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Faculty often require students to include scholarly articles in their bibliographies. The following checklist is intended to help you distinguish between scholarly articles and popular articles. If you still have questions, contact your professor or [Ask A Librarian](#).

Scholarly Articles:

- are usually longer than five pages.
- contain mostly text.
- have many citations and/or a bibliography.
- usually focus on academic subjects and contribute to the research in that area.
- often have an abstract at the beginning.
- often list the author's credentials; he or she is usually an expert in the field.
- are written for the author's peers; it is generally assumed that readers have some background in the field.
- often provide a description of the research methodology used.

Scholarly articles are found in scholarly journals. Examples of scholarly journals include the New England Journal of Medicine, Harvard Business Review, Journal of American History, and Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly. Listed below are some characteristics of scholarly journals.

Scholarly Journals:

- often include Journal, Review, or Quarterly in the title.
- are often published by a college, university, or professional society.
- usually contain little or no advertisements.
- often provide a statement of purpose, mission, or scope.
- usually have some form of peer review. Peer review is the process by which articles are evaluated by an expert(s) in the field before being accepted for publication.

Popular Articles:

- are usually brief, less than five pages.
- often contain many photographs and graphics.
- usually do not have citations and/or a bibliography.
- may not list an author; if an author is listed, he or she is often not an expert.

Popular articles are generally found in newspapers, magazines, and trade publications. Examples of popular publications include People, Sports Illustrated, Newsweek, and Time.

Popular Publications:

- are published frequently, weekly or monthly
- contain many advertisements
- have familiar titles and are usually sold at newsstands and bookstores
- often have glossy pages
- are intended to entertain or inform the general reader; language is simple and presumes the reader has no background in the topic.

If you have questions about scholarly articles or research in general,

[Ask A Librarian](#)



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