

How to Identify a Scholarly Article

Some of your assignments may require you to use scholarly or peer-reviewed articles rather than articles from popular magazines or websites.

Scholarly Journal Articles – are written by academics or scholars for other researchers and report on original research or experimentation, contain footnotes and bibliographies, and are usually published by academic or scholarly organizations. Most but not all scholarly publication are peer reviewed.

Peer Reviewed Journal Articles – are scholarly articles that have been reviewed and approved by experts (peers) in the same subject areas as the articles authors before they are accepted for publication.

To determine if your chosen article is scholarly and/or peer reviewed answer the following questions about the article(s). Answering 'yes' to most of the following questions is a good indicator that you have chosen a scholarly article. If in doubt, ask your professor or the Library Resource Centre staff.

- ✓ Does the **periodical title** indicate a specific subject area? (e.g. American Journal of Nursing, Palliative Medicine)
- ✓ Does the **periodical title** contain the words *Journal, Studies, Research* or *Review*?
- ✓ Are the **authors' names** listed along with their degrees, titles or other credentials and/or the names of institutions with which they are affiliated?
- ✓ Is the **article** long – more than four pages?
- ✓ Is there an **abstract** or summary of the article at the beginning of the article?
- ✓ Does the **article** use technical language or specialized vocabulary?
- ✓ Does the **article** include footnotes, a bibliography or list of references?
- ✓ Does the **article** contain charts, graphs and/or tables?
- ✓ Was the article cited in a subject-specific database? (e.g. CINAHL, ProQuest Nursing Journals)



For more help determining the difference between primary, secondary, and tertiary sources, please ask the Library Resource Centre staff.