

How to follow a world event

Becoming a caring, active and involved global citizen begins with knowledge. The more you know, the better you will understand the role you can play in your area, your country and the international community.

Use online newspapers to keep up-to-date

Find out what's going on in your world. By reading the newspaper, listening to a news station on the radio or watching the news on television, you will quickly learn about what's happening today. To read up on current events online, visit "[Find Newspapers.com – Your Internet Guide to Newspapers Online](http://www.findnewspapers.com/)" (<http://www.findnewspapers.com/>). This site will provide access to newspapers in more than 70 countries—including all Canadian dailies.

If the story you are following is event-oriented, chances are that a website will have been established to provide information leading up to and after the event. For example, the Johannesburg Summit 2002—The World Summit on Sustainable Development was held from August 26 to September 4, 2002. The official United Nations website for the summit can be found at www.johannesburgsummit.org.

But some stories have a background. They've been in the news for a while and may not necessarily have an official website to provide the information. So how do you get caught up?

Evaluate authority of online information

The Internet is an excellent source with a lot of valuable information, but there is no overall quality control. At times, it will be difficult to gauge the authority of the information you are accessing. Here are some questions to consider when evaluating the reliability of the online source:

- Is the information part of or linked to a reliable organization's web site such as the government, a college or university, an international organization (e.g. United Nations), or a recognized non-governmental organization?
- How current is the content (look for a date when the information was posted or last updated)?
- Are the links on the page active?
- Is there an author? Is there a link to the author's qualifications, home page, etc.? Can you find information about the author by searching the web or from non-Internet sources?
- How comprehensive is the content? Does the content generally agree with what you have found elsewhere, including in books and other non-Internet sources?
- Is there a bibliography?
- Is the page for some purpose other than to provide information (e.g., advertising or expressing an opinion)?

Other sources of background information on a world event can be found in previous newspaper issues at your local library. If the story is political in nature, you can obtain information by contacting the office of your city councilor, MPP or MP.

Become an expert

Choose an issue you care about—whether it's politics, human rights, the environment or sustainable development—and see what's in the news. Follow some of the suggestions above to learn more about what is happening around your issue. Where does Canada stand on human rights. What is different in other countries? How can you get involved?