



# Library Research Tips

## Popular or Scholarly Resources

Periodicals can be popular or scholarly publications. They are issued at regular or “periodic” intervals. Magazines, newspapers, trade publications and scholarly journals are all examples of periodicals.

### Popular Magazines (*National Geographic, Cosmopolitan, Maclean’s*)

- Purpose is to entertain and inform.
- Written in non-technical, and easy to understand language.
- Journalists write the articles; they are not subject experts.
- Credentials of magazine writers are not provided.
- Writers may provide opinions or editorials.
- Articles are not peer-reviewed by a panel of experts.
- Bibliographies are usually not provided.
- Magazine articles tend to be shorter in length (1-2 pages).

### Scholarly Journals (*Journal of Accountancy, Journal of Forestry*)

- Purpose is scholarly communication—researchers sharing their findings.
- Contain language or jargon meant for a scholarly audience in a particular field.
- Written by scholars, subject experts or researchers whose credentials are provided.
- Articles are peer-reviewed by a panel of experts.
- Bibliographies are always provided.
- Scholarly articles are often lengthy and comprehensive (10-30 pages).

### Which to choose?

Both types of periodicals can be helpful, depending on the nature of your research. If you are doing a presentation comparing different opinions on a topic, magazines may serve your purpose. If you are writing a research paper and require in-depth, authoritative information, a scholarly journal will be more suitable.

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