Hello and welcome to this video tutorial on Scholarly vs Popular periodical articles.

As a post-secondary student, your professors may require that you use scholarly or academic articles as references when writing research papers.

It will be important for you to be able to tell the difference between scholarly and popular periodicals.

A periodical is simply a publication that is published at regular intervals and may come in many forms including: journals, magazines, and newspapers.

Scholarly periodicals are sometimes referred to as journals. Popular periodicals may be called magazines.

So let’s take a look at some defining features of scholarly journals. When you are trying to decide whether to use any resource in your academic paper the first thing you should always find out is … who wrote it!

Journal articles are written by scholars or experts in their field of research.

They will cover original research … topics in great detail and will often make complex arguments.

The second detail to think about is …who is the intended audience for the article? Journal articles are written for other scholars, researchers and students.

They may have an abstract, research details and will always include a reference list.

A few other details to keep in mind are that journal articles, unlike popular magazine articles do not usually often include photos … unless it’s important to the original research and never include advertisements.

Another clue is that they are often more than 5 pages long.

In contrast, let’s take a quick look at magazine articles. They are usually written by reporters or feature editors who may not be experts on the subject they are writing about.

The articles are focused towards a general audience and use common language choices.

They do not have an abstract or list of references.

The final detail that always indicate popular magazine articles are the glossy photographs and of course … advertising!

After all, the main job of a magazine is to sell itself to the general public.
So, what if you have an article that you got online and you don’t know if it fits the “scholarly” criteria your professor has asked for ...
Let’s look for some specific clues.

The first will be whether you can see an author name and perhaps even his or her affiliations (or basically what degree do they have or where do they work).

Remember real scholars don’t try to hide their credentials. It’s what makes their work authoritative.

Another item to look for on the title page is an Abstract or synopsis of the article. This is a great feature that will allow you to briefly read what the article covers and decide whether it really fits your specific topic.

Another element that you may find in a scholarly article is methodology and data analysis. This is where you can evaluate the content of the research.

The final defining detail for all scholarly sources of information is that they will always provide details about where they got their information. This usually appears at the end of the article.

In this case both a Notes and Reference list are provided.

Thank you for taking the time to watch this video and hopefully you’ve picked up some useful tips for evaluating scholarly articles and always remember ...we’re here to help!