

What is bad evidence?

No, just because you can find a published work that says something you like does not mean you should automatically use it. Bad evidence does exist and you need to be able to avoid it by engaging in the process of quality control. Here are some things you should always avoid when searching for cards:

- Unqualified authors: this is probably the number one source of bad cards you should look to avoid. *Joe Schmoe* might say some pretty cool things, but if he has no relevant field experience or journalistic credentials, it's probably best to avoid him. You should also avoid using **anonymous** sources for the same reason, unless they publish under the umbrella of a larger (relevant) organization, such as a think tank.

- Blogs/forums/comments sections: this ties in with the above. The vast majority of blogs and public discussion forums **do not make for good evidence** simply because they are written by common people with little to no expertise on the subject they write about - in today's virtual age, literally anyone with computer access can start up their own blog and start firing uneducated opinions away. There are some exceptions, of course - blogs written by topical experts on a specific subject are certainly a good source of evidence.

- Poorly-warranted evidence: basically, you should not use evidence that contains many claims but does not back those claims up with reasoning. An article that asserts that the world will end in 2012 but fails to offer any warrants to support that statement probably will not win many debates. Preemptively avoiding such materials in your initial search for evidence allows you avoid using bad cards.

What is good evidence?

Simply put, good evidence is well-written, highly-warranted material found in legitimate publications by qualified authors academically and selected in the library database system.

- Well-written: the material is understandable, fluidly conveyed and avoids the use of field-specific jargon. - Highly-warranted: the material does not stop at making claims, but goes on to isolate specific reasoning and analysis that supports those claims.

- Legitimate publications: ranked in terms of quality, these include books, peer-reviewed scholarly journals, government documents, online journals, major newspapers and media outlets, expert-written blogs.

Where can I find good evidence?

Well, now that we know that legitimate publications in the library databases contain good evidence, let's focus on how we can narrow down our search to find such publications. Starting at the broadest levels of the hierarchy, you can generally divide publications into two categories - print and digital. The availability, accessibility, and convenience of the digital medium has made it easier than ever before to obtain and compile evidence than ever before.

IF YOU HAVE TO USE GOOGLE READ FIRST - When using Google, you should try to narrow down your searches by using specific keywords and specifying certain date ranges.

- You can also increase the number of high quality sources by using the **Google Scholar** function, focusing on credible information.. - If you are looking for disadvantage uniqueness, **Google News** is a fantastic news aggregator and can yield thousands of articles on any given topic in current events. You can also set up Google News Alerts for specific topics; doing so will

have Google automatically email you with new articles and updates on specific keywords, which is very handy for hassle-free disadvantage updates.

- Another good tip is to search by file type - narrowing your searches to .doc and .pdf is a good idea as they tend to bring up a lot of well-warranted reports from various organizations.

FIRST - Besides Google, you should try and search any online periodicals and databases that you might have available to you. Ask your school librarian and see if you have access to any, and be sure to take note of them.