VISUAL AI LITERACY CHECKLIST

So, what are the tools and strategies for identifying AI-generated images and promoting visual literacy?

Detection Tools

Visual Inspection

Visual inspection involves looking closely at certain features that often signal AI manipulation or generation.

Common signs include distorted anatomy, inconsistent lighting or reflections, nonsensical text, and repetitive or unnatural patterns. By training your eye to spot these details, you can develop a more critical and informed approach to evaluating digital images.

Look for common AI artifacts:

- Unusual hand proportions
- Inconsistent lighting
- Illogical text or writing
- Repetitive patterns

Reverse Image Search

- Reverse image search can help you trace where an image appears online, check for duplicates, or verify its original source.
- Reverse image search tools analyse visual features—such as size, shape, colour, and patterns—using recognition algorithms. Some advanced tools can even detect faces or objects to improve search accuracy.

Using a reverse image search is simple:

- You either upload an image file or paste an image URL into the search bar.
- The tool then scans online databases to return matches, including pages where the image is used, similar visuals, or possible sources.
- These tools are accessible via both desktop and mobile devices—and some are already built into platforms you might use every day.

Here are some tools you can try:

- **Google Images** (click to try this out)
- **TinEye – Reverse Image Search and Recognition (click to try this out)**

Context Clues

Investigate where and how the image is being used:

- Check the date and source of the post or article
- Look at the account or website sharing the image – is it credible?
- Read the caption or surrounding text – does it match what's shown?
- Compare with known events or headlines from trusted sources
- Be cautious with viral posts lacking clear attribution

Visual AI Literacy Checklist

Here is a summary of things for you to watch out for:

- **Consider the source and context of the image**
- **Look for disclosure statements or AI generation tags**
- **Examine hands and facial features**
- **Check for lighting and shadow consistency**
- **Notice if the background (or skin) looks unusually smooth, warped or mismatched**
- **Ask: Does anything feel "off" or too perfect?**
- **Search for similar images using Google Images or TinEye**