4.0 Lowest Quality Websites (Please review this section and its subsections with extra care)

Lowest quality websites are untrustworthy, deceptive, harmful to people or society, or have other highly undesirable characteristics. The considerations for **Lowest** quality include quality of the MC, reputation, E-E-A-T, etc., but there are special checks you will need to complete first.

As a reminder, here are the steps for doing DQ rating:

1. Assess the true purpose of the website. If the website has a harmful purpose or is designed to deceive people about its true purpose, it should be rated **Lowest** .
2. Assess the potential of the website to cause harm as described in these guidelines. Websites that are harmful to people or society, untrustworthy, or spammy as specified in these guidelines should receive the **Lowest** rating.
3. Otherwise, the DQ rating is based on how well the website achieves its purpose using the criteria outlined in these guidelines.

Steps 1 and 2 are a screening process to quickly detect harmful content before other DQ considerations are applied.

To identify **Lowest** quality websites, start by considering the following:

Initial Consideration	**Lowest** Quality Websites
The purpose of the website	**The Lowest rating is required** if the website has a harmful purpose, or if it is designed to deceive people about its true purpose or who is responsible for the content on the website. **The Lowest rating is required** if the website is created to benefit the owner of the website (e.g. to make money) with very little or no attempt to benefit website visitors or otherwise serve a beneficial purpose.
The potential for the website to cause harm as described in these guidelines	**The Lowest rating is required** if the MC is harmful to self or others, harmful to specified groups, or contains harmfully misleading information.
The topic of the website, the type of website, and the extent to which YMYL standards apply	A website on any topic or any type of website may qualify for **Lowest.** Give special scrutiny to websites needing a high level of trust, such as online stores, medical websites, or news coverage of major civic issues.

Next, assess the website to determine if any of the criteria for **Lowest** apply:

Lowest Website Quality Assessment	Any one of the following is justification for **Lowest**
Quality of the MC	- The website is hacked, defaced, or spammed. - The website is gibberish or otherwise makes no sense. - The MC is created with little to no effort, has little to no originality and the MC adds no value compared to similar websites - The MC is created with so little effort, originality, talent, or skill that the website fails to achieve its purpose.
The title of the website	The website title is extremely misleading, shocking, or exaggerated.

The role of Ads and SC on the website	The MC is deliberately obstructed or obscured due to Ads, SC, interstitial websites, download links or other content that is beneficial to the website owner but not necessarily the website visitor.
Information provided by the website and content creator	A complete lack of information about who is responsible for the website and its content for YMYL websites or other websites requiring trust.
Reputation of the website and content creator	A very negative reputation, including a reputation for malicious or harmful behavior.
Trustworthiness of the website: E-E-A-T	- The website is highly untrustworthy. - The lack of experience, expertise, authoritativeness or trust causes the website to fail to achieve its purpose.

4.1   Types of Lowest Quality Websites

There are many different shapes and forms that **Lowest** websites can take. To help you keep track, the table below organizes **Lowest** websites into three broad categories: Harmful, Untrustworthy, and Spammy. These categories can overlap (e.g., websites that contain Harmfully Misleading Information are also Untrustworthy).

Type of **Lowest** Website	Description	Reference Section
Harmful to Self or Other Individuals	Websites that encourage, depict, incite or directly cause physical, mental, emotional or financial harm to self or other individuals. Examples include: - Detailed instructions on how to commit suicide - Detailed, realistic, and serious instructions written with the intent to help someone commit murder	Section 4.2
Harmful to Specified Groups	Websites that promote, condone, or incite violence or hatred against a Specified Group of people (as defined in Section 4.3). Examples include: - Content that encourages violence or ill treatment towards a Specified Group - Content with extremely offensive/dehumanizing stereotypes of a Specified Group	Section 4.3
Harmfully Misleading Information	Websites that misinform people in a way that could cause harm. Examples include: - Clearly inaccurate harmful information that can easily be refuted by straightforward and widely accepted facts - Harmful unsubstantiated theories/claims not grounded in any reasonable facts or evidence	Section 4.4

Untrustworthy Websites	Websites that are deceptive or have untrustworthy characteristics. Examples include: ● Websites with deceptive purpose or design ● Websites designed to manipulate people into actions that benefit the website or other organization while causing harm to self, others or Specified Groups	[Section 4.5](#)
Spammy Websites	Websites with characteristics of webspam as defined in the [Google Search Essentials Guidelines](#) and/or Section 4.6 of these guidelines. Examples include: ● Websites deliberately created with no MC or gibberish MC ● Hacked, defaced, or spammed websites	[Section 4.6](#)

Important : There is lots of content that many people would find controversial, one-sided, off-putting, or distasteful, yet does not meet the criteria for **Lowest** as described in these guidelines. Use your judgment to follow the standards outlined throughout Section 4.0 rather than relying on personal opinions.

4.2   Harmful to Self or Other Individuals

Use the **Lowest** rating for websites with content that encourages, depicts, incites, or directly causes harm to self or other individuals.

Harm includes physical, mental, emotional, or financial harm to people. Websites should be considered Harmful to Self or Other Individuals if they directly attempt to harm people; encourage behavior that may result in harm; depict extremely violent or gory content without a beneficial/educational purpose; or otherwise are severely traumatic to people who view the website.

Websites do not have to be harmful to *all* people to be considered Harmful to Self or Other Individuals. Different people have different levels of vulnerability to scams, awareness of potential dangers (e.g., dangerous feats depicted in stunt videos), and tolerance for viewing violent/disturbing content. If there is a reasonable possibility that viewing a particular website would cause harm to those who are most vulnerable, it should be considered harmful **.**

Websites created with a beneficial purpose that report on, discuss, or inform about harmful actions or events (e.g., fictional entertainment, reputable news, education) should typically not be considered Harmful to Self or Other Individuals. For example, advocacy aimed at drawing attention to harmful, real-world actions or events (such as a website describing a protest against domestic violence) would not be considered Harmful to Self or Other Individuals.

Here are some examples of content that is vs. is not considered Harmful to Self or Other Individuals:

Harmful to Self or Other Individuals	NOT Harmful to Self or Other Individuals
- Incitement of violence towards Other Individuals - Serious death threats or realistic-sounding threats - Exposing personal information belonging to others with malicious intent to target them or promote harassment towards them (i.e., "doxxing") - How-to information that describes how to commit violent acts in an easy-to-replicate way - Advocating for, glorifying, or trivializing violence and atrocities, or to disparage victim(s) of violence/atrocities - Depicting or promoting information that facilitates or leads to serious harm to people, or discussions that attempt to justify abuse of people - Encouraging unsafe behavior or substantially downplays the risks of dangerous activities (e.g., consuming household cleaning products) - Suicide promotion or pro-anorexia content that encourages people to engage in behavior that can result in hospitalization or death - Health-related advice that contradicts well-established expert consensus and could result in serious harm or could prevent someone from undertaking a life-saving treatment	- Depictions of violence in an action movie - A news story about violent events - Educational content that may depict violence or gross imagery - An explanation of scams meant to raise awareness about them - Portrayals of dangerous activities in a manner that discourages others from attempting the same feat (such as by clearly explaining the risks, describing the expertise and equipment required, etc.)

4.3　Harmful to Specified Groups

Lowest rating for websites that promote, condone, or incite hatred against a Specified Group of people.

For the purposes of Search Quality rating, a Specified Group is a group of people that can be defined on the basis of:
- Age (e.g., older adults)
- Caste (e.g., Dalits)
- Disability (e.g., people who are blind)
- Ethnicity (e.g., Roma)
- Gender Identity and Expression (e.g., transgender people)
- Immigration Status (e.g., student visa holders)
- Nationality (e.g., Italians)
- Race (e.g., Asians)
- Religion (e.g., Christians)
- Sex/Gender (e.g., men)
- Sexual Orientation (e.g., lesbians)
- Veteran Status (e.g., Marines)
- Victims of a major violent event and their kin (e.g., victims of the Holocaust)
- Any other characteristic that is associated with systemic discrimination or marginalization (e.g., refugees, people experiencing homelessness)

The tone of the harmful content must be either serious (i.e., not joking or satirical) or mean-spirited (i.e., with an intent to demean or promote intolerance) to be considered Harmful to Specified Groups. Comedy or artistic expression related to a Specified Group should not be considered harmful unless it is clearly mean-spirited or has other clear harmful impact.

Criticism of objects, philosophies, and ideas are generally not considered Harmful to Specified Groups. For example, negative criticism of a religious doctrine should not be considered targeted at the Specified Group that follows that religion. Remember that the content must promote, condone, or incite hatred of *people* to be considered Harmful to Specified Groups.

Educational websites (e.g., definitions, research, academic papers), news stories, or other websites that have a beneficial purpose of informing society should not be considered Harmful to Specified Groups. Similarly, historical documents/videos that aim to capture the beliefs of different eras should not be considered Harmful to Specified Groups.

Here are some examples of content that is vs. is not considered Harmful to Specified Groups:

Harmful to Specified Groups	NOT Harmful to Specified Groups
- Encourages violence or ill treatment towards a Specified Group - Promotes intolerance by demonstrating a staunch unwillingness to allow for the views, beliefs, or behavior of a Specified Group - Implies that one Specified Group is superior or inferior to another - Contains extremely offensive/dehumanizing stereotypes of a Specified Group. Note that stereotypes can be negative or positive.	- A historical documentary of WWII featuring speeches from Nazi leaders - A stand-up comedy routine that plays off of stereotypes in a way that is not mean-spirited - A newspaper article about a hate organization - The dictionary definition of a slur - A discussion about a particular religious text and its views on women

4.4   Harmfully Misleading Information

Lowest rating for websites that mislead people in ways that can cause harm to people and society.

Misleading websites may have been produced with the intent to misinform people, or the content creator may believe that the inaccurate information they are sharing is true. There is an especially high standard for accuracy on clear YMYL topics or other topics where inaccurate information can cause harm. Be sure to research consequential facts or claims as necessary and to the extent the task time allows.

Websites should be considered to contain Harmfully Misleading Information when they contain *at least one of the following:*

Type of Harmfully Misleading Information	Description	Examples
Harmful and clearly inaccurate information	Content that can be refuted by straightforward and widely accepted facts	● False claims that a world leader died ● False dates for an election
Harmful claims that contradict well-established expert consensus	Content that is inconsistent with positions, facts, or findings that are widely agreed upon by authorities in the relevant field	● Claims that lemons cure cancer ● Claims that buying lottery tickets is a guaranteed way to save for retirement
Harmful unsubstantiated theories/claims	Content that is not grounded in any reasonable facts or evidence, especially those that could erode confidence in public institutions. This includes unsubstantiated theories that have been thoroughly debunked or are too outlandish to be given credence.	● Claims that the 9-11 attacks were planned by the U.S. government ● Claims that world leaders are lizard people

Harmfully Misleading Information can occur from any websites or content creators - even seemingly "expert", "authoritative" or "official" ones. Any type of website with Harmfully Misleading Information should be rated Lowest, regardless of the source.

However, note that some types of information are subjective, debatable, unverifiable, or inconsequential. For example, websites should not be considered to contain Harmfully Misleading Information if they *exclusively* contain:
- Non-YMYL content created with a clear entertainment purpose, containing no hard claims of factual accuracy and are not harmful to people or society. Examples include many types of fiction, satire or parody, astrology, folklore, myths, and urban legends.
- Reviews expressing personal preferences, opinions, or value-based judgments about a product, restaurant, book/movie/TV show, etc.
- Claims or statements that are reasonably debatable when there is not a single established correct answer or truth (e.g., discussions about the relative effectiveness of different healthcare systems)
- Insignificant errors or inaccurate information about a trivial topic (e.g., inaccuracies in the height of a celebrity)

Websites that aim to persuade others that a certain position or perspective is correct are fairly common on the Internet. Websites with one-sided/opinionated/controversial/polarizing content should not be considered to contain Harmfully Misleading Information unless they could create harm to individuals or Specified Groups (as described above) and contain clearly inaccurate information, contradict well-established expert consensus, or are not grounded by reasonable facts/evidence.

A website may be considered to have Harmfully Misleading Information based on the MC or on other characteristics of the website or information about the content creator (e.g., the title of an article is harmfully misleading, even if the article on its own is not; a creator blatantly misrepresenting their medical credentials for a video on medical topics).

Harmfully Misleading Information can be especially hard to identify because it may require research from outside sources. Reputable fact-checking websites can't always keep up with the volume of unsubstantiated theories/claims produced by the Internet, and some theories may even claim that debunking information is inaccurate. You should attempt to find high-quality, trustworthy sources to check accuracy and seek out the consensus of experts if you are unsure. Please research theories and claims to the extent the task time allows. If a theory/claim seems wildly improbable and can't be verified by independent trustworthy sources, you should consider it unsubstantiated.

4.5   Untrustworthy Websites

The **Lowest** rating should be used for websites you strongly suspect are engaging in deceptive or malicious practices.

Some untrustworthy websites are created to benefit the organization rather than helping people. Some untrustworthy websites may even exist to cause harm to people who engage with the website, such as scams or malicious downloads.

Your assessment of untrustworthiness may be based on the content of the website, information about the website, information about the content creator, and the reputation of the website or content creator.

Your assessment may also be based on a *lack* of critically important information. For example, any website involving financial transactions or sensitive information should have comprehensive information about who is responsible for the site and a way to contact the site if something goes wrong. If some aspect of a website makes you suspect deception or maliciousness, please look for information about the site. If you cannot find reputation information to confirm your suspicion, carefully explore the site.

Sometimes a single website on an unknown website in isolation may seem odd but subsequent exploration shows no concern. However, if you see a pattern of what appears to be deception or manipulation or become concerned about your own safety, please use the **Lowest** rating and leave the website immediately.

Websites with the following characteristics should be considered Untrustworthy:
- Multiple or significant factual inaccuracies on an informational website which would cause users to lose trust in the website as a reliable source of information
- Inadequate information about the website or content creator for its purpose
- Lowest E-E-A-T or Lowest reputation
- Deceptive purpose, deceptive website design, or deceptive intent
- Deliberately obstructed or obscured MC
- Characteristics of scams, malicious downloads, or other harmful behavior
- Any website designed to manipulate people into actions that benefit the website or other organization while causing harm to self, others, or Specified Groups

Important: Highly untrustworthy websites should be given the **Lowest** rating even if you are unable to "prove" the website is harmful. Because many people are unwilling to use a highly untrustworthy website, an untrustworthy page or a website which fails to achieve its purpose.

4.5.1 Inadequate Information about the Website or Content Creator for the Purpose of the Website

For websites that require a high level of trust, information about who created the content and who is responsible for the content is critical.

As discussed in Section 2.5.3 , we expect most websites to have some information about who (e.g., what individual, company, business, foundation, etc.) is responsible for the website and who created the MC and some contact information, unless there is a good reason for anonymity. As you will see in the examples below, many types of Lowest websites such as malicious downloads and scams typically have no information or fake information about who is responsible to prevent recourse by people who are harmed.

Any site that handles personal, private or sensitive data must provide extensive contact information. This includes sites that ask users to create passwords, share personal information, or conduct financial transactions.

YMYL websites that handle sensitive data with absolutely no information about the website or content creator should be rated **Lowest** .

4.5.2 Lowest E-E-A-T and Lowest Reputation of the Website or Content Creator

If the E-E-A-T of a website is low enough, people cannot or should not use the MC of the website. If a website on YMYL topics is highly inexpert, it should be considered Untrustworthy and rated **Lowest** .

Use the **Lowest** rating if the website and content creator have an extremely negative reputation, to the extent that many people would consider the website untrustworthy.

Here are some examples originally shown in Section 3.3.3 . All of these websites should be rated **Lowest** because of the credible extremely negative or malicious reputation of these websites, making them untrustworthy.

Note: These website examples may be considered Harmful in some form as well. Sometimes reputation research exposes information that may not meet the criteria for considering a website harmful but does cause it to be untrustworthy.

Website	Description
Site selling children's jungle gym	**Evidence of fraudulent behavior**: There are many reviews on websites describing how users sent money and did not receive anything in return. There is also a news article about this business engaging in financial fraud.
Site selling products related to eyewear	**Evidence of criminal behavior**: This website engaged in criminal behavior such as physically threatening users.
Organization serving the hospitalized veteran community	**Evidence of fraudulent behavior**: There are many detailed negative articles on news sites and charity watchdog sites describing fraud and financial mishandling about this organization.

4.5.3 Deceptive Website Purpose, Deceptive Information about the Website, Deceptive Design

All websites using deception of any type should be rated **Lowest** because they are Untrustworthy. Here are some types of deception to look for during Domain Quality rating.

Type of Deception	Description
Deceptive Purpose	The website superficially appears to have one purpose, but in fact exists for a different reason.
Deceptive Information about the Website or Content Creators	The website has deliberately inaccurate or misleading information about the website or content creators to make the website appear trustworthy.
Deceptive Design	The website or content is deliberately designed to look like one type of website or content but in fact functions as another.

Note : No list of deceptive website types will be complete—deceptive websites continue to evolve as people and search engines figure out how they are being tricked.

Please see below for some examples.

Deceptive purpose:

- **A website with deliberately inaccurate information to promote products in order to make money from clicks on monetized links.** Examples include a product recommendation website falsely impersonating a celebrity blog, or a product recommendation based on a false claim of personal, independent testing when no such testing was conducted.
- **A website claims to offer an independent review or share other information about a product, but is in fact created to make money for the owner of the website without attempting to help users.** For example, the MC may contain intentionally misleading or inaccurate information created with the sole purpose of getting users to click on monetized links or buy the product.

Deceptive information about the website or content creators:

- **A website that impersonates a different site** e.g., copied logo or branding of an unaffiliated site, URL that mimics another site's name, etc.
- **A non-satirical social network profile made by an impersonator** .
- **A website that looks like a news source or information website, but in fact has articles to manipulate users** in order to benefit a person, business, government, or other organization politically, monetarily, or otherwise.
- **A website claims to be the personal website of a celebrity, but the website is actually created to make money for the owner of the website without the permission of the celebrity.** For example, the website may have false testimonials for a product and is created for the sole purpose of getting users to click on monetized links or buy the product.
- **A website with deceptive business information.** For example, a website may claim to have a physical "brick and mortar" store but in fact only exists online. While there is nothing wrong with being an online business, claiming to have a physical "brick and mortar" (e.g. fake photo, fake physical store address) is deceptive.
- **A website with "fake" owner or content creator profiles.** For example, AI generated content with made up "author" profiles (AI generated images or deceptive creator descriptions) in order to make it appear that the content is written by people.

- **Factually inaccurate and deceptive information about creator expertise.** For example, an author or creator profile inaccurately claims to have credentials or expertise (e.g. the content creator claims falsely to be a medical professional) to make the content appear more trustworthy than it is.

Deceptive design:

- **Websites that use Ads to obstruct MC**. Actual MC may be minimal or created to encourage users to click on the Ads.
- **Websites with deceptively designed buttons or links** . For example, buttons or links on pop ups, interstitials or on the website are designed to look like they do one thing (such as close a pop up) but in fact have a different result which most people would not expect, e.g. download an app.
- **Websites with a misleading title or a title that has nothing to do with the content on the website.** People who come to the website expecting content related to the title will feel tricked or deceived.

> Take a good look at the website and use your judgment. If you believe the true purpose of the website is not what it appears to be, the website should be rated **Lowest**. If you believe the website was deliberately created with the primary purpose to manipulate users to click on Ads, monetized links, questionable download links, etc., rather than to help people, the website should be rated **Lowest.** If the website has any form of deceptive or significantly misleading information about itself, or if the website uses deception in any form even if not described here, the website should be rated **Lowest.**

4.5.4 Deliberately Obstructed or Obscured MC

Websites are untrustworthy if the MC is deliberately obstructed or obscured due to Ads, SC, interstitial websites, download links or other content that is beneficial to the website owner but not necessarily the website visitor. Attempts to manipulate or coerce users away from the MC is evidence of untrustworthiness.

Here are some examples of websites with deliberately obstructed or obscured MC that should be rated **Lowest** :
- Ads that continue to cover the MC as the website visitor scrolls down the website. The Ads are virtually impossible to close without clicking on the Ad
- Pop-ups that obscure the MC and cannot be closed without taking an action that benefits the website
- An interstitial website that attempts to coerce a download or click that does not benefit the website visitor
- Ads that push the MC down so far that many users would not notice the MC
- MC in white-on-white text or MC presented so that it is difficult for a human being to read

Logins or paywalls on otherwise trustworthy sites should not be considered untrustworthy, deceptive, or coercive. Many high quality sites such as newspapers or magazines cannot exist without monetization through subscriptions and paywalls. Some types of MC should be login protected, such as websites with personal information, online banking websites or private pages on social network websites.

MC may be inaccessible for non-deliberate or non-coercive reasons, such as content that doesn't load or content that is unavailable in a country or region. These are not reasons for **Lowest** .

Use your judgment to assess whether the website is designed to manipulate or coerce users into taking actions that benefit the website. If you are unsure, look at other websites on the same website, conduct reputation research, etc.

Important: Remember that many websites need monetization to share content with users. The presence of Ads alone is not enough for **Lowest** .

It may be difficult to prove that a website causes harm without experiencing harm yourself. For this reason, you may use the **Lowest** rating if you strongly suspect a website is malicious or harmful even without having proof. Any of the following should be considered untrustworthy:

- Websites that you strongly suspect are scams (see these links for more information about Internet scams: Avoid Scams 1, Avoid Scams 2, Internet Fraud).
- Websites that ask for personal information without a legitimate reason (for example, websites that ask for name, birthdate, address, bank account, government ID number, etc.).
- Websites that appear to "phish" for passwords to Facebook, Gmail, or other popular online services. See here for information about "phishing" fraud.
- Websites with links that you strongly suspect are malware downloads.

Important: Do not continue to interact with the website if you observe these characteristics.

If you do click on a link and encounter a malware warning from your browser or antivirus software (example), please do not continue to that website. You can assume that the website is malicious for the purpose of rating and use **Lowest**.

Note that not all warnings your browser may display are related to malware (e.g., other types of browser warnings include certificate acceptance requests, content filtering warnings, etc.). If you are unsure or hesitant to continue to the website for any reason, you can release the task.

4.6 Spammy Websites

Websites should exist for the benefit of people who visit the website. There are many types of websites that can benefit visitors, such as online shopping or banking services, videos offering entertainment, or personal websites sharing a perspective or experience. Some of these websites depend on advertising and monetization to maintain the website and create high quality content while still benefiting visitors.

However, some websites are created to benefit the website owner or other organizations and with little to no attention paid to the experience of the people who visit. When such websites use deceptive techniques to appear near the top of search results, it may disincentivize the creation of high quality content by crowding out websites created with effort, originality, talent, or skill that is helpful for visitors.

This section describes characteristics of spam or spam-like websites that should be rated **Lowest** . The Google Search Web Spam Policies website is a good reference to learn more about different spam techniques. If you recognize any of these spam techniques on a website, please use the **Lowest** rating.

You do not need to develop expertise to recognize all types of spam techniques described in the Google Search Web Spam Policies . However, with practice, we do expect you to recognize the techniques described in this section.

4.6.1 Cannot Determine a Purpose, No MC, Little MC, Lowest Quality MC or No Added Value MC

All websites should be created with sufficient MC quality so that the website can achieve its purpose. However, some websites are so lacking in MC that the purpose of the website itself is unclear or you may suspect the website is not actually created for people.

If any of the following are true, the website should be rated **Lowest**:

- Despite your best efforts, the purpose of the website cannot truly be understood because the MC is gibberish or otherwise unusable for people
- The website deliberately has no MC
- The website is deliberately created with so little MC that it fails to achieve any purpose
- The website is deliberately created with such low quality MC that it fails to achieve any purpose
- The MC is created with little to no effort, has no originality and the MC adds no value compared to similar websites

4.6.2 Hacked, Defaced, or Spammed Websites

A hacked or defaced website is a site that has been modified without permission from the website owner(s).

Websites can become hacked, defaced, or filled with a large amount of distracting and unhelpful content from bad actors. Bad actors may add unrelated MC or SC or may modify existing MC on websites to change the purpose of the website. These websites should be rated **Lowest** because they fail to achieve their original purpose. Responsible website owners should regularly check their websites for suspicious behavior and take steps to protect users.

A common problem on forum websites or in the comments sections of websites is "spammed" comments: posts with unrelated comments that are not intended to help other people, but rather to advertise a product or create a link to a website. Frequently these comments are posted by a "bot" rather than a real person. If a specific page on a website has many unrelated "spammed" comments, the website should be rated **Lowest** .

See the Google Search Essentials Hacked Content Policy for more information.

4.6.3 Expired Domain Abuse

Expired domain abuse is where an expired domain name is purchased and repurposed primarily to benefit the new website owner by hosting content that provides little to no value to users.

Often the expired domain was a highly trusted site such as a government website, a charity, or a school with a trustworthy looking URL. The new website owner hopes to rank well using the reputation of the expired domain. The new content is often highly monetized or otherwise benefits the owner of the website. Visitors to the website may be confused by the new content, expecting to find a trustworthy government website, charity, etc.

Here are some examples:
- Affiliate content on a site previously used by a government agency
- Commercial medical products being sold on a site previously used by a non-profit medical charity ● Casino-related content on a former elementary school site

How can you tell if a website is abusing an expired domain? Sometimes the URL or other aspects of the website offers a clue. For example, the URL may look like an elementary school website but the current content is on a topic that you would not expect from an elementary school such as payday loans or gambling. To confirm, look up the homepage or other pages of the website on the Internet Archive to see if an obvious change has occurred.

4.6.4 Site Reputation Abuse

Site reputation abuse is a tactic where third-party content is published on a host site mainly because of that host's already-established ranking signals, which it has earned primarily from its first-party content. The goal of this tactic is for the content to rank better than it could otherwise on its own.

Third-party content is content that's created by an entity that's separate from the established host site. Examples of separate entities include users of that site, freelancers, white-label services, and content created by people not employed directly by the host site.

Having third-party content alone isn't site reputation abuse; it's only site reputation abuse if the third-party content is published on a host site mainly because of that host site's already-established ranking signals.

Examples of site reputation abuse include, but are not limited to:

- An educational website hosting a page about sponsored reviews of payday loans written by a third-party that distributes the same page to other sites across the web
- A medical website hosting a third-party advertising page about "best casinos" that readers wouldn't expect and that's being placed on the site to rank better due to the established site's ranking signals
- A movie review website hosting third-party pages about topics that would be confusing to users to find on a movie review site (such as "ways to buy followers on social media sites", the "best fortune teller sites", and the "best essay writing services")
- A news website hosting coupons provided by a white-label service where the main reason for publishing the coupons on the news site is to capitalize on the news site's reputation
- An established first party website branches out into a new area primarily using freelance content because this content will rank better on the first-party site than it would have otherwise

Examples that are **NOT** considered site reputation abuse include:

- Wire service or press release service sites
- News publications that have syndicated news content from other news publications
- Sites designed to allow user-generated content, such as a forum website or comment sections
- Columns, opinion pieces, articles, and other work of an editorial nature
- Third-party content (for example, "advertorial" or "native advertising" type websites) where the purpose is to share content directly to readers (such as through promotion within the publication itself), rather than hosting the content to manipulate search rankings
- Using affiliate links throughout a website, with links treated appropriately , or embedding third-party ad units throughout a website
- Coupons that are sourced directly from merchants and other businesses that serve consumers

4.6.5 Scaled Content Abuse

Creating an abundance of content with little effort or originality with no editing or manual curation is often the defining attribute of spammy websites.

Scaled content abuse is a spam practice described in the Google Search Web Spam Policies. Scaled content abuse occurs when many websites are generated for the purpose of primarily benefiting the website owner and not helping users. This practice is typically focused on creating large amounts of unoriginal content that provides little to no value for website visitors compared to other similar websites, no matter how it's created.

Examples of scaled content abuse include:

- Using automated tools (generative AI or otherwise) as a low-effort way to produce many websites that add little-to-no value for website visitors as compared to other websites on the same topic.

- Scraping feeds, search results, or other content to generate many websites (including through automated transformations like synonymizing, translating, or other obfuscation techniques), where little value is provided to website visitors
- Stitching or combining content from different websites without adding value
- Creating multiple sites with the intent of hiding the scaled nature of the content
- Creating many websites where the content makes little or no sense to a reader but contains search keywords

Websites made up of content created at scale with no original content or added value for users, should be rated **Lowest** , no matter how they are created. Even if you are unsure of the method of creation, e.g. whether or not the website is created using generative AI tools, you should still use the **Lowest** rating when you strongly suspect scaled content abuse after looking at several pages on the website.

4.6.6 MC Created with Little to No Effort, Little to No Originality, and Little to No Added Value for Website Visitors

The **Lowest** rating applies if all or almost all of the MC on the website (including text, images, audio, videos, etc) is copied, paraphrased, embedded, auto or AI generated, or reposted from other sources with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for visitors to the website. Such websites should be rated **Lowest** , even if the website assigns credit for the content to another source.

As a reminder, there are many types of effort that people put into content creation, from directly creating the content on the website to building custom website functionality. The criteria "little to no effort" means little to no effort of any type. Please review the description of Effort in Section 3.2 Quality of the Main Content.

The word "copied" refers to the practice of "scraping" content, or copying content from other non-affiliated websites without adding any original content or value to users (see here for more information on copied or scraped content). Any type of content may be copied: text, images, video, etc. Images may be slightly cropped or edited to avoid detection. People may alter videos as well, or even make a video of a screen playing video!

Important : Licensed or syndicated content should not be considered as "copied" (see here for more on web syndication). Examples of syndicated content in the U.S. include news articles by AP or Reuters.

Content on a website may be "paraphrased" from another source. We will consider MC to be paraphrased if it contains content that is unoriginal and exists on other pages, with different wording, organization or phrasing. People can paraphrase content manually by rewriting the content from other sources using different words. Automated tools can also be used to create paraphrased content by restating or summarizing the content on other websites.

Sometimes content is "embedded" or included on the website from another source. There is nothing wrong with embedding content, but the **Lowest** rating applies if there is no significant original content or added value on the website.

Social media posts may be reposted by an unrelated account. There is nothing wrong with reposting content, but the **Lowest** rating applies if there is no added value in the form of additional content, context, or discussion.

All of the following are considered copied or paraphrased content:
- **Content copied, reposted, or embedded exactly from an identifiable source.** Sometimes an entire website is copied, and sometimes just parts of the website are copied. Sometimes multiple pages are copied and then pasted together into a single page. Content that has been copied, reposted, or embedded exactly is usually the easiest type of copied content to identify.
- **Content that is copied, but changed slightly from the original.** This type of copying makes it difficult to find the exact matching original source. Sometimes just a few words are changed, or whole sentences are changed, or a "find and replace" modification is made, where one word is replaced with another throughout the text. Images may be cropped or videos may be segmented into shorter clips. These types of changes are deliberately done to make it difficult to find the original source of the content. We call this kind of content "copied with minimal alteration."

- **Content copied from a changing source, such as a search results website or news feed.** You often won't be able to find an exact matching original source if it is a copy of "dynamic" content (content that changes frequently). However, we will still consider this to be copied content.
- **Content that is paraphrased from a single source or multiple sources.** Content from a single page or from many websites can be summarized, reworded or paraphrased by people or generative AI tools. Paraphrasing may be valuable, for example when an expert paraphrases the contents of a government policy in easy-to-understand language.

Important: Copying, paraphrasing, embedding or reposting content does not automatically make a website **Lowest** quality. However, the **Lowest** rating is required when all or almost all of the MC on the website (including text, images, audio, videos, etc) is copied, paraphrased, embedded, or reposted with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors. Likewise, the use of Generative AI tools alone does not determine the level of effort or Domain Quality rating. Generative AI tools may be used for high quality and low quality content creation. For example, a high level of effort may be involved in creating high quality original artwork using Generative AI tools. However, it's also possible to use Generative AI tools to create **Lowest** quality content with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors.

4.6.7 How to Determine if Content is Copied

How do you determine whether all or most of the MC is copied? How do you identify the original source of the content? How do you know if content is paraphrased from a single page or from multiple pages? These things can be difficult to determine, but the following steps may help.

1. Copy a sentence or phrase in the text. It may be necessary to try a few sentences or phrases from the website just to be sure. When deciding what sentence or phrase to copy, try to find a sentence or series of several words without punctuation, unusual characters, or suspicious words that may have replaced the original text.

2. Search on Google by pasting the sentence or phrase (surrounded by quotation marks to search for an exact match) inside the Google search box. You may also try without quotation marks to search for more general matches.

Here are some sentences and phrases from [this page](#) about "The Wizard of Oz" film and how to search for them.

Sentence or Phrase From a Sentence	Query to Find the Sentence or Phrase
A sentence on the website: *All are convinced by Dorothy that the Wizard can help them too*	Try the query both with and without quotation marks around foruthe sentence: **[" All are convinced by Dorothy that the Wizard can help them too "]** **[All are convinced by Dorothy that the Wizard can help them too]**
A phrase on the website: *Dorothy uses the Golden Cap to summon the Winged Monkeys*	Try the query both with and without quotation marks around the sentence: **[" Dorothy uses the Golden Cap to summon the Winged Monkeys "]** **[Dorothy uses the Golden Cap to summon the Winged Monkeys]**
A different phrase on the website: *revealing an old man who had journeyed to Oz from Omaha long ago in a hot air balloon*	Try the query both with and without quotation marks around the sentence: **[" revealing an old man who had journeyed to Oz from Omaha long ago in a hot air balloon "]** **[revealing an old man who had journeyed to Oz from Omaha long ago in a hot air balloon]**

3. Compare the pages you find that match the sentence or phrase. Is most of their MC the same? If so, does one clearly come from a highly authoritative source that is known for original content creation (newspaper, magazine, medical foundation, etc.)? Does one source seem to reasonably be the original? Does one source appear to have the earliest publication date, verified by sources like the Wayback Machine?

Based on this [older version of a Wikipedia article](#) about "The Wizard of Oz," which can be found using the [Internet Archive Wayback Machine](#) , we can confirm that the text in the table has been copied. Please note that searching for the above sentence and phrases will not lead you to a current Wikipedia article about "The Wizard of Oz," which demonstrates how confirming that the MC of a site contains copied content can sometimes be difficult.

Paraphrased content can be much harder to recognize. Use the same process described above to search for other pages with similar content by searching for sentences from the website or searching for the website title. Paraphrased content is likely to:
● Only contain commonly known information or generally known facts
● Have high overlap with websites on well established sources such as Wikipedia, reference websites, etc.
● Appear to summarize a specific website such as a forum discussion or news article without any added value
● Have words or other indications of summarizing or paraphrasing generative AI tools, such as words like "As an AI language model" ([example](#))

Use your best judgment. Sometimes it is clear that the content is copied or paraphrased from somewhere, but you cannot tell what the original source is. Other times the content found on the original source has changed enough that searches for sentences or phrases may no longer match the original source. For example, Wikipedia articles can change dramatically over time. Text copied from old copies may not match the current content. Summaries or paraphrased content may have a different organizational structure than the original source. If you strongly suspect the website you are evaluating is not the original source, consider it likely to be copied or paraphrased.

Important: If all or almost all of the MC on the website (including text, images or videos) is copied, paraphrased, embedded, or reposted from other sources, you must assess the level of effort, originality and added value for website visitors in order to assign a rating. The **Lowest** rating is appropriate if there is little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors. The **Low** rating is appropriate if there is low effort, originality or added value to website visitors.
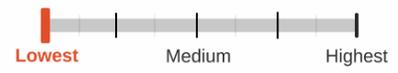
4.7   Examples of Lowest Quality Websites

Website/Content	Lowest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Untrustworthy	**Untrustworthy** ● Multiple, obvious and odd factual inaccuracies ● Lowest E-E-A-T	This site appears to be an informational article about the animal the praying mantis. Factual inaccuracies and odd statements exist in the section titled " Praying Mantises Are Not Poisonous ": "In contrast to praying mollies, which are mostly solitary creatures that avoid human interaction, praying mollusks are more closely related to God. There are no poisonous snakes, and there are no venomous turtles." Odd, factually inaccurate and/or misleading statements: ● The section suddenly refers to praying mantises as "praying mollies" - a name does that isn't supported through a quick web search ● Praying mollusks do not exist - there is no such animal ● Statements about animals and their relation to God are not what one would expect on an informational site like this ● Poisonous snakes exist It is unlikely a human author would make these odd statements and obvious mistakes. It's likely this content was auto-generated with no human editing. No matter how this content was created, the odd statements and factual inaccuracies make this article untrustworthy and therefore Lowest E-E-A-T and Lowest quality.

Website/Content	Lowest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Lowest E-E-A-T and Deceptive	**Untrustworthy** ● This site has a deceptive purpose: the site claims to be an informational resource for parents, but the website terms of service state that it is published for AI enthusiasts and is not intended for the general public. ● The website terms of use states that "some articles" are generated by artificial intelligence and may have errors or be out of date; there is no indication to which website this statement applies. The information in this article is not trustworthy and is Lowest E-E-A-T	The website appears to be an informational article about switching babies from breast milk to whole milk. **(YMYL)** The bottom of the website states "Our blog is dedicated to all things related to kids and parenting – including product reviews, news, recipes, and more. We strive to provide parents with the information they need in order to make informed decisions for their families." However, if you read the terms of service website, you'll find a very different description of pages on the website. The terms of use page states "Some articles on this website might have been partially generated by an artificial intelligence language model and published for experimental and research purposes. The articles on this website are only to be used as proof of concept by AI enthusiasts and not intended for general public. We do not assume any responsibility or liability for the use or interpretation of this content for any other purpose than it was intended. While we strive for accuracy and quality, please note that the information provided may not be entirely error-free or up-to-date . We recommend independently verifying the content and consulting with professionals for specific advice or information." **Given the statements above, the articles on this website should be considered untrustworthy and Lowest E-E-A-T.**
Lowest: Superiority of Specified Group 1 This is the homepage of Stormfront, a white supremacist website. The site is known for propagating white nationalism, antisemitism, Holocaust denial, white supremacy, and Islamophobia.	**Harmful to Specified Groups** ● Promotes, condones, or incites hatred against a Specified Group of people ● Lowest website reputation	 Inciting hatred towards Specified Groups significantly harms members of those groups and society as whole. This website is on a YMYL topic. This website has an extremely negative reputation for promoting white supremacy, antisemitism, Holocaust denial, etc.

Website/Content	Lowest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Superiority of Specified Group 2

This website describes a non-scientifically backed theory of superiority of a Specified Group. | **Harmful to Specified Groups, Harmfully Misleading Information**

● Promotes, condones, or incites hatred against a Specified Group of people
● Contains unsubstantiated theories/claims not grounded in any reasonable facts or evidence | Lowest — Medium — Highest

Unsubstantiated claims about a Specified Group significantly harms members of that group and society as a whole. This website is on a YMYL topic.

The purpose of the website is to promote the view of superiority of a group of people.

This website makes unsubstantiated claims about the role of melanin in the human body. |
| Lowest: Non-medical drug use advice

This post encourages mixing an anti-anxiety drug with a recreational drug. | **Harmful to Self or Other Individuals**

● Encourages, depicts, incites, or directly causes physical, mental, emotional, or financial harm to self or others | Lowest — Medium — Highest

Potentially harmful use of drugs could significantly impact a person's health. This is a YMYL topic.

This post and other content on the website encourages dangerous behavior that could cause harm. |
| Lowest: Eating disorder encouragement

This website has posts that encourage people to lose weight in unhealthy ways. | **Harmful to Self or Other Individuals, Harmfully Misleading Information**

● Encourages, depicts, incites, or directly causes physical, mental, emotional, or financial harm to self or others
● Contains information that contradicts well-established expert consensus | Lowest — Medium — Highest

Eating disorders and decisions to seek medical treatment significantly impact a person's health. This is a YMYL topic.

This post encourages harmful behavior.

"Proana" or pro-anorexia is a movement to view anorexia as a lifestyle choice, not a disease. Proana and similar "thinspiration" websites contradict well-established expert consensus that anorexia is a life-threatening eating disorder. |
| Lowest: Personal information collection scam

Superficially, this looks like a payment page on a merchant site.

However, the form asks for highly sensitive personal information such as social security number, drivers license number, bank account numbers, and ATM PIN. | **Harmful to Self or Other Individuals, Untrustworthy**

● Encourages, depicts, incites, or directly causes physical, mental, emotional, or financial harm to self or others
● Characteristics of scams, malicious downloads, or other harmful behavior | Lowest — Medium — Highest

Sharing highly sensitive personal information could significantly impact a person's financial security. This website is on a YMYL topic.

While this looks like a merchant site, the true purpose of this website is to collect information that could be used to commit identity theft or remove money from someone's bank account. |

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Website/Content	Lowest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Poor financial advice and possible scam This is an article suggesting clicking on a link to avoid paying debt.	**Untrustworthy** ● Inadequate information about the website or content creator for the purpose of the website. ● Lowest E-E-A-T ● Deceptive website design ● Characteristics of scams, malicious downloads, or other harmful behavior	**Lowest** — Medium — Highest Debt management significantly impacts a person's financial security. This is a YMYL topic. This site has multiple **Lowest** quality characteristics. From the MC, it is evident that the content creator lacks financial expertise (inconsistent with well-established expert consensus on what to do for debt relief). Furthermore, the website appears to be designed to manipulate people into clicking one of several prominent links rather than helping people by providing sound financial advice. The promise of debt relief is a common form of manipulation and scam technique .
Lowest: Miley Cyrus is dead "news article" on a deceptive website This is a factually inaccurate article on a website called "Now 8 News". It falsely claims Miley Cyrus is dead.	**Harmfully Misleading Information, Untrustworthy** ● Contains clearly inaccurate information that can be refuted by straightforward and widely accepted facts ● Deceptive website design	**Lowest** — Medium — Highest This website is designed to look like a news site and yet has deliberate factually inaccurate information. There is no information on who is responsible for this content. There is no date for the news article or date of death, which would be a key part of any standard reporting. This website was designed to misinform or deceive.
Lowest: Crystals heal cancer potential scam This article explains how crystals can be used to help cure cancers. It has a prominent "Shop Crystals" link at the top.	**Harmfully Misleading Information, Untrustworthy** ● Contains unsubstantiated theories/claims not grounded in any reasonable facts or evidence ● Contains information that contradicts well-established expert consensus ● Characteristics of scams, malicious downloads, or other harmful behavior	**Lowest** — Medium — Highest Claims about cancer cures could significantly impact people's decisions to seek medical treatment. This website is on a YMYL topic. The claims made about the healing power of crystals contradict well-established expert scientific and medical consensus. Selling "cures" for diseases such as cancer is a commonly used scam technique .

Website/Content	Lowest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Flat earth This is a homepage of The Flat Earth Society, a group of people dedicated to spreading the belief that the earth is flat.	**Harmfully Misleading Information** ● Contains unsubstantiated theories/claims not grounded in any reasonable facts or evidence ● Contains clearly inaccurate information that can be refuted by straightforward and widely accepted facts ● Contains information that contradicts well-established expert consensus	Lowest —— Medium —— Highest Claims contradicting well-established scientific consensus about the shape of the earth undermine trust in scientific institutions such as NOAA, the agency responsible for issuing alerts during dangerous weather events. This is a YMYL topic. The purpose of this website is promoting misleading information. It is harmful to people and society as it undermines trust in public institutions.
Lowest: Dry socket medical info This YMYL medical site has literally no information about who is responsible for the content or the website.	**Untrustworthy** ● Inadequate information about the website or content creator for the purpose of the website	Lowest —— Medium —— Highest Medical information about this dental condition could significantly impact how people seek dental treatment. This website topic is YMYL. There is no information about who created this website, no contact information, and no information about the author. Medical websites require a high level of user trust. Because there is no information about who owns this website and who created this content, this is considered an untrustworthy website.
Lowest: Merchant with little contact info, untrustworthy characteristics This looks like a product listing page on a merchant website.	**Untrustworthy** ● Inadequate information about the website or content creator for the purpose of the website (YMYL) ● Characteristics of scams, malicious downloads, or other harmful behavior	Lowest —— Medium —— Highest Inaccurate information about shipping and returns, deceptive use of logos and no information about who is responsible make this shopping site appear potentially fraudulent and untrustworthy. This website is selling Nike Air Jordan shoes. However, there is inadequate contact information on the contact us page for a merchant site. In addition, the Shipping and Returns page has the name of another company that seems to be unrelated. There are also official looking logos at the bottom of the homepage, including the Better Business Bureau logo and

		Google Checkout logo, that don't appear to be affiliated with the website.

Website/Content	Lowest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Stomach flu lowest EAT article This poorly written article describes how to cure the stomach flu.	**Harmfully Misleading Information, Untrustworthy** ● Contains information that contradicts well-established expert consensus ● Inadequate information about the website or content creator for the purpose of the website ● Lowest E-E-A-T	Lowest — Medium — Highest Many patient hospitalizations and deaths occur due to the flu each year. This topic could significantly impact a person's health. This is a YMYL topic. The writing is poor and the information is not consistent with standard medical guidance. It is clear from the content the author does not have medical expertise. This website should not be trusted as a medical resource.
Lowest: Pimple popping lowest EAT article This very poorly written article describes popping pimples.	**Untrustworthy** ● Inadequate information about the website or content creator for the purpose of the website ● Lowest E-E-A-T	Lowest — Medium — Highest The writing is extremely poor and there is virtually no information in this article. For example, the opening sentence is "Popping pimples could be or could be not the new trend of getting rid of them." It is clear from the content that the author does not have skin care expertise.
Lowest: Malicious merchant site This website appears to be an eyeglasses merchant site.	**Harmful to Self or Other Individuals, Untrustworthy** ● Encourages, depicts, incites, or directly causes physical, mental, emotional, or financial harm to self or others ● Lowest E-E-A-T ● Characteristics of scams, malicious downloads, or other harmful behavior	Lowest — Medium — Highest This website swindled people and physically threatened people who complained. These articles on Wikipedia and the New York Times describe the deceptive techniques used by this website and provide other negative information about the website and its owner. The reputation of this website is lowest based on reports of malicious behavior.

Lowest: Chicken recipes no MC This looks like a list of chicken recipes, but is actually a list of links that are ads.	**Untrustworthy, Spammy** ● No MC ● Deceptive website design ● Content created with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors	 **Lowest**　Medium　Highest MC should be created to benefit people who come to the website. Websites without MC should be considered spammy as they crowd out and disincentivize the creation of websites with high quality MC. Websites with Ads that are designed to look like MC should be considered untrustworthy.

Website/Content	Lowest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Mesothelioma deceptive directory This page looks like a listing of resources about Mesothelioma, a form of lung cancer.	**Untrustworthy, Spammy** ● No MC ● Deceptive website design ● Content created with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors	 **Lowest**　Medium　Highest Information about cancer could significantly impact how people make decisions related to medical treatment. This website is on a YMYL topic. This website is designed to look like a directory website or a list of helpful resources, but every link is an Ad. There is no MC on this website. Websites without MC should be considered spammy as they crowd out and disincentivize the creation of websites with high quality MC. Websites that disguise Ads as directory listings or other MC should be considered untrustworthy.
Lowest: Ads deliberately obscure MC When you first visit the website, it appears that there is no MC, only Ads. If you scroll down, you will eventually find the MC at the bottom.	**Untrustworthy** ● Deliberately obstructed or obscured MC	 **Lowest**　Medium　Highest This website requires scrolling past so many Ads to get to the MC that many people may stop scrolling and leave the website before reaching the MC. Deliberately obscured MC to benefit the website with no help for people visiting the website should be considered untrustworthy.

Lowest: Deceptive and untrustworthy fake survey page This website appears to be a survey with the opportunity to win an Apple MacBook Air, an iPhone 5c, or a Galaxy S4.	**Untrustworthy, Spammy** ● Inadequate information about the website or content creator for the purpose of the website ● Deceptive website design ● Characteristics of scams, malicious downloads, or other harmful behavior ● Content created with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors	Lowest · Medium · Highest This website contains a fake survey, which appears to promise users the opportunity to win an Apple MacBook Air, an iPhone 5c, or a Galaxy S4. However, there is no information about who is responsible for the survey, even though upon clicking, the survey asks for highly personal information such as bank account numbers. The message at the top of the website, "Thank You from Goggle.com" and survey content could mislead users to think that the survey is affiliated with Google. This website is deceptive and should be considered untrustworthy.

Website/Content	Lowest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Lowest MC free credit report The title of the website suggests that it may provide a credit report from the government "freecreditreport gov". However, the website has gibberish MC and spammy looking features, such as ads or links surrounding the meaningless text.	**Untrustworthy, Spammy** ● Extremely misleading title ● Inadequate information about the website or content creator for the purpose of the website ● Deceptive website design ● Characteristics of scams, malicious downloads, or other harmful behavior ● Cannot determine any purpose, e.g., gibberish MC ● Content created with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors	Lowest · Medium · Highest Credit reports could significantly impact one's financial security. This is a YMYL topic. The MC is gibberish. There is no beneficial purpose of gibberish MC. The title of the website is misleading, given the MC. This website also has deceptive features in the supplementary content, such as a friend request, a prize alert, and a download button. It is highly likely that these are ads or malicious download links.

Lowest: Buy Xanax This is a page on the website for the U.S. Green Building Council. However, this page has the words "Buy Xanax" over and over again, along with related words about buying Xanax and a URL link.	**Untrustworthy, Spammy** ● Characteristics of scams, malicious downloads, or other harmful behavior ● Content created with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors	Prescription drugs could significantly impact a person's health. This is a YMYL topic. This specific page has been created or modified on this organization's website in hopes that people will click on the link to buy the prescription drug Xanax. This is a spam technique. Spammers hope that the page will rank well in search results because the website is otherwise high quality. The words "buy xanax" are used repeatedly in hopes that the page will show up for the search "buy xanax". Attempting to spam search engines and trick people into clicking on links is highly untrustworthy behavior.

Webpage/Content	Lowest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Auto-generated car engine code This page is full of supplementary content, links, and large ads. The MC at the top gives information about a specific error code P2570 and a second block of main content in the middle shows more information about P2570. The MC is broken up by large ads and it is difficult to understand due to the poor content quality.	**Untrustworthy, Spammy** ● Inadequate information about the website or content creator for the purpose of the website ● Content created with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors	 This page has low quality MC and spammy attributes. The page repeats the error code "P2570" beyond what is helpful for users- a technique known as irrelevant keywords . The small amount of MC is not original to the website. Lists of error codes are available either by purchase or by scraping. An important fact is missing at the top "When you check engine light came on code P2570 the reason should be ." The reason is left out - this should be the most important content on the page! Looking at other pages on the website, it is clear that each page is created automatically by filling in a template from a list of error code information. There appears to be little to no manual editing or checking to make sure the error code content is correctly pulled in, as evident by the missing reason on this page. As with many spammy websites, there is no information about who is responsible for this website and no way to report problems with the page.

Webpage/Content	Lowest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Auto-generated bulldog wrinkle wipes This page claims to list the best bulldog wrinkle wipes and uses affiliate links.	**Untrustworthy, Spammy** ● Inadequate information about the website or content creator for the purpose of the website ● Deceptive website design ● Content created with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors	Lowest —— Medium —— Highest The MC on this website is copied with little or no time, effort, expertise, manual curation, or added value for users. Looking at the content at the bottom of the page and exploring other pages on the website, it is clear that each page is created automatically using content from Amazon and substituting different product names into a generic template. There appears to be little to no manual editing or curation on this website. The true purpose of this website is to bring users seeking information about products to this website in hopes that they will click and order products by clicking on Amazon affiliate links. This website does not have a beneficial purpose for users but rather was created to benefit the creator of the website. Though the website discloses that they use affiliate links, the site offers no added value for users. As with many deceptive websites, there is no information about who is responsible for this website.

Lowest: Viagra copied content This looks like an information website for the drug Viagra.	**Untrustworthy, Spammy** ● Inadequate information about the website or content creator for the purpose of the website ● Deceptive website design ● Content created with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors	Information about prescription drugs could significantly impact a person's health. This website is on a YMYL topic. All MC on this website is copied with little or no time, effort, expertise, manual curation, or added value for users. Here is the original source . Exploration of the pages on this website are similarly created with little expertise or added value for users. The true purpose of this website is to bring users seeking information about Viagra to this website in hopes that they will click on the "order now" link. The "order now" link goes to another website and is likely monetized. Therefore, this website does not have a beneficial purpose for users but rather was created to benefit another website. As with many deceptive websites, there is no information about who is responsible for this website.

Webpage/Content	Lowest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
[Lowest: Scaled content abuse cancers](#)	**Spammy** ● Scaled content abuse ● All of the MC on the website (including text, images or videos) is paraphrased with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors	Lowest — Medium — Highest This website is a YMYL medical article. The contents of the website show it is created with generative AI with likely no original content and provides no value to users. For example, the article starts with "As a language model, I don't have real-time data and my knowledge cutoff date is September 2021. Cancer rankings.." The end of the text of the article appears to be cut off with an incomplete sentence "Pancreatic neuroendocrine tumors (NETs): Pancreatic NETs are a rare type of pancreatic cancer that can have a poor" This is spam (scaled content abuse) and a highly untrustworthy medical website: it demonstrates no real expertise and may not be correct and is especially concerning for YMYL topics.
[Lowest: Scaled content abuse tumors](#)	**Untrustworthy, Spammy** ● Scaled content abuse ● Deceptive information about the website purpose ● All of the MC on the website (including text, images or videos) is paraphrased or embedded with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors	Lowest — Medium — Highest Website information indicates this is a website for rabbit enthusiasts "We are rabbit lovers and breeders, we will share some of our guides here, welcome to discuss with us." However the website includes articles on a very wide variety of topics unrelated to rabbits such as YMYL human health, making the information about the website appear deceptive. All the MC on the website is embedded from a different source or likely paraphrased and unoriginal. If you explore the site, you'll find hundreds of templated articles with unoriginal, paraphrased content and embedded videos. This is an example of scaled content abuse. While the method of content creation is unknown, the format of the articles (question and answer) is a common technique to create scaled content by collecting questions (available from sources such as [Google Search's "People also ask" feature](#)) and answering the questions with unoriginal, paraphrased content (often using generative AI tools).

Webpage/Content	Lowest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Expired domain abuse	**Untrustworthy, Spammy** ● Expired domain abuse ● Highly misleading URL	Lowest — Medium — Highest At the time of this example, the URL for this example was ruralschools.org . Previously ruralschools.org was owned by an organization called Organizations Concerned for Rural Education (OCRE). Using the Internet Archive , we can see what the website used to look like. Currently the content is about the Hong Kong lottery. People may be genuinely expecting a website about rural schools for this URL. Consider URLs to be misleading or deceptive when the URL looks like a high quality government agency, school, charity or otherwise trusted source but the content is low quality and completely unrelated, e.g. low quality content about medical products, loans, lottery tickets, gambling, etc.

Webpage/Content	Lowest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Site reputation abuse	**Untrustworthy, Spammy** ● Site reputation abuse ● Deceptive website content; untrustworthy due to conflict of interest	Lowest Medium Highest This is an article published on a news website. The top of the website has a Sponsored Content banner. The website goes on to disclose: "Articles attributed to this byline are authored by paying advertisers. The editorial team did not contribute to these pieces, and the opinions expressed do not necessarily represent those of the editorial staff. Refer to our partner statement to better understand the nature of the relationship. The sponsor retains responsibility for the content and holds the copyright to their material" This website qualifies as site reputation abuse because the content on the website is produced by a third party (a supplement maker) and published on this news website to inherit the reputation of the news publisher, even though the new publisher is not responsible for this content. In addition to site reputation abuse, there are also potentially misleading and untrustworthy aspects to this article that warrant a Lowest rating: ● Even though there is a disclaimer, the content could be mistaken for an article written by the newspaper. ● The article appears to be an independent review for a supplement, but is actually written by the producer of the supplement. ● There is a clear conflict of interest, making this an untrustworthy source of information

Webpage/Content	Lowest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Scaled content abuse chickens	**Untrustworthy, Spammy** ● Scaled content abuse ● Deceptive information about the website purpose ● Most or all of the MC on the website (including text, images or videos) is paraphrased or embedded with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors ● Repetitive, low value to no add MC	Lowest ——— Medium ——— Highest The about us page describes the website as providing information for seniors: "we provide non-medical information to senior citizens in their own homes or apartments." However, the site hosts hundreds of articles on all sorts of topics. The articles are templated, have paraphrased text content and embedded videos from other sources. This is an example of Scaled Content Abuse. This website is titled with a poorly phrased question "How Cold Can Chickens Tolerate" The answer text is poorly written and starts off bizarrely: "What is this? Cold weather chickens..." The website goes on to have repetitive questions and poorly produced responses. "What temp is too cold for chickens?" "Is 40 degrees too cold for chickens?", etc. A careful read of the answers shows that the sentences may make sense individually, but not as a whole. For example "How cold can chickens tolerate at night? Chickens can survive quite well with temperatures down into the teens. In fact, if you place a thermometer in your coop overnight, you will likely find the temperature has been maintained in the thirty to forty-degree area." (The second sentence does not make sense following the first.) While the method of content creation is unknown, the format of the articles (question and answer) is commonly used to create low effort, unoriginal, paraphrased content with generative AI tools. The text does not appear to have been written or edited by a human editor.

5.0   Low Quality Websites

> **Low** quality websites do not achieve their purpose well, because they are lacking in an important dimension or have a problematic aspect. <u>**Low** quality websites do not meet the standards for **Lowest,**</u> but may have similar though milder undesirable characteristics.
>
> Please ensure to pay special attention to comparisons made in this section, between the criteria for **Lowest** and **Low** ratings.

To identify **Low** quality websites, start by considering the following:

Initial Consideration	**Low** Quality Websites
The purpose of the website	**Low** quality websites have a beneficial or non-harmful purpose.
The potential for the website to cause harm as described in these guidelines	**Low** quality websites have either no potential to cause harm, or have some mild potential for harm but do not meet the standards for **Lowest** as described in Section 4.0 . *(please see for reference)*
The topic of the website, the type of website, and the extent to which YMYL standards apply	A website on any topic or any type of website may qualify for **Low.** Give special scrutiny to websites or websites needing a high level of trust, such as online stores, medical websites, or news coverage of major civic issues.

Next, assess the website to determine if any of the criteria for **Low** apply:

Low Domain Quality Assessment	Any one of the following is justification for **Low**
Quality of the MC	MC is created without adequate effort, originality, talent, or skill necessary to achieve the purpose of the website in a satisfying way.
The title of the website	The website title is slightly misleading, shocking, or exaggerated.
The role of Ads and SC on the website	The Ads or SC significantly distract from or interrupt the use of the MC as described in Section 5.3 .
Information provided by the website and content creator	Unsatisfying amount of website information or information about the content creator for the purpose of the website. **Important**: For personal content shared on social media platforms or forums, an alias or username is adequate.
Reputation of the website and content creator	A mildly negative reputation of the website or content creator.
Trustworthiness of the website: E-E-A-T	Inadequate level of E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website.

Important : Low quality websites can occur on any type of website, including academic websites, nonprofit websites, government websites, or any other generally helpful type of website. Low quality websites may be about any topic. Websites on YMYL topics need more scrutiny for signs of Low quality related to the MC and website/content creator because the website could impact a person's health, financial stability, or safety, or the welfare or well-being of society. However, for any type of website, a single Low quality attribute is enough to use the **Low** quality rating.

5.1   Lacking E-E-A-T

Low quality websites often lack an appropriate level of E-E-A-T for the topic or purpose of the website. Here are some examples:

- The content creator lacks adequate expertise, e.g. an article about how to skydive written by someone with no expertise in the subject
- The website or content creator is not an authoritative or trustworthy source for the topic of the website, e.g. tax form downloads provided on a cooking website.
- The website is not trustworthy for its purpose, e.g. a shopping website with minimal customer service information

Important: The **Low** rating should be used if the website lacks appropriate E-E-A-T for its purpose. No other considerations such as positive reputation or the type of website can overcome a lack of E-E-A-T for the topic or purpose of the website.

5.2   Low Quality Main Content

MC is **Low** quality if it is created without adequate effort, originality, talent, or skill necessary to achieve the purpose of the website in a satisfying way.

> Mild inaccuracies on informational websites are evidence of **Low** quality. However, if the website has harmful inaccuracies or so many inaccuracies that it feels untrustworthy, the **Lowest** rating is justified.

Here are some examples of websites with **Low** quality MC:

Low Quality MC Examples	Why the MC is considered Low quality
A crafting tutorial website with instructions on how to make a basic craft and lots of unhelpful "filler" at the top, such as commonly known facts about the supplies needed or other non-crafting information.	Lacks adequate effort to clearly present the instructions to people hoping to make the craft.
A list of the best vacuum cleaners with product images and reviews that are paraphrased or summarized from other sources, with minimal signs of effort or original content added by the content creator.	Lacks adequate effort and first-hand experience from the content creator.
A slide show of the top 10 world destinations using other people's pictures and existing top 10 lists.	Lacks effort and originality.
A website titled "How many centimeters are in a meter?" with a large amount of off-topic and unhelpful content such that the very small amount of helpful information is hard to find.	Lacks effort, has excessive filler, lacks depth, and has only commonly known facts.
A list of the tallest mountains in the world that is missing Mount Everest.	Lacks accuracy and effort.

The title of the website is also considered part of the MC. Titles are important because they represent the website in search results and help users decide what to click on. A misleading title can lead to a poor search experience.

Exaggerated or shocking titles are evidence of **Low** quality because of the poor user experience that results when users see the actual MC after reaching the website.

Here are some examples of websites with **Low** quality titles:

Low Quality Title Examples	Why the Title is considered Low quality
A website titled "Pink Elephant: Part 2 coming soon!", but includes only speculation and rumor about a potential movie sequel that may or may not be produced.	Slightly misleading titles would give people the impression that the movie sequel has a confirmed release date, and that the website would provide accurate information about it.
A website titled "Is the World about to End? Mysterious Sightings of Sea Serpents Prompt Panic!", for an article about the remains of a dead fish on a beach.	Exaggerated and shocking title is a mismatch with the content of the article.
A website titled "Eat the Healthiest Foods in the WORLD to extend your life!!!!" for a list of tips on how to add more fruits and vegetables to meals.	The overly exaggerated title suggests that the website would offer something more than the basic nutrition advice it provides.

The level of talent or skill required for artistic expression by ordinary people on social media or other websites that allow content sharing should be viewed leniently. In many cases, people post activities to share with friends, such as a video documenting a first attempt at a new hobby. These types of websites should not be considered **Low** on the basis of talent or skill because the primary purpose is sharing content. Use the **Low** rating only if the lack of talent or skill prevents the website from achieving its purpose well.

> **Important** : **Low** quality MC does not meet the standard for **Lowest** and is not harmful, but it is unsatisfying for the purpose of the website or causes the website to fail to achieve its purpose well.

5.2.1 MC is Created with Low Effort, Low Originality and Low Added Value for Website Visitors

People who search benefit from a variety of websites offering high quality content and good experiences to website visitors. However, some websites are created by "repackaging" content available on higher quality sites, with low effort, low originality and low added value for website visitors compared to higher quality sources.

As a reminder, the **Lowest** rating applies if all or almost all of the MC on the website (including text, images or videos) is copied, paraphrased, embedded, or reposted from other sources with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors. However, the **Low** rating should be used if much of the MC on the website is copied, paraphrased, embedded or reposted, with a low amount of effort to create value by editing, manually curating, reformatting or injecting some original content.

Examples of low effort, low originality and low added value include
  - Social media reposts with little additional comment or discussion
  - Websites with content from other sources (e.g. pages of embedded videos or pages with "repinned" images) with little additional comment, discussion, or curation by the content creator of the website
  - "Best" lists based on existing reviews and lists with little original content

The **Low** rating applies when the MC is created using any technique with low effort, low originality, and low added value for website visitors compared to other websites that contain similar content.

5.2.2 Filler as a Poor User Experience

The main content (MC) of a website should support its purpose. Web site owners and content creators should place the most helpful and essential MC near the top of the website so that visitors can immediately access it.

A high quality website has the most helpful MC placed most prominently. Content that supports the website purpose without directly contributing to the primary goal can be included, but it should be shown lower on the website in a less prominent position. For example, on recipe websites, the recipe itself and important supporting content directly related to the recipe should be prominently displayed near the top of the website.

Sometimes, MC includes "filler" - low-effort content that adds little value and doesn't directly support the purpose of the website. Filler can artificially inflate content, creating a website that appears rich but lacks content website visitors find valuable. Filler can result in a poor experience for people who visit the website, especially if placed prominently ahead of helpful content for the purpose of the website.

Important: Content that supports the website purpose without directly contributing to its primary goal can still be valuable if placed appropriately. Filler refers to low-effort content that occupies valuable and prominent space without providing value or without being helpful or satisfying for the primary purpose of the website.

A Low rating is appropriate if the website
- Contains a large amount of low quality and unhelpful filler, causing a poor experience for people visiting the website
- Contains a large amount visually prominent filler that makes it difficult to find the helpful MC, causing frustration for people visiting the website

5.3   Distracting Ads/SC

We expect Ads and SC to be visible. However, some Ads, SC, or interstitial pages (i.e., websites displayed before or after the content you are expecting) make it difficult to use the MC. Websites with Ads, SC, or other features that significantly distract from or make it difficult for the user to efficiently access the information they want from the website should typically be given a **Low** rating even if some of the MC is helpful.

A single pop-over Ad or interstitial page with a clear and easy-to-use close button is <u>not</u> terribly distracting, even though it may annoy some people. However, difficult-to-close Ads that follow page scrolls, or interstitial pages that require an app download, can be truly distracting and make the MC difficult to use. You can see examples of interstitial pages here .

Important: The **Low** rating should be used if the website has Ads, SC, or other features that significantly distract from or interrupt the use of the MC.

> Remember that a domain is held accountable for Ad **placement** - but not for the **content** of the Ads.

5.4   Mildly Negative Reputation of the Website or Content Creator

The **Low** rating should be used if the website or the content creator has a <u>mildly</u> negative reputation.

If the MC was created by a content creator who is using the website to host it, <u>research the reputation of the content creator</u>. Expect to find reputation information on well-known journalists, authors, social media influencers, bloggers and vloggers, professionals such as lawyers and doctors, etc. Pay attention when there is evidence of mildly

negative—though not malicious or financially fraudulent—reputation. However, a lack of reputation information for ordinary people and lesser-known content creators is expected and is not a sign of **Low** quality.

Exercise care when researching the reputation of businesses. Try to find enough reviews to understand a range of customer opinions and experiences, and read the details of negative reviews and low ratings before inferring that the business overall has a negative reputation. A few negative customer service reviews are typical for businesses such as stores or restaurants.

5.5   Unsatisfying Amount of Information about the Website or Content Creator

Expect to find some form of website information for many or most websites. We expect clear information about who (e.g., what individual, company, business, foundation, etc.) created the MC, unless there is a good reason for anonymity. A long-standing Internet alias or username can identify the content creator. For personal websites or forum discussions on non-YMYL topics, an email address or social media link alone may be sufficient. Many people are reasonably hesitant to share personally identifiable information online!

Stores and websites that process financial transactions require a high level of user trust. If a store or financial transaction website has just an email address and physical address, it may be difficult to get help if there are issues with the transaction. Likewise, many other types of websites on clear YMYL topics also require a high level of user trust.

Important: Websites that offer payment functionality or process other types of financial transactions should receive a **Low** rating if there is an unsatisfying amount of customer service information or contact information. Websites on YMYL topics and other websites that require a high level of user trust should receive a **Low** rating if there is an unsatisfying amount of information about who is responsible for the website or who created the content. For forums, social media pages, and other websites where people commonly exchange opinions, a username is an acceptable identifier.
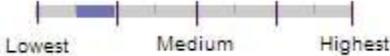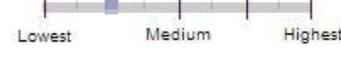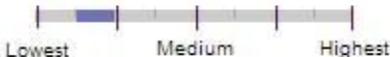
5.6   Exaggerated or Mildly Misleading Information about the Website or Content Creator

> Recall that deceptive information about a website or content creator is a strong reason for the **Lowest** rating.
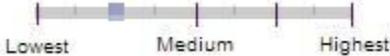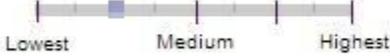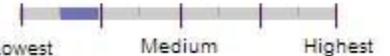
However, sometimes the information about the website or content provider seems exaggerated or mildly misleading, such as claims of personal experience or expertise that seem overstated or included just to impress website visitors. E-E-A-T assessments should be based on the MC itself, the information you find during reputation research, verifiable credentials, etc, not just website or content creator claims of "I'm an expert!".

If you find the information about the website or the content creator to be exaggerated or mildly misleading, the **Low** rating should be used.

5.7   Examples of Low Quality Websites

Type of Webpage/Content	Low Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Low: News 1 Article about nuclear power	● Unsatisfying MC for the purpose of the website: does not achieve the purpose well ● MC lacks accuracy or does not align with well-established expert consensus ● Low E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	Information about energy sources and nuclear power could significantly impact global industries and society. This is a YMYL topic. The writing of this article is unprofessional, including many grammar and punctuation errors. The MC also appears to have been paraphrased from a science article found on a different source, but with factual inaccuracies introduced throughout. The combination of low quality MC and lack of E-A-T justify the Lowest+ to Low rating.
Low: News 2 Article titled "Getting Rid Of Toxins After The Holiday Season"	● Unsatisfying MC for the purpose of the website: does not achieve the purpose well ● MC lacks accuracy or does not align with well-established expert consensus ● Slightly misleading, shocking, or exaggerated title ● Low E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	The title of the article is misleading and does not reflect the actual content of the website. The MC does not explain how to get rid of toxins or what the word "toxins" in the headline refers to. The content also has many problems: the writing quality is poor, and the article includes meaningless statements such as "water therapy is one of the easiest ways of beauty regimen since it will give enough moisture on the skin". The article fails to cite sources, and there is no evidence of E-A-T.
Low: Informational 40 th birthday party food ideas	● Unsatisfying MC for the purpose of the website: does not achieve the purpose well ● Ads or SC significantly distract from or interrupt the use of MC ● Low E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	This page and website have many characteristics of **Low** quality websites. Close observation shows MC that contains mostly commonly known information and poor quality writing, demonstrating a lack of effort. The MC is broken up by large Ads that significantly disrupt the user experience.
Low: Article 1 Article with tips for dressing for the office	● Unsatisfying MC for the purpose of the website: does not achieve the purpose well ● Low E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	This informational article has multiple Low quality characteristics leading to a Low or Lowest+ rating. There is a large amount of "filler" or meaningless content and a complete lack of effort in editing. In addition, the MC contains only commonly known information with no expertise or first-hand experience shared by the content creator.

Type of Webpage/Content	Low Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Low: Article 2 Using ginger for your health	● Unsatisfying MC for the purpose of the website: does not achieve the purpose well ● MC lacks accuracy or does not align with well-established expert consensus ● Low E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	 This informational article has multiple Low quality characteristics leading to a Low or Lowest+ rating. There is garbled or meaningless content, a complete lack of effort in editing, and unrelated links in the middle of the website. Additionally, the article is on a health topic, and there are no signs that the content creator has relevant expertise or links to support the medical claims made in the article.
Low: Article 3 How to adopt children from Iraq	● Unsatisfying MC for the purpose of the website: does not achieve the purpose well ● Low E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	 Adopting a child significantly impacts the health and well-being of families. This is a YMYL topic. However, the steps listed here are merely commonly-known information that would be of little benefit to someone interested in adopting a child from Iraq. For example, step 1 says "Choose an adoption agency" and suggests looking in a phone book. This demonstrates a lack of effort in the creation of MC. There is almost no information specific to Iraq. There is no evidence of expertise on adoption from the description about the author. Note that some Ads have the same format as links to other articles on this website, potentially making it a bit harder for users to visually distinguish these Ads from the MC and SC.
Low: Article 4	● MC has low effort, low originality and little added value compared to the original source	 This website summarizes a discussion page . There is little original content. It requires low effort to summarize a discussion. This website offers little added value over the original source.

Type of Webpage/Content	Low Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Low: Financial Page with advice on picking a quality stock for investment	● Low E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	 Advice on stock investment could significantly impact a person's financial decisions and security. This is a YMYL topic. The MC is superficial and includes mostly commonly known information for this topic, e.g. "look at key statistics" or "find companies with rising revenue". There is no evidence that the author has financial expertise. Because this article gives advice on a YMYL financial topic, lacking expertise is a reason for a Low rating.
Low: Medical Page with information about how long the flu lasts	● Low E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	 Many patient hospitalizations and deaths occur due to the flu each year. This topic could significantly impact a person's health. This is a YMYL topic. There is no evidence that the author has medical expertise. Because this article gives advice on a YMYL medical topic, lacking expertise is a reason for a Low rating.
Low: Recipe 1 Apple pie recipe	● Unsatisfying MC for the purpose of the website: does not achieve the purpose well	 This website has many characteristics of Low quality websites. The MC is low quality and lacks important information. For example, it gives no indication of how to make a crust and doesn't list premade crust as an ingredient. It would be very difficult to actually make an apple pie using this recipe. This website is lacking the kind of helpful content we expect in recipe websites, such as user reviews or comments. Without such information, it's hard to tell if the recipe is any good. The small pink text at the top is not helpful for users.

Low: Recipe 2	● Ads or SC significantly distract from or interrupt the use of MC	This is an example of distracting and disruptive Ads/SC: there are large Ads in the main column pushing down the MC as well as highly distracting content on the right that are labeled "Top Posts & Pages." It is unclear whether these are SC or Ads.
Gluten-free New York cheesecake recipe		

Type of Webpage/Content	Low Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Low: Recipe 3	● A large quantity of prominent filler makes it difficult to find the helpful MC ● Ads, SC and Filler MC distract from the helpful MC	The primary purpose of the website is to share a recipe for Butterbeer. While helpful MC such as the ingredients and information about Butterbear are at the top of the website, significant scrolling is required to find the actual Butterbeer recipe. The "jump to recipe" link itself is difficult to find. The website has a large amount of content unrelated to Butterbeer between the Butterbeer ingredients and the Butterbeer recipe. The website has photos and reviews of many other unrelated foods at universal studios. In addition, Ads and SC and interstitials appear throughout causing additional scrolling to finally find the recipe towards the bottom. All of the above lead to a poor user experience. Note: A higher rating could be appropriate if the website were better organized, the recipe was prominently placed and easy to find, and there was less Filler, SC and Ads distracting from the helpful MC.

6.0   Medium Quality Websites

Medium websites have a beneficial purpose and achieve their purpose. There is nothing wrong with **Medium** quality websites. Expect to encounter many **Medium** quality websites in DQ rating tasks.

To identify **Medium** quality websites, start by considering the following:

Initial Consideration	**Medium** Quality Websites
The purpose of the website	**Medium** quality websites have a beneficial or non-harmful purpose.
The potential for the website to cause harm as described in these guidelines	**Medium** quality websites are not expected to cause harm.
The topic of the website, the type of website, and the extent to which YMYL standards apply	A website on any topic or any type of website may qualify for **Medium. moey** Give special scrutiny to websites on YMYL topics or websites needing a high level of trust, such as online stores.
The title of the website	**Medium** quality websites have titles that summarize the website.
The role of Ads and SC on the website	The Ads and SC do not block or significantly interfere with the MC on **Medium** quality websites. **Remember**: Many websites need monetization to share content with users. The presence or absence of Ads alone is not a consideration for DQ rating.
Information provided by the website and content creator	**Medium** quality websites have adequate information about the website and content creator for the purpose of the website. For stores or websites that process financial transactions, examine the customer service information. **Important:** For personal content shared on social media platforms or forums, an alias or username is adequate.

Next, assess the website to determine if the criteria for **Medium** apply:

Medium Domain Quality Assessment	**Medium** Quality Criteria
Quality of the MC	MC created with adequate effort, originality, talent, or skill such that the website achieves its purpose.
Reputation of the website and content creator	Not especially positive nor especially negative: Reputation information found about the website or content creator is not concerning, but not positive enough to justify a higher rating.
Trustworthiness of the website: E-E-A-T	Adequate level of E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website.

6.1   Types of Medium Quality Websites

There are two types of **Medium** quality websites:

Type of **Medium** Website	Description
Nothing wrong, but nothing special	All of the **Medium** Domain Quality considerations and criteria apply.
Mixed, but with some redeeming qualities	The website has some signs of **High** quality (E-E-A-T, quality of the MC, positive reputation), but also has one sign or mild signs of **Low** quality.

> **Important:** For a website to receive a rating **higher than Medium** , it must meet the criteria described in the next sections on **High** and **Highest** Domain Quality. For a website to receive a rating **lower than Medium** , it must meet the criteria for **Low** or **Lowest** Domain Quality. **Medium** is a rating that applies to many websites you will encounter in DQ rating tasks: many websites have nothing wrong,yet do not represent the high or highest quality content that's available online (also do not contain any especially positive attributes).

6.2   Examples of Medium Quality Websites

Website/Type of Content	Medium Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Medium: Encyclopedia Wikipedia article about baroque pearls	**Nothing wrong, but nothing special** ● Adequate MC: achieves the purpose of the website	 This is a short Wikipedia article about baroque pearls, a fairly narrow topic. This website achieves its purpose but doesn't display characteristics associated with a High rating, such as effort in the form of interesting and meaningful content.
Medium: Humor Webpage from a humorous site	**Nothing wrong, but nothing special** ● Adequate MC: achieves the purpose of the website	 This is from a humorous site that encourages users to post photos with mouths drawn on them. This website achieves its purpose but doesn't display characteristics associated with a High rating, such as effort in the form of discussion, engagement, or comments from other users.
Medium: Entertainment 1 Article about "Keeping Up with the Kardashians" show	**Nothing wrong, but nothing special** ● Adequate MC: achieves the purpose of the website	 This is on a website dedicated to entertainment news. This website achieves its purpose but doesn't display characteristics associated with a High rating, such as effort in the form of interesting and entertaining content, original images, etc.

Website/Type of Content	Medium Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Medium: Entertainment 2 Article about Miley Cyrus	**Nothing wrong, but nothing special** ● Adequate MC: achieves the purpose of the website	 Lowest — Medium — Highest This is from a news/entertainment website. This website achieves its purpose but doesn't display characteristics associated with a High rating, such as effort in the form of interesting and entertaining content, original images, etc.
Medium: Recipe 1 Mexi-Chicken Casserole on a newspaper website	**Nothing wrong, but nothing special** ● Adequate MC: achieves the purpose of the website	 Lowest — Medium — Highest This recipe was contributed by a cookbook author. However, the website has no SC related to the purpose of the website, such as reviews or links to other recipes, etc. This website achieves its purpose but doesn't display characteristics associated with a High rating, such as effort in the form of original images or comments from users who followed the recipe.
Medium: Recipe 2 Recipe for cherry-topped cake	**Nothing wrong, but nothing special** ● Adequate MC: achieves the purpose of the website	 Lowest — Medium — Highest This website is known for high quality content about animals and the environment. This particular website has a recipe for kids. There isn't much MC or SC. This website achieves its purpose but it doesn't display characteristics associated with a High rating, such as effort in the form of more detailed steps or inspiration.

7.0   High Quality Websites

High quality websites serve a beneficial purpose and achieve that purpose well. **High** quality websites exist for almost any beneficial purpose you can imagine, from providing information to selling products to making people laugh to artistic expression.

To identify **High** quality websites, start by considering the following:

Initial Consideration	**High** Quality Websites
The purpose of the website	**High** quality websites have a beneficial purpose.
The potential for the website to cause harm as described in these guidelines	**High** quality websites are not expected to cause harm.
The topic of the website, the type of website, and the extent to which YMYL standards apply	A website on any topic or any type of website may qualify for **High.** Give special scrutiny to websites on YMYL topics or websites needing a high level of trust, such as online stores.
The title of the website	**High** quality websites have titles that summarize the website.
The role of Ads and SC on the website	The Ads and SC do not block or significantly interfere with the MC on **High** quality websites. **Remember**: Many websites need monetization to share content with users. The presence or absence of Ads alone is not a consideration for DQ rating.
Information provided by the website and content creator	**High** quality websites have adequate information about the website and content creator for the purpose of the website. For stores or websites that process financial transactions, examine the customer service information. **Important:** For personal content shared on social media platforms or forums, an alias or username is adequate.

Next, assess the website to determine if the criteria for **High** apply:

High Domain Quality Assessment	**High** Quality Websites must demonstrate at least one of the following
Quality of the MC	MC created with a high level of effort, originality, talent, or skill such that the website achieves its purpose well.
Reputation of the website and content creator	Positive reputation of the website for the topic of the website. Positive reputation of the content creator for the topic of the MC.
Trustworthiness of the website: E-E-A-T	High level of E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website.

7.1   High Quality Main Content

High quality MC should be satisfying for people visiting the website. High quality MC shows evidence of effort, originality, talent, or skill. For informational websites, High quality MC must be accurate and consistent with well-established expert

consensus when such consensus exists. Have high standards! If you aren't sure whether the content is high quality, try finding other websites on the same topic to help calibrate your assessment: "typical" and "average" websites on a topic generally have Medium (not High) quality MC.

To help develop your standards, here are some examples of **High** quality MC in contrast with **Low** quality MC:

High Quality MC: Details and Examples	Low Quality MC: Details and Examples
High level of effort: The website or content creators worked hard to create content that achieves the purpose of the website. The MC is well-organized, edited, and curated to support the purpose. ● A news article with accuracy, depth, and clarity ● A Q&A website or forum post with meaningful discussion by multiple participants ● A well-organized crafting tutorial website with clear, helpful instructions so that others can make the craft successfully	**Low level of effort:** The MC shows signs of a lack of effort by the website or content creators. ● Lack of curation or editing: Content that helps the website achieve its purpose is mixed with less helpful distracting or filler content ● Lack of content creation: A forum post with little discussion or only superficial comments ● Lack of organization: A crafting tutorial website with lots of unhelpful "filler" at the top and little effort put into explaining how to make the craft (the purpose of the website) at the bottom
High originality ● The MC is unique or original to the website ● Original photos or video footage produced by the website or content creator ● The content on the website is unique to the content creators, such as a personal perspective based on first-hand life experience	**Low originality** ● Information is summarized from other sources with little added value ● Photos or videos come from other sources ● A summary of the perspectives of others, such as summarizing product reviews written by others
High level of talent or skill ● The MC showcases the talent of the creator, e.g. a video of a talented content creator dancing ● The MC allows the website to achieve its purpose well because the content creator has talent or skill, e.g. a how-to article on plumbing by a skilled plumber	**Low level of talent or skill** ● A lack of adequate talent or skill prevents the website from achieving its purpose, e.g. a how-to article on plumbing by someone who does not have the necessary skill to explain the steps accurately

7.2   Positive Reputation

Positive reputation of the website can be a reason for a **High** rating if the website is responsible for the MC. If the website is not responsible for the MC (e.g., posts on social media websites or forums), the positive reputation of the content creator(s) can be a reason for the **High** rating.

For non-YMYL topics, reputation information may be less formal. Popularity, user engagement, and user reviews can be considered evidence of reputation for non-YMYL websites: websites can be considered to have a positive reputation if they are popular and well-known for their topic or content type.

Remember: Many smaller websites and ordinary people have little reputation information available. A website can still receive a **High** rating without reputation information.
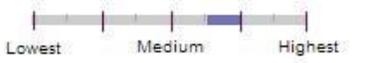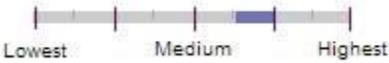
7.3   High Level of E-E-A-T

Depending on the purpose of the website, topic, and type of website, a high level of E-E-A-T may be required for the website to achieve its purpose well and be considered **High** quality. Websites with **High** E-E-A-T are trustworthy or very trustworthy.
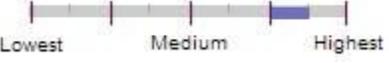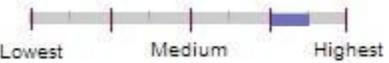
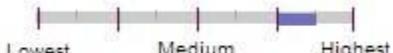|	
👥	**Experience** is valuable for almost any topic. Social media posts and forum discussions are often **High** quality when they involve people sharing their experience. From writing symphonies to reviewing home appliances, first-hand experience can make a social media post or discussion website **High** quality.
🎓	**Expertise** is required for satisfying content on a variety of topics, from hobbies such as photography to YMYL topics such as tax preparation. Think about the topic of the website and what expertise is needed to create satisfying, trustworthy content. There are many types of informal expertise that may be visible in the MC itself.
🛡️	**Authoritative** websites of all types can be found. Government tax websites are an authoritative source for tax forms. Local businesses and organizations may be go-to sources for local information. When looking at a website, consider whether it is considered a go-to, authoritative source for the type of information it is displaying.
🔒	**Trust** is especially important for **High** quality websites that involve processing financial transactions or cover YMYL topics. Even if the topic is not YMYL, trust may still be required; for example, product reviews and websites offering advice require at least some level of trust. While not all websites require a high level of trust, a trustworthy website is often a satisfying one.

Think about the topic of the website. What kind of E-E-A-T is required for the website to achieve its purpose well?
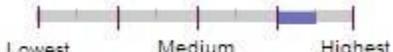
7.4   Examples of High Quality Websites

Website/Type of Content	High Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
High: News 1 Homepage of a newspaper	● Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well ● Positive reputation for the topic of the website	 The news on the homepage of a newspaper is often on topics that significantly impact society. This is a YMYL topic. This is the homepage of a newspaper that has won several prestigious awards and has a positive reputation for its objective reporting. The articles on the homepage are original reporting by professional journalists (effort, skill, and original content unique to this site).
High: News 2 Opinion article on a newspaper website	● Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well ● Positive website reputation for the topic of the website ● High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	 This is an opinion piece written by the Editorial Board of the largest newspaper in the U.S. state of Minnesota. The website is clearly labeled as an opinion piece, welcoming a new football coach to the University of Minnesota. This is original content unique to this site that was created by a skilled editorial board with expertise in editorial opinion writing.
High: Government agency US Naval Observatory Master Clock website	● High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	 The purpose of this website is to display the official US Naval Observatory Master Clock time in 7 different time zones. The website displays the clock information in a clear, easy-to-read format. The Naval Observatory is highly trustworthy and authoritative for this type of information.
High: Humor Article on a humor website	● Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well ● Positive reputation for the topic of the website	 This website is well-known for its humorous, satirical articles. This is a cute example of a satisfying and funny article (talent, skill, and original content unique to this site).

High: Small business 1 Local fish & chips restaurant	● Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well ● High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	This is an "about us" page on a restaurant website. This website provides information on when the restaurant opened and what visitors can expect. Other pages on the website provide information about the restaurant including the address, menu, other contact information, etc. The website is the go-to source for information about itself (Authoritative). The MC is high quality (effort, original content unique to this site).

Website/Type of Content	High Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
High: Small business 2 Local preservation center	● Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well ● High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	This is the News and Updates section of a local preservation center selling poultry, vegetables, and more (Expertise). The MC is high quality (effort, original content unique to this site). Note: This example was added in 2014 so the "News and Updates" were timely.
High: Blog post Parenting article about strollers	● Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well ● Positive content creator reputation for the topic of the website ● High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	This is a blog post on a newspaper that has won several prestigious awards. The author of this blog post has become known as an expert on parenting issues (Expertise) and is a regular contributor to this and other media websites (positive content creator reputation). The MC demonstrates effort and is original to this site.
High: Shopping 1 Backpack shopping page on a popular store website	● Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well ● Positive reputation for the topic of the website ● High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	The purpose of this website is to allow users to buy a school backpack. The page provides a lot of different backpack options, and some of them have user reviews. This is a well-known, reputable merchant, with detailed Customer Service information on the site, making it very trustworthy (Trust). The MC demonstrates effort, and the products on sale are unique to this site (effort, original content).

High: Shopping 2 Bathroom décor page on a store website	● Positive reputation for the topic of the website ● High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	This company sells its own line of high end, fashionable baby and children's furniture and accessories. It has a positive reputation and expertise in these specific types of goods. Many products sold on the site are unique to this company.
High: Video 1 Saturday Night Live video on a video website	● Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well ● High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	The MC of this video is an episode of Saturday Night Live, which represents original content produced by a talented organization with experience and expertise in producing humorous television shows.

Website/Type of Content	High Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
High: Video 2 "An Engineer's Guide to Cats" video	● Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well ● High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	This is a humorous, high quality video, illustrating the proper care and practical benefits of cats (original content, talent). The two engineers in the video are very experienced in cat ownership (Experience). For a humorous video like this one, experience (rather than formal expertise in cat care) is enough for it to have high E-E-A-T.
High: Game Online game	● Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well ● Positive reputation for the topic of the website	Highly engaging game with multiple levels that could entertain a child for hours (effort, original content, talent and skill in game design). This website has a positive reputation for educating children about animals, and this particular animal game is consistent with that reputation.

High: Encyclopedia Encyclopedia article about the American Civil War	● Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well ● Positive reputation for the topic of the website	(rating scale: Lowest — Medium — Highest, marked near Highest) This is a detailed article about the American Civil War. The citations support the E-E-A-T of this article. There is a large quantity of in-depth, original content (effort, accuracy). This website has a positive reputation as a good resource for finding a wealth of generally known facts about topics such as this one. Note: Although much of the content is visible on the mobile website, we consider the content under the headings (which you need to expand) to be part of the MC. (To see the screenshot, you will need to zoom in to the image.)

8.0 Highest Quality Websites

Highest quality websites serve a beneficial purpose and achieve that purpose very well. The distinction between **High** and **Highest** is based on the quality of MC, the reputation of the website and content creator, and/or E-E-A-T.

To identify **Highest** quality websites, start by considering the following:

Initial Consideration	**Highest** Quality Websites
The purpose of the website	**Highest** quality websites have a beneficial purpose.
The potential for the website to cause harm as described in these guidelines	**Highest** quality websites are not expected to cause harm.
The topic of the website, the type of website, and the extent to which YMYL standards apply	A website on any topic or any type of website may qualify for **Highest.** Give special scrutiny to websites on YMYL topics or websites needing a high level of trust, such as online stores.
The title of the website	**Highest** quality websites have titles that summarize the website.
The role of Ads and SC on the website	The Ads and SC do not block or significantly interfere with the MC on **HIghest** quality websites. **Remember**: Many websites need monetization to share content with users. The presence or absence of Ads alone is not a consideration for DQ rating.
Information provided by the website and content creator	**Highest** quality websites have adequate information about the website and content creator for the purpose of the website. For stores or websites that process financial transactions, examine the customer service information. **Important:** For personal content shared on social media platforms or forums, an alias or username is adequate.

Next, assess the website to determine if the criteria for **Highest** apply:

Highest Domain Quality Assessment	**Highest** Quality Websites must demonstrate at least one of the following
Quality of the MC	MC created with a very high level of effort, originality, talent, or skill such that the website achieves its purpose very well.
Reputation of the website and content creator	Very positive reputation for the topic of the website. Very positive reputation of the content creator for the topic of the MC.
Trustworthiness of the website: E-E-A-T	Very high level of E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website.

8.1   Very High Quality MC

Very high quality MC should be highly satisfying for people visiting the website. Very high quality MC shows evidence of a high level of effort, originality, talent, or skill. For informational websites, very high quality MC must be accurate, clearly communicated, and consistent with well-established expert consensus when it exists. Very high quality MC represents some of the most outstanding content on a topic or type that's available online.

The standards for **Highest** quality MC may be very different depending on the purpose, topic, and type of website. Here are some examples of **Highest** quality original content:

- **For news websites**: Original reporting that provides information that would not otherwise have been known had the article not revealed it. Accurate, original, in-depth, and investigative reporting requires a high level of skill/talent and effort. Very high quality news content will include a description of primary sources and other original reporting referenced during the content creation process. Very high quality news content must be accurate and should meet professional journalistic standards.
- **For artistic content websites** (videos, images, photography, writing, etc.): Unique and original content created by highly skilled and talented artists or content creators. Such artistic content requires a high level of skill/talent and effort. If the artistic content is related to a YMYL topic (e.g., artistic content with the purpose of informing or swaying opinion about YMYL topics), YMYL standards should apply.
- **For informational content website:** Original, accurate, comprehensive, clearly communicated, and should reflect expert consensus as appropriate. Expectations for different types of information may vary. For example, scientific papers have a different set of expectations than a social media post sharing information about a hobby such as stamp collecting. However, all types of very high quality informational content share common characteristics of accuracy and clarity of communication, in addition to meeting standards appropriate to the topic or field.

The **Highest** rating may be justified for websites with very satisfying MC created with a very high level of effort, originality, talent, or skill.

8.2   Very Positive Reputation

Reputation research is important when giving **Highest** ratings. For YMYL topics, very positive reputation is often based on recommendations from known experts or professional societies appropriate to the topic of the website. Prestigious awards may be evidence as well, depending on the topic and type of content.

For non-YMYL topics, reputation information may be less formal. Popularity, user engagement, and user reviews can be considered evidence of reputation for non-YMYL websites: websites and content creators can be considered to have a very positive reputation if they are seen as one of the best sources available online for a topic or type of content.

Remember: Many smaller websites and ordinary people have little reputation information. A website can still receive a **Highest** rating without reputation information.

8.3   Very High Level of E-E-A-T

Very high E-E-A-T is a distinguishing factor for **Highest** quality websites. **A website or content creator who is the uniquely authoritative, go-to source for a topic** has very high E-E-A-T. A content creator with a wealth of experience may be considered to have very high E-E-A-T for topics where experience is the primary factor in trust. A very high level of expertise can justify a very high E-E-A-T assessment. Very high E-E-A-T websites and content creators are **the most trusted sources on the internet for a particular topic**.
Think about what E-E-A-T means for the topic of the website. How important is first-hand experience? Who are the experts? What makes a source highly authoritative for the topic? What makes a website or content creator trustworthy for the topic? Standards for very high E-E-A-T will differ depending on the topic of the website.

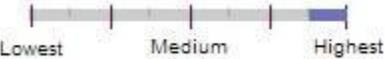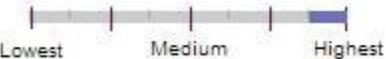## 8.4 Examples of Highest Quality Websites

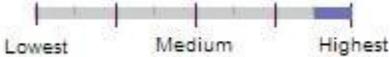| Website/Type of Content	Highest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Highest: News 1 Article on a newspaper website	• Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well • Very positive reputation for the topic of the website • Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	 Reporting on environmental toxicity can significantly impact the health and financial security of people, businesses and government agencies. This website is on a YMYL topic. This is a feature article from a newspaper that has won numerous awards (very positive reputation of the website). The website has a comprehensive amount of very high-quality MC, including in-depth reporting (effort, original content unique to this site, skill, accuracy) by authors with extensive knowledge and experience in investigative journalism (Expertise).
Highest: News 2 Article on a newspaper website	• Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well • Very positive content creator reputation for the topic of the website • Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	 This is an article on a newspaper website that has won a variety of awards. The article has a comprehensive amount of very high quality MC that is unique and original, including in-depth investigative reporting by two authors with extensive knowledge and experience in investigative journalism (effort, original content unique to this site, skill, accuracy). The reporters were finalists for a prestigious news award for the investigative reporting of this article (very positive reputation of the content creators).
Highest: Informational 1 Fact-checking page on an Internet rumor debunking website	• Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well • Very positive reputation for the topic of the website • Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	 This website is on a well-known fact-checking and debunking website that covers urban legends, Internet rumors, and other stories of unknown or questionable origin (very positive reputation of the website). The website has a very satisfying amount of original MC for users seeking to validate a photo claiming to have discovered a mermaid (effort, skill in fact checking, original content). Users can trust the information on this website due to its positive reputation and high level of expertise in debunking stories of this type.

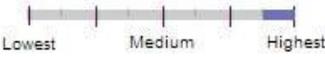| Website/Type of Content	Highest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Highest: Informational 2 Ball gown wedding dress page	• Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well • Very positive reputation for the topic of the website	*(rating scale: Lowest — Medium — Highest, marked near Highest)* This website has very satisfying MC for users interested in ball gown wedding dresses. An abundance of pictures, plus options to view by price range, style, etc., are part of what makes this website so satisfying (effort demonstrated in the depth and types of content). This page is on a very popular wedding planning website (very positive reputation of the website).
Highest: Government agency Yosemite National Park information	• Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well • Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	*(rating scale: Lowest — Medium — Highest, marked at Highest)* This website has very satisfying and helpful information about Yosemite National Park, including traffic alerts and links to other parts of the website with additional information (effort, accuracy). Since the website is on the official national park website, it is uniquely authoritative (highest E-E-A-T).
Highest: Technical 1 Software tips	• Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well • Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	*(rating scale: Lowest — Medium — Highest, marked at Highest)* This website offers very satisfying and helpful MC for the purpose of the website. Because the page is on the official website of the company that produces the software, it is highly authoritative (highest E-E-A-T).
Highest: Technical 2 Linux Kernel archives	• Very positive reputation for the topic of the website • Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	*(rating scale: Lowest — Medium — Highest, marked at Highest)* From this Wikipedia article, we learn that "Kernel.org is a main repository of source code for the Linux kernel, the base of the popular Linux operating system. It makes all versions of the source code available to all users... The main purpose of the site is to host a repository for Linux kernel developers and maintainers of Linux distributions." This website is the most authoritative source for information about Linux (highest E-E-A-T) and has a very positive reputation in the topic of the website.

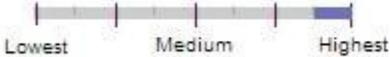| Website/Type of Content	Highest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Highest: Financial 1 Credit report information website	• Very positive reputation for the topic of the website • Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	 Credit reports significantly impact a person's financial choices and opportunities. This is a YMYL topic. Users in the U.S. can obtain free credit reports on this website by providing their Social Security Number. This Wikipedia article tells us that this website is "the only federally mandated and authorized source for obtaining a free credit report". This website is uniquely authoritative (highest E-E-A-T) and has a very positive reputation for credit report information.
Highest: Financial 2 Tax forms page	• Very positive reputation for the topic of the website • Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	 Income tax forms significantly impact a person's financial security. This is a YMYL topic. The purpose of the website is to provide income tax forms and publications. The website represents an agency of the U.S. federal government that handles taxes, so the website and forms are uniquely authoritative and trustworthy.
Highest: Magazine Article 1 Article titled "Secret Fears of the Super-Rich"	• Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well • Very positive reputation for the topic of the website	 This article is on a magazine website that has won multiple National Magazine awards (very positive reputation for this type of article). The article has in-depth MC that is unique and original (effort, skill, original content).
Highest: Magazine Article 2 Interview with musical artist	• Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well • Very positive reputation for the topic of the website	 This magazine is very well-known and well regarded for content about artists and bands, and specifically has a positive reputation for interviews with musicians. This article features in-depth, original content in its interview with the artist.

Website/Type of Content	Highest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Highest: Medical 1 BMI calculator	● Very positive reputation for the topic of the website ● Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	BMI is used by healthcare professionals to screen for various health issues and can significantly impact a person's medical treatment. This is a YMYL topic. The purpose of this website is to provide an online BMI (Body Mass Index) calculator. The calculator is functional and easy to use. This website was created with effort and skill, and it accomplishes its purpose very well by offering very high quality and satisfying MC. The website represents an institute that is part of the National Institutes of Health. It has an extremely good reputation and is an expert in medical topics.
Highest: Medical 2 Page about meningitis	● Very positive reputation for the topic of the website ● Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	Information about meningitis could significantly impact a person's health. This is a YMYL topic. This is a meningitis reference website on a trustworthy and authoritative website for a nonprofit medical research group. This website has a reputation of being one of the best web resources for medical information.
Highest: Medical 3 Page about seasonal flu	● Very positive reputation for the topic of the website ● Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	Many patient hospitalizations and deaths occur due to the flu each year. This topic could significantly impact a person's health. This is a YMYL topic. This is an influenza reference website on a trustworthy and authoritative medical website. This website has a reputation of being one of the best web resources for medical information of this type.

Highest: Medical 4 Health information on a hospital page	● Very positive reputation for the topic of the website ● Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	Information about hospital services and treatments could significantly impact a person's ability to seek and receive healthcare. This is a YMYL topic. According to this Wikipedia article , this hospital is "currently regarded as one of the top 4 hospitals in the United States as rated by U.S. News & World Report ." Users can trust medical information on this website.

Website/Type of Content	Highest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Highest: Shopping Backpack shopping page	● Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well ● Very positive reputation for the topic of the website ● Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	The purpose of this website is to provide information about, and allow users to buy, a specific type of school backpack. The website provides a lot of helpful product information, as well as 600 user reviews (effort, original content). Since the store produces this backpack (unique product), they are experts on the product, making the page on their own website authoritative (highest E-E-A-T). In addition, this store has a reputation for producing one of the highest quality and most popular school backpacks on the market.
Highest: Login Online banking login page	● Very positive reputation for the topic of the website ● Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	Accessing one's financial information significantly impacts a person's financial decisions and security. This is a YMYL topic. This page has login functionality and clear information about what the user is logging into. This is a large, popular bank that has a good reputation and is considered highly trustworthy.
Highest: Charity Homepage of a charity	● Very positive reputation for the topic of the website ● Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	Disaster relief significantly impacts people and society in a time of crisis. This website is on a YMYL topic. This is a highly reputable charity according to multiple charity rating organizations.

Highest: PDF File Campus map	• Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well • Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	 Lowest — Medium — Highest This PDF file is a detailed campus map of a major university, which is hosted on the official university website. This is a highly authoritative source for this information. The map includes a listing of all the buildings, parking structures, parking lots, construction areas, etc. (effort, skill, accuracy).
Highest: Recipe Chocolate chip cookie recipe on a recipe blog	• Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well • Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	 Lowest — Medium — Highest The author of this blog has documented her extensive experimentation with a chocolate chip cookie recipe (Experience), and her expertise and skill is demonstrated in the large quantity of unique, original, and very satisfying MC.

Website/Type of Content	Highest Quality Justification	DQ Rating and Explanation
Highest: Video 1 The band OK Go's music video for the song "This Too Shall Pass"	• Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well • Very positive website reputation for the topic of the website	 Lowest — Medium — Highest This is a high quality, professionally produced video on the band's official channel. The music video represents unique and original content created by a highly skilled and talented musical artist (talent, skill, effort, original content). In addition, this video sharing website has a positive reputation for hosting official music videos from bands.
Highest: Video 2 "Henri 2, Paw de Deux" video	• Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well • Very positive website reputation for the topic of the website	 Lowest — Medium — Highest This is an amateur video that went viral, created by a film school student about his mother's cat. It won the "Golden Kitty Award" for "Best Cat Video On The Internet" at the Walker Art Center's Internet Cat Video Film Festival. The video is unique and original content created with a high level of effort. In addition, this video sharing website has a positive reputation for cute cat videos.

Highest: Video 3 Saturday Night Live video on the TV network's website	● Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well ● Very positive content creator reputation for the topic of the website ● Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	Lowest　　Medium　　Highest The MC of this video website is an episode of Saturday Night Live on the TV network's official website, which is a go-to source for this content. The episode represents high quality and original content created by a TV show that has won numerous awards. Below the main video, there are many other videos that users may be interested in.

9.0 Domain Quality Criteria for Specific Types of Websites

9.1   Ratings for Encyclopedia Websites

There are many encyclopedia-type websites. Some are highly-respected publications that are standard references, while some are websites with content created and edited by anonymous users, with no editorial oversight or fact checking. We may not always know the author of the specific encyclopedia article, and therefore must rely on website reputation research to determine the E-E-A-T of the article. **High** and **Highest** quality ratings should only be used for encyclopedias with very good reputations for accuracy and expertise, where the article itself is well-researched with appropriate references cited.

A note about Wikipedia: in general, the website has a good reputation and is a very popular resource that is generally valued for accuracy. However, there is no single author or organization that vouches for the accuracy of Wikipedia articles, and the quality of websites varies. You should check individual articles to evaluate the quality of the MC.

A Wikipedia article on a non-YMYL topic (example) with a satisfying amount of accurate information and trustworthy external references can usually be rated in the **High** range. A DQ rating in the **Medium** range is often appropriate for websites with less extensive MC and external references. Naturally, Wikipedia articles with very little MC should get lower DQ ratings. Factual inaccuracy is a sufficient reason for a **Low** or **Lowest** rating.

9.2   Ratings for Websites with Error Messages or No MC

In DQ rating tasks, you may encounter websites with error messages or other types of "broken" websites. Please think about whether the website offers help for users—did the website owner make an effort to ensure that users visiting the website have a good experience and get help finding what they are looking for?
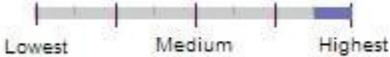
Pages with an explicit error (or custom 404) message are often **Medium** quality, since they tend to clearly communicate that there's a problem and help users navigate to other/better pages on the website. A rating of **High** (or occasionally even **Highest**) may be used for the rare error message website that involves a high level of effort and original content and provides a truly satisfying experience for users.

Websites that are "broken" are often **Low** quality, because the broken aspect prevents them from achieving their purpose even if the problem is temporary and likely to be fixed later on by the website owner. However, sometimes "broken" websites should be rated **Lowest** if the problem is not temporary and instead is due to a systemic problem with the website. To differentiate between **Low** quality (temporarily broken) vs. **Lowest** quality (evidence of a systemic problem) websites, check other pages on the same website. If many other pages have the same problem, there is a systemic lack of effort on the part of the website owner that justifies the **Lowest** rating. Otherwise, use the **Low** rating to reflect the (hopefully temporary!) issue with the MC on the website.

Here are some examples:

Website/Type of Content	Characteristics of the Website	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Deliberately created with no MC (systemic problem)	- No MC - Content created with little to no effort, little to no originality, and little to no added value for website visitors	 This is an example of a page with no MC. You might think that the MC is "missing" due to a problem with this particular page, but in fact, this website has hundreds of pages that look the same—no MC, just Ads. This website shows Ads with little or no attempt to help users, and should be rated **Lowest** quality.

Website/Type of Content	Characteristics of the Website	DQ Rating and Explanation
Low: Page didn't fully load and has no MC (temporarily broken)	● No MC (probably due to a temporary technical error) ● Positive website reputation	This page has no MC and no error message. It is an isolated example of a page with no MC or error message on a website for a reputable newspaper for a town in Michigan. All of the navigation links work, and the page was later fixed. This page can be viewed as lacking in effort (an error that was not caught before the page went live).
Medium: Error page with custom 404 message	● Nothing wrong, but nothing special	This is an example of a "custom 404" page, alerting users that the URL they are trying to visit no longer exists. Some websites do a nice job of alerting users about a problem and providing helpful tips. This page is on a well-known merchant website with a good reputation. However, this particular page displays the bare minimum of content needed to explain the problem to users, and the only helpful content is a link to the homepage.
High: Error page with custom 404 message	● Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the page well ● Positive website reputation	This is an example of a "custom 404" page, alerting users that the URL they are trying to visit no longer exists. This website does a nice job of explaining the issue and providing helpful tips, including a search box.

Highest: Error page with custom 404 message	● Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well ● Very positive website reputation	 This is an example of a "custom 404" page. These pages are designed to alert users that the URL they are trying to visit no longer exists. The MC of this page is the cartoon, the caption, and the search functionality, which is specific to the content of the website. It is clear that effort and talent was involved in the creation of the MC. This publication has a very positive reputation and is specifically known for its cartoons, which allows us to go as high as High+ to Highest. This is among the most clever, original, and satisfying custom 404 messages that can be found online!

9.3   Ratings for Forums and Q&A Websites

Ratings for forum and Q&A websites can be challenging. Here is some guidance on how to approach these websites:

- **The Main Content includes the question, the answers/responses, and the resulting discussions.**
- **Rate from the point of view of a user who visits the website** , rather than a participant involved in the discussion.
- **Users who post answers/responses or comments are often identified only by a username or alias.** A website can be **High** or **Highest** quality with just usernames or aliases depending on other criteria.
- **The E-E-A-T of a discussion among users can often be judged by the posts or comments themselves.**
  - For some topics, Experience is the most important dimension of Trust. For other topics, assessing Expertise through the posts may be important. In some cases, the posters themselves will highlight either their own Experience or Expertise, or other people will comment on it.
  - Websites on YMYL topics require more attention to Trust and more care in the assessment of E-E-A-T.
- **Highest quality forum/Q&A websites** have extremely satisfying conversations, including participation from users who have put a great deal of effort into their posts and have a wealth of Experience and/or Expertise on the topic. Such conversations can be very satisfying because of the depth of discussion, the unique insights, or the sharing of experiences that many would not have access to in their real-world community.
- **Low quality forum/Q&A websites** often lack effort (few responses, surface-level rather than in-depth discussion), lack Experience or Expertise, contain mild inaccuracies, or show a significant lack of respect or decorum among the participants that might deter others from joining the discussion.
- **Lowest quality forum/Q&A websites** may contain information or advice that is harmfully misleading, contradicts well-established expert consensus, encourages harm towards self or other individuals/participants, etc.

One challenge is rating websites with little to no participation, and/or no answer to an open question:
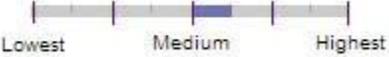
- A *new* website or *recently started* discussion that consists only of a question or initial post by a person should generally be rated **Medium** unless there are other low quality attributes. These websites may need time to achieve their purpose.
- Over time, no participation in a discussion (or only superficial discussion) and/or no meaningful answer to an open question may be a reason for a **Low** quality rating, especially in the presence of other low quality attributes.
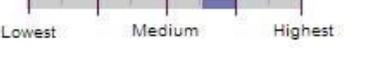
Another challenge occurs when the discussion on the website drifts, becomes combative, or becomes dominated by misleading or spammy content. When rating, value the insightful, meaningful discussion that exists. If the website is a mix

of high and low quality characteristics but has insightful, meaningful discussion, the **Medium** rating may be most appropriate as long as the website is not potentially harmful.
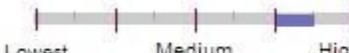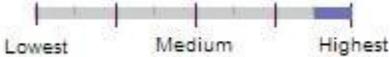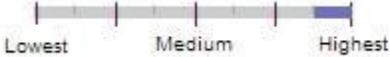
Here are some examples:

Website/Type of Content	Characteristics of the site	DQ Rating and Explanation
Lowest: Q&A page about chest pains and smoking	● **Harmfully Misleading Information:** Contains inaccurate and potentially dangerous medical advice about a YMYL topic	Information about chest pain and smoking could significantly impact people's decisions to seek medical treatment. This website is on a YMYL topic. This website must be evaluated from the point of view of a user visiting this website from a search engine, rather than a participant. The question is poorly worded and difficult to understand. There aren't many responses. One response correctly warns about the danger of smoking cigarettes but suggests smoking marijuana instead. Another response suggests that it's fine to keep smoking and that aspirin can be used to address pain. The last response lacks respect: it asks if the person who asked the original question is stupid. The answers have incorrect and potentially dangerous medical advice, making it lowest quality MC.
Low: Q&A page about a 2002 Volvo part	● Unsatisfying MC for the purpose of the website: does not achieve the purpose well ● Misleading website design	Please read the MC (areas with red boxes around it), including the completely unhelpful "answer." This answer is so unhelpful, we can consider this question to be unanswered. This website has an unsatisfying amount of MC. In addition to a very unhelpful "answer," the website design makes it difficult to distinguish the MC from Ads. For example, below the answer, we see a "sponsored answer," which has the same format as the real answer, but is actually an Ad and not an answer to the question—this is a misleading website design.

[Medium: Forum page with a new question, posted by a person](#)	**Nothing wrong, nothing special** ● Real in-depth question, posted very recently ● No one has responded (yet)	Forums rely on user engagement to create satisfying MC. In this case, a real person has posted a question that can lead to good discussion. The question is only hours old (at the time this example was created). For new questions, discussions and threads, a Medium rating is appropriate if there are no low quality characteristics but also no opportunity for discussion yet.

Website/Type of Content	Characteristics of the site	DQ Rating and Explanation
[Medium: Forum page on an online auction website](#)	**Mixed, but with some redeeming qualities:** ● High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website ● Unsatisfying MC for the purpose of the website: does not achieve the purpose well	The relative lack of effort/participation in the discussion and depth of the MC is balanced by the high E-E-A-T of this forum. This forum is dedicated to this kind of question and therefore has a high level of expertise.
[Medium: Forum page on how to wash ballet shoes](#)	**Mixed, but with some redeeming qualities:** ● Adequate MC: achieves the purpose of the website ● Ads or SC significantly distract from or interrupt the use of MC ● High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	This forum is about dance topics, and many websites have expertise from a community of ballet dancers. On this particular website, participants have first-hand experience washing ballet shoes and make recommendations based on their own experiences. This website is "mixed" because there is some distracting content that makes it hard to read the MC. However, this is not a beauty contest! Even though the website may be cluttered, there is some valuable E-E-A-T and helpful MC, making Medium a good rating for this website.
[High: Forum post on the magic loop technique in knitting](#)	● MC is satisfying for the purpose of the website: demonstrates effort, originality, talent, or skill ● High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	The person who posted the first message on this forum website provides a helpful resource on how to master the magic loop technique in knitting (effort, skill). She also shares pictures of her own version using an old pair of blue jeans (original content). With over 20 years of experience knitting socks, we would consider her to be an expert on the topic.

High: Q&A page about whether a Roomba will work	• Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well • High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	Lowest — Medium — Highest Many participants share their personal experiences with these products, giving details such as how well certain models work with pet hair (effort, first-hand experience, original content). There are many descriptions of participants' own experiences with this product and how well it works for them, making the MC satisfying for the purpose of the website.

Website/Type of Content	Characteristics of the site	DQ Rating and Explanation
High: Forum page on authenticating a purse	• Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well • Positive reputation for the topic of the website • High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	Lowest — Medium — Highest This forum is a go-to source for discussions on luxury designer purses (positive website reputation, experience, expertise, "go-to" authority). On this particular forum website, members are consulting forum experts who have expertise authenticating bags from this brand. These experts can tell if a particular bag is authentic or fake. The quality of the MC is high due to the level of effort, skill, and engagement among those who participate in the forum. While there is an ad at the top and a few ads within the forum message, it does not distract from the MC, which is easy to find.
High: Forum page on landscaping an aquarium	• Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well • High E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	Lowest — Medium — Highest This discussion focuses on the landscaping for a particular paludarium (an aquarium with terrestrial and aquatic elements). There is a lot of discussion and interaction between forum members about the types of materials and species used in the aquarium (effort, original or unique content). The posts show expertise in a niche topic aquarium landscaping (experience, expertise).

Highest: Q&A page about how long most cancer patients live	• Very satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website very well • Positive reputation for the topic of the website • Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	Lowest — Medium — Highest How long a person may live with a disease could significantly impact life decisions. This is a YMYL topic. This is a Q&A website on a medical question that is well-answered by non-experts with life experience. There are many responses describing how long a loved one lived after diagnosis. The focus of the website is experience, not medical advice. Many responses are based on personal experience and are helpful for this topic.
Highest: Q&A page on abbreviations	• Satisfying MC: achieves the purpose of the website well • Very positive reputation for the topic of the website • Very high E-E-A-T for the purpose of the website	Lowest — Medium — Highest The purpose of the website is to answer questions about the usage of abbreviations, and it contains helpful information about common abbreviation issues. This website has a very good reputation as a reference for information on writing, publishing, etc. It is considered highly authoritative and trustworthy for the topic of the website.

10.0 Domain Quality Rating Tasks

At first, DQ rating may seem difficult. There are several aspects of the page and the website to look at and think about.

Important: Do not struggle with each DQ rating. Please give your best rating and move on. If you are having trouble deciding between two ratings, use the lower rating. If you are torn between three ratings, choose the one in the middle.

Do not consider the country or location of the page or website for DQ rating. For example, English (US) raters should use the same DQ standards when rating pages from other English language websites (UK websites, Canadian websites, etc.) as they use when rating pages from U.S. websites. In other words, English (US) raters should not lower the DQ rating because the website location (UK, Canada) does not match the task location.

These guidelines are specific to "regular" websites. Occasionally, you may be asked to rate a landing page that is not a webpage. For example, you may be asked to rate a PDF file, a PNG or JPEG image file, etc. When the landing page of the URL is not a webpage, some of the criteria in these guidelines may not apply. In this case, please use your judgment.

Finally, this Domain Quality Rating Guideline does not completely cover every aspect of Domain Quality. If you find websites that you truly believe to be **High** or **Low** quality, please rate them as such, even if the reason is based on something not covered in these guidelines. Please use the comment section to explain your reasoning. As always, use your judgment.

10.1   Instructions for Rating Domain Quality Tasks

The Domain Quality task page is broken up into several parts:

1. Some initial questions about the task site.
2. An "attribute list " to record your observations about DQ characteristics of the domain. Please note you will perform your selection per every question topic.
3. The Final Rating is your rating that you selected based on the attribute ratings mentioned in step 2.
4. A comment box to explain your rating. Please note this comment should fully explain why you selected the rating you did

Some results to the initial questions will end the task early. If the page is Porn, Foreign Language, Did Not Load, or consists of restricted or inaccessible MC (e.g., subscription is required to view MC), you will not need to complete the attribute selections. It is mandatory to complete the comment section to explain why you selected the above reasons. **Foreign Language** should not be used when the language on the website is in the task language, a language that is commonly used by a significant percentage of the population in the task location, or English.

- **Did Not Load** should be used for websites where there is absolutely no content on the website created by the website. There is no MC, SC, or Ads on the website. See this Wikipedia article for descriptions of different types of error messages.

The Attribute List is designed to be your "note pad." It allows you to record your observations about the pages and the website it belongs to.

11.0 Domain Quality Rating FAQs

Question	Answer
Why do we have to do all these steps? This takes a long time!	With practice, the amount of time needed for accurate DQ ratings will decrease. The steps are important and are designed to help you assess many different aspects of DQ. You may be surprised by what you find. Websites that initially look Low quality may turn out to be Medium or High quality with careful inspection. The reverse may happen as well. We want your most informed, thoughtful opinion.
Are we just giving High quality ratings to websites that "look" good?	No! The goal is to do the exact opposite. These steps are designed to help you analyze the website without using a superficial "does it look good?" approach.
Is sharing a personal experience or opinion a beneficial purpose? What if the personal opinion is upsetting or offensive?	Sharing a personal experience or opinion can be a beneficial purpose as it allows people to appreciate different perspectives. Content on the Internet can help people understand why others think and feel the way they do. It can be valuable to see the opinions and perspectives of others, even when they are off-putting, distasteful, upsetting, or offensive to you personally. Apply the standards of these guidelines rather than your own personal opinions or views. However, sometimes opinions and perspectives can spread misleading information or otherwise have the potential to cause harm. Therefore, apply the standards in these guidelines to all types of websites and content. **Remember**: Your assessment of harm happens before and overrides other considerations such as the life experience or expertise of the content creator.
Can life experience justify a Highest quality rating for a website on a YMYL topic?	Factual information and advice on YMYL topics should come from experts. Sharing life experience on YMYL topics can be **Highest** quality, but it must be trustworthy, safe, consistent with well-established expert consensus, and speak to topics that life experience is valuable for. For example, information about when and where to vote is a YMYL topic. It's possible to have a **Highest** quality website that shares life experience about voting, such as an inspiring personal post about becoming a citizen and voting for the first time. However, if a website about someone's voting experience gives inaccurate information about when and where to vote either deliberately or through careless oversight, the website should be rated **Lowest** because it could cause others to miss the opportunity to vote.
You talked about expertise when rating MC. Does expertise matter for all topics? Aren't there some topics for which there are no experts?	Remember that we are not just talking about formal expertise. Informal expertise is equally important, and for some topics may be a more common type of E-E-A-T. For most website purposes and topics, you can find experts even when the field itself is niche or non-mainstream. For example, there are expert alternative medicine websites created by leading practitioners of acupuncture, herbal therapy, etc. There are also websites about alternative medicine written by people with no expertise or experience. E-E-A-T should differentiate between these two scenarios. **Reminder** : If the website is harmful to people or society, untrustworthy, or spammy as defined in these guidelines, expertise and experience doesn't matter. It should be rated **Lowest** .

Question	Answer

When I think about E-E-A-T, it seems like expertise and experience overlap a lot. What's the difference?	Here's one way to think about it:
	  ● **Expertise** often involves objective, testable knowledge or skills, for example: can you calculate the load bearing weight of a bridge?
	  ● **Experience** can be more subjective and is often shared through personal narration, for example: how does it feel to experience love for another person?
	
	For DQ rating, it's not important to distinguish between expertise and experience. Instead, focus on what kind of content is trustworthy and satisfying for the purpose of the website. You may find that both expertise and experience can be trustworthy and satisfying for the same topic. For example, a medical website may be a trustworthy source for treatment options, and the experiences of other people who have gone through treatment may provide emotional support and prepare you for what to expect.

Aren't some types of websites always Low quality, such as celebrity gossip?	For almost any type of website or informational topic, there is a range of content quality. For example, there are both **High** and **Low** quality celebrity gossip websites. The purpose of these websites is to share interesting, accurate information about celebrities. There may be benefits in celebrity stories that inspire others or help people going through similar challenges. A celebrity gossip website is **High** quality if it has accurate and interesting information, has no characteristics of Low or Lowest quality, and comes from a reasonably reliable source.
I've never seen a High quality website of type X. If there are no high quality websites of this type, why are we giving existing websites a Low quality rating?	For some topics or types of websites, there may not be many (or any!) High quality websites now, but there may be in the future. We need a uniform set of standards that apply to all websites, even for websites that have not yet been created.
Some of these criteria seem unfair. For example, some art websites do not have a purpose. Are these websites Low quality?	Art websites do have a purpose: artistic expression. Websites created for artistic expression do not deserve the Low quality rating simply because they have no other purpose. Artistic expression, humor, entertainment, sharing photos and videos, etc. are all valid and beneficial website purposes.
How should interstitials factor into my rating?	Sometimes clicking on the task URL will bring up an interstitial website. You can ignore this website in your rating criteria if you can easily get to the MC. However, if the interstitial makes it extremely hard (or impossible) to get to the MC and evaluate how well the website achieves its purpose, that should factor into your DQ rating.