

Academic/Scientific Journals

and

Popular Magazines

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Magazines

Popular literature is written by journalists and other writers, who are employed by the magazine for which they write. Journalists cover news and current events in a field, write profiles of people, places, or events, and express political opinions. The audience for popular literature is the general public. Some examples include:

- *The New York Times*
- *National Geographic*
- *Smithsonian*
- *Field and Stream*
- *Newsweek*
- *Psychology Today*
- *Science News*
- *Natural History*

Academic/Scientific Journals

Scholarly literature is written by researchers who are experts in their field. People who write for academic journals are usually employed by colleges, universities, or other institutions of education or research. They submit articles to the editors of the journals, who decide whether or not to publish.

The most prestigious academic journals subject articles to the *peer-review (also known as refereed)* process. This means that, before an article is accepted for publication, it is reviewed by several experts in the field, who suggest possible changes and make recommendations as to whether or not the article should be published. Some examples of academic journals are:

- *Science*
- *Nature*
- *Journal of Counseling Psychology*
- *Journal of Herpetology*
- *Herpetological Review*
- *Castanea*
- *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*
- *American Midland Naturalist*

Trade and Professional Literature

Trade and professional literature resembles scholarly literature in that it is written by people working in the field. However, the articles in trade and professional journals cover news in the field, brief reports on research, and opinions about trends and events. Some examples of trade and professional journals are:

- *American Libraries*
- *AdWeek*
- *American Forests*
- *Drug Store News*

Quick Guideline

Scientific/academic research literature will *always* supply a list of references at or near the end of the article. These are a list of works that the researcher used in his or her research for that article. Often detailed tables, graphs, or charts will be included. The methodology of the study is usually detailed if empirical, original research is done.

Journal Types: A Comparative Chart

	POPULAR	SCHOLARLY	PROFESSIONAL
Purpose	To inform and entertain the general reader	To communicate research, scientific, and scholarly ideas	To apply information; to provide professional support
Audience	General public	Other scholars, scientists, and students	Practitioners in the field, professionals
Coverage	Broad variety of public interest topics, cross disciplinary	Very narrow and specific subjects	Information relevant to field and members of group
Publisher	Commercial	Professional associations; academic institutions; and many commercial publishers	Professional, occupational, or trade group
Writers	Employees of the publication, freelancers (including journalists and scholars)	Scholars, scientists, researchers, experts, usually listed with their institutional affiliation	Members of the profession, journalists, researchers, scholars
Characteristics	<p>Little technical language or jargon</p> <p>Few or no cited references</p> <p>Absence of bibliographies</p> <p>General summaries of background information</p> <p>Contain numerous advertisements</p> <p>Articles are usually brief; between 1-7 pages</p>	<p>Little or no background information given</p> <p>Technical language and discipline- specific jargon</p> <p>PEER REVIEW, editorial board</p> <p>Bibliographies included</p> <p>Procedures and materials often described in detail</p> <p>Articles are longer, often over 5 pages</p>	<p>Application of new technology</p> <p>Employment issues</p> <p>Practitioners viewpoint</p> <p>Technical language used</p> <p>Interpretation of research trends and issues</p> <p>Articles are usually brief; between 1-7 pages</p> <p>Contain advertisements</p>
Frequency	Frequent, on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis	Frequent, on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis	Less frequent, on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis
Examples	<i>Time, US News and World Report, Modern Healthcare</i>	<i>Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</i>	<i>Institute of Transportation Engineers Journal</i>