

Popular vs. Scholarly Articles - Guide

What is the difference between popular and scholarly articles?

Popular Articles (Magazines)

- Are often written by journalists or professional writers for a general audience
- Use language easily understood by general readers
- Rarely give full citations for sources
- Written for the general public
- Tend to be shorter than journal articles

Examples of Popular Magazines:



Scholarly Articles (Journals)

- Are written by and for faculty, researchers or scholars (chemists, historians, doctors, artists, etc.)
- Uses scholarly or technical language
- Tend to be longer articles about research
- Include full citations for sources
- Are often refereed or peer reviewed (articles are reviewed by an editor and other specialists before being accepted for publication)
- Book reviews and editorials are not considered scholarly articles, even when found in scholarly journals

Examples of Scholarly Journals:



Some points to remember:

- Both magazine and journal articles can be good sources for your work.
- When selecting articles, think about how you intend to use the information:
 - Do you want background on a topic new to you? (**use magazines**)
 - Did your teacher say to cite **scholarly** resources? (**use journals**)
- Often a combination of the two will be most appropriate for undergraduate research.