

These general guidelines are designed to help you distinguish between the three main types of **periodicals**: popular magazines, trade magazines, and scholarly journals. Not all periodicals can be easily classified. If you aren't sure whether a publication is appropriate for your assignment, ask for help at the Information Desk or from your instructor.

	Popular Press Magazines	Professional/Trade Magazines	Academic/Scholarly Journals
Intended Audience	- general public	- people working in the field - post-secondary students	- researchers/academics - post-secondary students
Author(s)	- on-staff professional journalists - free-lance journalists or writers	- people working in the field - free-lance journalists or writers	- academics/researchers in the field
Article Selection	- editor assigns and/or chooses articles	- editor assigns and/or chooses articles	- editorial board of researchers/academics - "peer review" or "referee" committee
Type of Research	- usually secondary reporting of research - some original research (general public concerns)	- usually secondary reporting of research - some original research	- mostly original research
Purpose	- provide general information; to entertain	- provide practical information to people in a specific field	- inform or make original research available to the scholarly world
References	- may mention sources in text, but no formal citations (i.e., bibliography)	- may have a short bibliography of references	- contain bibliographies, footnotes, endnotes, and/or works cited
Advertisements	- many general ads	- ads are usually related to the industry	- may promote upcoming conferences or publications - very few, if any, commercial advertisements
Appearance	- designed to be eye-catching and attractive; glossy pages; colourful pictures	- designed to be eye-catching and attractive; glossy pages; moderately colourful pictures	- serious and plain-looking; few pictures; may have graphs/charts to illustrate concepts
Writing Style	- general language - informal writing style	- includes terminology specific to the field - more formal writing style than popular magazines, but less formal than scholarly journals	- full of terminology specific to the field - formal writing style
Examples	- <i>Newsweek</i> - <i>National Geographic</i> - <i>Maclean's</i>	- <i>Nursing BC</i> - <i>CA Magazine</i> - <i>Advertising Age</i>	- <i>JAMA: Journal of the American Medical Association</i> - <i>International Review of Social History</i> - <i>Canadian Journal of Political Science</i>

What if you are using an online, full-text article? Here are some clues that may help you:

- 1) Look for a list of references (a bibliography) at the end of the article.
- 2) If the article is less than half a page in length, it is not a research article.
- 3) Look for credentials after the author(s) name.
- 4) If the title of the publication has the word "journal" in it, chances are it is scholarly.
- 5) In some article databases you can limit your search to "peer reviewed" journals (scholarly journals).
- 6) Use the chart above to help you evaluate the article.