

Scholarly Journal v. Magazine v. Newspaper

What is the difference between a magazine, a journal, or newspapers? What is a periodical? A periodical is any title that is published periodically. This can be a daily, weekly, monthly, or annual publication. Magazines, journals, and newspapers are the three most commonly used periodicals.

Criteria	Scholarly Journals	Popular Magazines	Newspapers	Substantial News/General Interest
Purpose: Why is the periodical published?	To inform, report, and make available original research and new findings	To entertain and inform without providing in-depth analysis	To disseminate news on a daily or weekly basis	To offer in-depth reporting and feature articles without scholarly conventions
Subject: What does this periodical cover?	Often devoted to a single discipline or sub-discipline	Often focuses on a particular subject or hobby but may also cover a variety	Encompass current events in politics, sports, leisure, religion, and business	Cover a wide variety of topics that may be of interest to the readership
Contributors: Who writes for this periodical?	Subject specialists and experts in the field	Journalists, freelance writers, and editorial staff	Local staff, newswire services, and syndicated columnists	Staff writers, freelance journalists, preeminent authors and scholars
Intended Audience: What readers is the periodical targeting?	Other researchers and specialists in the field	General readership of non-specialists	General audience with interest in the news	General but educated and well-read audience
Article Coverage: How detailed or sophisticated are the articles?	Articles are generally lengthy and devoted to one very specific narrow subject or piece of research	Articles are often brief and provide general information without going into great detail	Articles are usually brief and cover a vast array of topics with the contents determined by current events	Articles are often lengthy and range from in-depth reporting and analysis to opinion and general interest features
Language: What terms and jargon is used in this periodical?	Use terminology and jargon of the discipline covered. The reader is assumed to have a similar scholarly background.	Use no jargon or subject-specific knowledge	Use common words and simple sentence structures	Avoid jargon and use language that is appropriate for an educated readership
Sources: How are sources cited in each article?	Cite sources in footnotes, endnotes, or bibliographies	Infrequent mention of sources making information difficult to substantiate or trace	Usually name sources, but may keep some sources confidential	May refer to sources but not document them in a formal way
Appearance: What is the physical Appearance of this periodical?	Usually plain black print on white paper. May contain graphs and charts. Seldom contain photographs or colorful graphics	Slick and glossy paper with photographs, illustrations, graphics, and interest-catching cover stories	Usually inexpensive, thin paper and black ink. Amount of color and graphics determined by editorial policy	Some photographs and graphics but generally not as many as popular magazines
Advertising: How much space is devoted to ads?	Limited advertising	Ads are present and may be predominant feature	Large space devoted to classified and display ads	Ads are present but not predominant
Examples:	Journal of Modern Literature, Harvard Business Review, Social Forces	Glamour, Black Belt, Sports Illustrated, Southern Living	Virginian-Pilot, New York Times, Journal and Guide	Psychology Today, Scientific American, National Geographic