**SCHOLARLY VS. POPULAR RESOURCES GUIDE**

In order to choose the best resources for your research, you will need to understand the difference between popular magazines, professional and scholarly journals. Below are some criteria to consider when distinguishing between journals and magazines. Note that each category relates to the five criteria by which we begin to evaluate all information: accuracy/relevance, authority, objectivity/perspective, currency, and coverage/scope.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Scholarly Journal</th>
<th>Popular Magazine</th>
<th>Professional Journal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example</td>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Scholarly Journal Example" /></td>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Popular Magazine Example" /></td>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Professional Journal Example" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content (Accuracy)</td>
<td><strong>In-depth</strong>, primary account of <em>original findings</em> written by the researcher(s); specific information, with the goal of scholarly communication.</td>
<td>Secondary discussion of someone else’s research; may include personal narrative or opinion; general information, with the purpose to entertain or inform.</td>
<td>Current <em>news, trends, and products</em> in a specific industry; practical information for <em>professionals</em> working in the field</td>
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<tr>
<td>Author (Authority)</td>
<td>Author’s <em>credentials are provided</em>; usually a scholar or specialist with subject expertise.</td>
<td>Author is frequently a journalist or staff writer paid to write articles, and may or may not have subject expertise.</td>
<td>Author is usually a professional in the field, sometimes a journalist or staff writer with subject expertise.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audience (Coverage)</td>
<td>Scholars, researchers, and students.</td>
<td>General public; the interested non-specialist.</td>
<td>Professionals in the field; interested non-specialist.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language (Coverage)</td>
<td>Specialized terminology or jargon of the field; requires some expertise in subject area.</td>
<td>Vocabulary in general use; <em>easily understandable</em> to most readers.</td>
<td>Specialized terminology or jargon of the field, but understandable to the interested reader.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graphics (Coverage)</td>
<td>Graphs, charts, and tables, augment text; <em>very few advertisements</em> and photographs.</td>
<td>Generally contains lots of <em>glossy advertisements and photographs</em>.</td>
<td>Photographs; some graphics and charts; <em>advertisements targeted to professionals</em> in the field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layout &amp; Organization (Currency)</td>
<td><strong>Structured</strong>; includes abstract of article, goals and objectives, methodology, results (evidence), discussion, conclusion, and bibliography.</td>
<td><strong>Informal</strong>; may include non-standard formatting. May not present supporting evidence or conclusion.</td>
<td><strong>Informal</strong>; articles organized like a journal or a newsletter. Evidence drawn from personal experience or common knowledge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Accountability (Objectivity)

Articles are **evaluated by peer-reviewers* or referees who are experts in the field; edited for content, format, and style.**

Articles are **evaluated by editorial staff**, not experts in the field; edited for format and style.

Articles are evaluated by editorial staff who may be experts in the field, **not peer-reviewed*; edited for style and format.**

### References

**Required.** Quotes and facts must be verifiable.

**Rare.** Little, if any, information about source materials is provided.

Occasional **brief** bibliographies, but not required.

### Examples

#### Scholarly Journals
- Critical Inquiry
- Journal of Abnormal Psychology
- Journal of Business Strategy
- Journal of Theological Study
- Music & Letters

#### Popular Magazines
- National Geographic
- Newsweek
- Psychology Today
- Rolling Stone
- Time
- Vogue
- Wired

#### Trade Magazine/Journal
- Advertising Age
- American Libraries
- Christian Retailing
- Footwear News
- Restaurant Business

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*In general, a peer-reviewed article has been evaluated by several reviewers who are experts in the field or on the research topic of the article; only with their positive reviews will the article be published.*

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