

Scholarly vs. Popular Journals

The following chart illustrates the differences between scholarly and popular journals:

	Scholarly	Popular
Documentation	Bibliographies, footnotes, or other references are always included	None
Authors	Experts, scholars, and researchers; authors named along with their institutional affiliation	Staff writers, generalists; may be anonymous
Peer-reviewed*	Articles are most likely peer-reviewed, or refereed.*	Articles are not peer-reviewed
Publisher	Usually, a university or an association	Commercial Firm
Article type	Long research articles with abstracts, tables, graphs, charts, and summaries	Few number pages (1-10), non-technical articles with photos and graphs
Audience	Scholarly readers, such as professors, researchers, students	General readers
Writing Style	Formal, scholarly	Informal, written to entertain and inform general audience
Journal Title	Journal titles may include terms such as "review," "bulletin," or "journal."	Magazine titles lack such "designating" terms
Appearance	Plain	Colorful, illustrated
Publication Frequency	Issues tend to be published less often (monthly, quarterly, semi-annually)	Issues tend to be published more frequently (daily, weekly, monthly)
Page Numbering	Issues tend to be successively numbered	Each issue tends to begin with page 1
Advertising	No ads or ads for books or other scholarly tools	Ads for business or consumer products
Illustrations	If present, illustrations support text	Often illustrated for marketing appeal
Examples	<i>Journal of Abnormal Psychology, Modern Fiction Studies, Journal of the American Medical Association</i>	<i>Psychology Today, Newsweek, Sports Illustrated</i>

* **Peer-reviewed** indicates that the article was submitted to a panel of scholars/experts within the field and critiqued for accuracy and content prior to its approval for publication.

Chart compiled and adapted from Davidson College library web page in Charlotte, North Carolina at <http://www.davidson.edu/administrative/library/refer/popsch.htm>. September 26, 2001 and from the Carleton College Library Instruction Web Pages in Northfield, Minnesota at <http://www.library.carleton.edu/reference/researching/jrnlvspop.html> February 7, 2003.