

HOW TO CHECK

Seeing it, if you want to

You can't police what's real. But you can check — and it's more possible than most people know. Here is what actually works, and where each tool stops.

TOOL	WHAT IT TELLS YOU	WHERE
Content Credentials <i>C2PA metadata</i>	Who or what made a file, when, and what was edited — if the maker attached it.	contentcredentials.org/verify <i>stripped by a screenshot</i>
SynthID Detector <i>invisible watermark</i>	Whether an image came from a Google or OpenAI generator — survives crops and screenshots.	deepmind.google/.../synthid <i>only flags marked generators</i>
Google Lens / Images <i>reverse search</i>	Everywhere else an image has appeared, and roughly when it first did.	images.google.com
TinEye <i>reverse search</i>	The same, sorted oldest-first — best for finding the true original.	tineye.com
Bing Visual / Yandex <i>reverse search</i>	Different indexes — they catch what Google misses.	bing.com/visualsearch
AI classifiers <i>Hive, Sightengine...</i>	A probability that content is AI-made.	<i>a hint, not a verdict — often wrong</i>
Text detectors	Claim to spot AI writing.	<i>none is dependable — don't accuse anyone on one</i>

Reverse image search, in practice. Upload the picture, or paste its link, into any of the searches above. If a photo of a current event has been online for three years, or appears nowhere else at all, you have your answer.

A missing mark proves nothing either way. Which is part of why Europe now asks for disclosure instead. The tools narrow the question; a person still has to close it.