FREE GUIDE · GROW RICH GROW HAPPY



Grow Rich Grow Happy

A Beginner's Crypto Research Guide

Think like a detective. Gather the clues. Make your own informed decisions — without needing to be a programmer.

5-step detective method · Research scorecard · Red flags · Staying safe · Glossary · Free tools

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EDUCATIONAL ONLY · NOT FINANCIAL ADVICE

WELCOME

Crypto isn’t as scary as it looks

Crypto can seem confusing, but that’s often because people dive headfirst into the technical details before they grasp the big picture. Let’s fix that.

Think about it: do you know exactly how banks move money behind the scenes? Or the engineering inside your car? Probably not. You still use both, because you understand what they do and you’ve learned which ones to trust.

Crypto is similar. **You don’t need to be a programmer to understand it.** You need the basics, a few good questions, and the patience to check the answers.

The three basics

1

Crypto is digital money

Think of it like online cash that lives on the internet instead of in your pocket.

2

Blockchain is the record book

A shared digital ledger that anyone can look at, and that’s very hard to secretly change.

3

You can buy, sell, and hold it

Much like stocks or other assets, prices move. Sometimes a lot, and fast.

THIS IS A RESEARCH GUIDE, NOT A HOT-TIP SHEET

You won’t find price predictions, “next 100x” coin picks, or promised results in here. What you **will** get is a repeatable way to investigate any crypto project, spot warning signs, and protect yourself, so the decision you make is *yours*.

What’s inside

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THE FRAMEWORK

Think like a detective

So you're getting the hang of the basics and you want to explore some projects. With thousands of cryptocurrencies out there, where do you even begin?

Imagine you're a detective working a new case. Your job isn't to guess where the price goes. It's to gather clues and evidence until you understand what you're looking at, then decide for yourself.

1	2	3	4	5
Learn the basics	Investigate the project	Look beyond it	Buy & store safely	Put it together

1 Learn the crypto basics

Learn the rules of the game first. Start with the best-known networks, Bitcoin and Ethereum, because there are plenty of free, beginner-friendly explanations of both.

- **Read the Bitcoin whitepaper.** It's the original "rule book" for Bitcoin, published under the name Satoshi Nakamoto. It's short, and it's fine to skip the math.
- **Get comfortable with three words:** *wallets* (where you hold the keys to your crypto), *addresses* (like an account number you can share to receive funds), and *transactions* (sending and receiving).

2 Investigate the project

- **The website:** Can you tell who's behind it? Do they explain what it does in plain words? Broken links and sloppy typos are clues too.
- **The whitepaper or docs:** Skim for the goal, how the token is used, and how it's supposed to work. Don't get stuck on the technical parts.

FIVE KEY QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

- What real problem does this solve, and for whom?
- What makes it different from similar projects?
- Who is the team, and what have they built before?
- Is there a roadmap, and have they hit past milestones?
- Are partners real? Look for the *partner's own* announcement, not just a logo.

3 Look beyond the project

- **Check the community.** What are people saying on X, Reddit, Discord or Telegram? Look for people *using* and *building*, not just people cheering about price.
- **Size up the competitors.** Who else is solving the same problem? How does this one compare on users, activity, and size (market cap)?
- **Read the news and reviews.** Use more than one source, check the date on every article, and notice who's being paid to say what.

4 Buy and store safely

- **Where to buy:** Is it available on large, well-known exchanges that are allowed to operate where you live? If it's only on obscure platforms, write that down as a clue.
- **How to store:** Learn the difference between leaving crypto on an exchange and holding it yourself, for example with a hardware wallet (think of a USB stick built for crypto). Page 7 walks through it.

5 Put it all together

- **Score it.** Fill in the Crypto Research Checklist on the next page.
- **Make a pros and cons list.** Write down the good and the bad you found, and where you found it.
- **Trust your gut.** If something feels off, it probably is.
- **Start small.** Never put in more than you can afford to lose.

DETECTIVE TIP: KEEP A CASE FILE

Keep one note per project with the date, the links you used, your score, and *why* you're interested. When the hype gets loud, or quiet, you can reread your own reasoning instead of reacting to the crowd.

REMEMBER

- **Do your own research.** Don't just rely on what others say, including me. Check it yourself.
- **Be patient.** Learning crypto takes time, and there's always another opportunity.
- **Have fun.** Exploring this new world can be exciting. Stay curious, stay careful.

PRINT ME · FILL ME IN

The Crypto Research Checklist

Score each clue **0** = no evidence or can't find it · **1** = some evidence, still unclear · **2** = clear evidence you checked yourself.

Project / ticker: _____ Date researched: _____

Main sources used: _____ Price when researched (for your notes): _____

	CLUE	WHAT TO LOOK FOR	SCORE
1	**Problem it solves** Is there a real need?	Can you explain the problem and who has it in one plain sentence? Buzzwords alone score 0.	0 1 2
2	**Real utility / revenue** Is anyone using it?	Real users, transactions, or fees you can see on-chain or on DefiLlama. Does the token do anything besides trade?	0 1 2
3	**Tokenomics** Supply, unlocks, who holds it	Circulating vs. total supply, upcoming unlocks, and how much the team and early investors hold.	0 1 2
4	**Yield / rewards** Does holding pay, and from where?	Staking or rewards paid from real activity and clearly explained. A big APY with no source scores 0.	0 1 2
5	**Institutional ties / partners** Who's really involved?	Partnerships confirmed by the partner's own website or press release, not just logos on the project's site.	0 1 2
6	**Undervalued vs. peers** How does it compare?	Compare its market cap with similar projects. Is it smaller while showing similar or better usage?	0 1 2
7	**Dated catalysts** What's coming, and when?	Launches, upgrades, or listings with real dates from official sources. "Soon" and "big news coming" score 0.	0 1 2
8	**Trusted access** Can people get it safely?	Listed on reputable, well-known exchanges and supported by established wallets or custodians.	0 1 2

Total

___ / 16

13–16
Strong case file. Still start small and keep checking.

8–12
Mixed evidence. Dig into your 0s and 1s before going further.

0–7
Too many missing clues. Be patient or pass.

Red flag override: any red flag from page 6 means stop and re-check, whatever the score. This score measures how much *evidence* you found. It doesn't predict price.

WARNING SIGNS

Red flags: when to walk away

Every good detective knows the clues that point to trouble. One of these doesn't always mean a scam, but each one should make you slow down and dig deeper. Several together? Walk away.

01 Anonymous team, no track record

You can't find who's building it or anything they've built before. A new project asking for your money should have people willing to stand behind it.

02 "Guaranteed" returns

Nobody can guarantee crypto returns. Promises of fixed daily profits or "risk-free" gains are a classic scam signal.

03 Heavy insider supply or big unlocks ahead

If a handful of wallets or insiders hold most of the supply, or a large unlock is scheduled, a lot of tokens could hit the market at once.

04 Paid-hype influencers

Lots of accounts posting the same coin, at the same time, with the same talking points. Ask: were they paid, and did they say so?

05 No real users

Big promises, but little activity you can actually see: few transactions, no working product, nobody using it except to trade.

06 Pressure to buy *now*

Countdown timers, "last chance," "you'll regret it." Real opportunities survive you taking a day to research.

07 "DM me" giveaways

"Send 1, get 2 back." Private "investment groups." Surprise winnings that need a fee first. These are scams, every time.

08 Impersonators & copycats

Fake accounts that copy real creators or projects (look-alike handles, stolen photos), and copycat tokens with similar names. Verify through official links.

A NOTE FROM ME

I will **never** DM you asking you to send crypto, join a private investment group, or share your seed phrase. If "Mr. Foresight" messages you with any of that, it's an impersonator. Block and report it.

PROTECT YOUR BAG

Staying safe

Great research means nothing if someone tricks you out of your crypto. Crypto transactions usually can't be reversed, so these habits matter more than any single project pick.

🔑 Guard your seed phrase

Your recovery words **are** your money. Write them on paper (or metal) and keep them offline. Never share them, photograph them, store them in the cloud, or type them into any website. Real support will never ask.

📱 Use an authenticator app for 2FA

Turn on two-factor authentication everywhere, using an authenticator app rather than text messages. SMS codes can be stolen through SIM-swap scams.

🎣 Beware fake support & phishing

Scammers pose as exchange or wallet "support" in replies and DMs. Real support doesn't DM you first. Bookmark official sites and check the address bar before you log in.

🧪 Send a small test first

Moving crypto to a new address? Send a tiny amount, confirm it arrived, then send the rest. Double-check the first and last characters of every address.

Exchange custody vs. self-custody

	ON AN EXCHANGE	SELF-CUSTODY (YOUR OWN WALLET)
Who holds the keys	The exchange holds them for you	You do: "not your keys, not your coins"
Upside	Easy to use, and you can usually recover access if you forget your password	Full control; you don't depend on a company staying healthy or open
Main risk	Hacks, frozen withdrawals, or the company failing	Lose your seed phrase and your funds are gone. There's no reset button
Good for	Small amounts and learning the ropes	Amounts you plan to hold, once you're confident with backups

HARDWARE WALLET TIPS

- Buy directly from the manufacturer or an authorized seller, never used or from a random marketplace.
- If a device arrives with a seed phrase already written down, don't use it. You should always create your own.

SPEAK THE LANGUAGE

Plain-English glossary

Wallet
An app or device that holds the keys to your crypto. Your coins live on the blockchain; the wallet holds the keys that let you move them.

Seed phrase a.k.a. recovery phrase
A list of words (often 12 or 24) that can restore your wallet. Whoever has it controls the funds. Treat it like the master key to your house.

Exchange
A platform where you buy, sell, and trade crypto. Some are run by companies; others (decentralized exchanges) run on smart contracts.

Market cap
Price × circulating supply. It tells you how big a project is, not whether it's "cheap." A one-cent coin can be bigger than a $100 coin.

Circulating vs. total supply
Circulating = coins out in the market right now. **Total** = all coins created so far, including locked ones. (Max supply = the most that can ever exist, if there's a cap.)

Tokenomics
"Token economics": how many tokens exist, who got them, how and when new ones are released, and what the token is actually used for.

Unlock
When tokens that were locked up (often for the team or early investors) become free to sell, adding to the circulating supply.

Stablecoin
A token designed to hold a steady value, usually tied to a currency like the US dollar. "Designed to" isn't the same as guaranteed, so check what backs it.

Gas fee
The fee you pay a blockchain network to process your transaction. It changes with the network and how busy it is.

RWA real-world assets
Things like bonds, real estate, or commodities represented as tokens on a blockchain.

Whitepaper
A project's founding document that explains the problem, the solution, and how the token fits in.

Block explorer
A free website that lets you look up any public transaction, address, or token on a blockchain. Think of it as a search engine for the record book.

DYOR
"Do Your Own Research." The whole point of this guide.

Staking
Locking up tokens to help run or secure a network, sometimes in exchange for rewards. Rewards and risks vary by project.

YOUR DETECTIVE KIT

Free research tools

Every tool here has a free version, and none of these are affiliate links. Use at least two sources for anything important, and always reach a project through its official links.

CoinGecko

coingecko.com

Price, market cap, circulating and total supply, and which exchanges list a coin. Usually links to the official site and docs.

CLUES 3 · 6 · 8

CoinMarketCap

coinmarketcap.com

Similar market data. Great as a second opinion to cross-check numbers and listings.

CLUES 3 · 6 · 8

DefiLlama

defillama.com

Shows activity for DeFi apps and blockchains, such as total value locked, fees, and revenue. Great for checking whether real usage exists.

CLUES 2 · 4 · 6

Tokenomist (formerly Token Unlocks)

tokenomist.ai

Token unlock schedules and allocation breakdowns: who holds what, and when more supply arrives.

CLUE 3

Block explorers

etherscan.io · solscan.io · mempool.space · xrpscan.com

Look up transactions, token contracts, and top holders on Ethereum, Solana, Bitcoin, and the XRP Ledger. Use the explorer for the right chain.

CLUES 2 · 3

GitHub

github.com

Many projects publish their code here. Is it public? Has it been updated recently? Are developers active?

CLUES 1 · 2

Official docs & whitepaper

via the project's official website

The primary source for goals, token use, and roadmap. Reach it through links on CoinGecko or CoinMarketCap to avoid fake look-alike sites.

CLUES 1 · 5 · 7

Beginner reading

bitcoin.org/bitcoin.pdf · ethereum.org/learn

The original Bitcoin whitepaper, plus Ethereum's own free beginner guides to wallets, gas, and more.

STEP 1

Heads-up: websites change names, features, and pricing over time. If something looks different from what's described here, check the site's own "About" page before relying on it.

KEEP GROWING

Your next move

Open your first case file today

Pick one project you've been curious about. Work through the five steps, fill in the checklist, and check it against the red flags. One careful case file teaches you more than a hundred hype videos.

▶ Watch Grow Rich Grow Happy on YouTube

Breakdowns, research walk-throughs, and mindset talks for people building a better tomorrow.

youtube.com/@growrichgrowhappy

🎧 Listen to The Process podcast

Antonio's podcast. Learn while you drive, work, or work out.

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Always be cautious, and never stop learning. Grow rich. Grow happy.

BEFORE YOU PUT IN A SINGLE DOLLAR

- ☐ I can explain what it does in one sentence
- ☐ I checked it against all eight red flags
- ☐ My seed phrase is offline and never shared
- ☐ I'll send a small test transaction first
- ☐ I filled in the checklist and noted my sources
- ☐ I reached it through official links only
- ☐ 2FA is on, using an authenticator app
- ☐ It's an amount I can afford to lose

Not financial advice.

This guide is for educational purposes only and should not be interpreted as financial, investment, legal, or tax advice. Nothing in it is a recommendation to buy, sell, or hold any asset, and no results are promised. Crypto prices are volatile and you could lose some or all of the money you put in. Tools and websites are mentioned for educational reference only; they are not endorsements, and this guide contains no affiliate links. Please do your own research and consult a qualified financial professional before making any financial decision.

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