

# Anonymous: A reporters guide

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*Anonymous can be confusing, especially for reporters, what we intend to achieve with this guide is to make sense of what Anonymous is and where its sources come from.*

## What is Anonymous?

Anonymous is a leaderless collective, nothing more than an internet gathering. Once a majority of us agrees on a certain topic, we put our collective effort in operations. Where Anonymous doesn't have leaders, operations are always carefully coordinated by its operatives. **This means Anonymous is NOT a group.** Reporters often call us hackers, and while there are hackers within Anonymous, the majority is not.

## Sources

If you want to know the source of a pastebin link, twitter is a surprisingly effective tool. A pastebin link looks like this: <http://pastebin.com/NP5iiEBw> if you copy and paste the last part of the link into twitter and click on “live” the person who first tweeted it will be at the bottom.

Example:

The screenshot shows a Twitter search interface. At the top, the search bar contains the text "NP5iiEBw". Below the search bar, a video player is visible with the text "A DARK TIME ON THE DARK NET". Below the video player, a list of tweets is displayed. The tweet by @AnonDiscordian is highlighted with a red box. A red arrow points to the search bar, and another red arrow points to the highlighted tweet. The tweet by @AnonDiscordian reads: "pastebin.com/NP5iiEBw Operation Paris".

## **Hashtags**

Every operation uses a twitter hashtag, you can click on them to see what Anonymous individuals are tweeting about the operation. Take criticism from others into account for your article!

## **Interviews**

So great, you found your source, if you want to interview the source, simply ask them to follow for an interview. Twitter made it possible to do this via Direct Messages after cutting the 140 character limit. Make sure to state the media organization you work for.

## **Leaks**

Whenever Anonymous leaks information as being “classified” always do a Google search for the document names in between quotes, a Google search in between quotes will find out the results containing accurate set of words without any change in order. An extra step to this is to post part of the document in a Google search and see if it pops up.

Always contact the allegedly breached party to comment on the leak. If they deny that it happened, do some extra research (for example asking your source how the leak was obtained)

## **Announcements**

If Anonymous makes a shiny video announcement do not immediately jump on it to write an article. Wait until Anonymous delivers on their promises. There are several YouTube accounts announcing fake information to discredit Anonymous as a whole, we found out government organizations want to discredit Anonymous in documents revealed in the HBGary leak and later in the Snowden leaks.