Bias is a subtle attempt to influence opinion, to express a preference or prejudice. Bias can be an opinion disguised as fact. The following are examples of ways that bias can appear in the news.

- **Bias through selection and omission**: Editors who choose to use or not use a specific news item can express bias by, for example, catering to young readers because they spend more money and ignoring news of interest to the elderly. Details within a story are ignored while others are included that give readers a different opinion of the events reported. For example, if a few people ‘boo’ during a speech, this display can be described as “remarks greeted by jeers” or the reaction can be ignored as “a handful of dissidents.” This type of bias is difficult to detect without comparing and contrasting the same event as reported in different papers.

- **Bias through placement**: Front page stories are often judged by readers as more significant than those residing on inside pages. Television and radio newscasts run the most important news stories first. For instance, by giving prominent space to all shootings and gun-related accidents in the paper, an editor can campaign against owning handguns.

- **Bias by headline**: Headlines are the most-read part of a paper, and many people scan nearly all headlines which can convey excitement where little exists, express approval or condemnation, and steer public opinion.

- **Bias by photos, captions, and camera angles**: Pictures can flatter a person or make him or her look unpleasant. For example, during an election campaign, a paper can choose photos to influence opinion about a candidate.

- **Bias through use of names and titles**: Labels and titles that describe people places and events can reflect bias and influence opinion. For instance, the same person can be called a “terrorist,” a “leader of the people’s army” or a “freedom fighter.”

- **Bias through statistics and crowd counts**: To make a disaster seem more spectacular and thus more worthy of reading, numbers can be inflated. “Two hundred injured in soccer match” can be the same as “only minor injuries at the soccer match.” Crowd counts are often inaccurate and reflect the opinion of the person doing the counting.

- **Bias through source control**: Consider where the news item comes from, such as a reporter, an eyewitness, police officer or firefighter, or elected or appointed government official. Some stories are supplied by companies or public relations directors to advocate support for their products or services.

- **Bias through word choice and tone**: The words chosen, just as in headlines, can influence the opinion of the news reader.