

Scholarly vs. Popular Sources

Scholarly clues	Popular (non-scholarly) clues
Authors who are experts in the discipline, with names and credentials listed	Authors who are staff writers/journalists, names may be listed or not, credentials usually not listed
Articles reviewed by a board of experts in the specific field or discipline	Articles reviewed by staff editors
Bibliographies almost always included	Bibliographies almost never included
Audience is scholars & students in the field	Audience is general public
Publisher is university or association (not for profit)	Publisher usually commercial firm (for profit)
Longer (relative to scope), articles usually 10+ pages	Shorter articles
In-depth	Broad overviews
Use jargon specific to the discipline	Use non-technical, everyday language
Often have a more rigorous format/structure to article (abstract, methodology, results, bib.)	Usually have no specific format/structure
Support text with charts/graphs, statistics that often cannot be understood outside the context of the article	Include charts/graphs, statistics that can often stand alone (do not need to be read in the context of the article)
Writing style is formal/scholarly	Writing style is informal/colloquial
Purpose is to report on original research in order to make the information available to the rest of the scholarly world	Purpose is often to entertain, promote a viewpoint, or sell a product