

How to Identify Scholarly Sources

Your research project should be based primarily on scholarly books and articles in scholarly journals.

How do you find and identify scholarly sources?

How to Identify Scholarly Sources

Scholarly Sources

- Are written by scholars or professionals in the field. Writers are usually allied with universities or government agencies.
- Always cite their sources of information in the form of footnotes or bibliography.
- Give research results, include specialized vocabulary and are aimed at specialized audiences.
- Journal cover and pages tend to be plain in design, with few or no pictures or graphics.
- Are mostly published by professional organizations, associations, scholarly groups or universities and colleges.

How to Identify Scholarly Sources

Furthermore, in Scholarly Sources

- Authors are always named, and their institutional affiliation is given.
- Journal issues are likely to be successively numbered (for example, issue 1 includes pages 1-356, issue 2 has pages 357-585, etc.).
- Articles tend to be long (10-40 pages).
- Journal issues tend to be published less often (monthly, quarterly, semi-annually).
- Are usually found in a library or in a professor's office.
- Examples: Articles in *Journal of American History*, *Journal of Education* or books published by a University Press written by a scholar.

How to Identify Scholarly Books and Articles

Look for the following for scholarly books:

You find the book in a college library

It is written by an expert (often with a Ph.D.)

It has a long title, often with a specialized subtitle (i.e., *William Faulkner: Ideology and the History of the New South*)

It has a works cited list or a bibliography

It has endnotes or footnotes

It is published by a university press

Look for the following for scholarly articles:

You found the article in a scholarly database such as MLA Bibliography

You found the article in an anthology of critical essays

It is written by an expert (often with a Ph.D.)

It has a long title, often with a specialized subtitle

It has a works cited list or a bibliography

It has endnotes or footnotes

It is long (10 or more pages)

It is published in an academic journal

Look for the following for academic journals:

They have long specialized titles and, occasionally, subtitles (i.e. *The Flannery O'Connor Review* or *Signs: A Journal of Feminist Scholarship*)

They are often published by scholarly organizations, schools and institutions

They are published quarterly or bi-annually (have season or month publication dates)

They have volume and issue numbers

They contain long essays (10 or more pages)

-- go to the next page for a grid outlining the differences between scholarly and non-scholarly sources --

Scholarly Sources	Non-Scholarly Sources
Are written by scholars or professionals in the field. Writers are usually allied with universities or government agencies.	Are written by professional writers (often journalists) who are not experts in the field under consideration.
Always cite their sources of information in the form of footnotes or bibliography.	Rarely provide footnotes or bibliographic citations about the sources of information.
Give research results, include specialized vocabulary and are aimed at specialized audiences.	Simply report events or opinions and are aimed at a general audience. They usually rely on very basic vocabularies.
Journal cover and pages tend to be plain in design, with few or no pictures or graphics.	Tend to be highly pictorial. Magazines accept advertising.
Are mostly published by professional organizations, associations, scholarly groups or universities and colleges.	Are generally published for profit. May be intended as a vehicle of opinion: political, moral, or ethnic.
Authors are always named, and their institutional affiliation is given.	Authors may be anonymous.
Journal issues are likely to be successively numbered (for example, issue 1 includes pages 1-356, issue 2 has pages 357-585, etc.)	Magazine issues are likely to begin with page 1.
Articles tend to be long (10-40 pages).	Articles tend to be short, some only 1-2 pages.
Journal issues tend to be published less often (monthly, quarterly, semi-annually).	Magazine issues tend to be published more frequently (monthly, weekly, daily).
Are usually found in a library or in a professor's office.	Can be found at any bookstore or convenience store.
Examples: Articles in <i>Journal of American History</i> , <i>Journal of Educational Psychology</i> or books published by a University Press written by a scholar with footnotes.	Examples: Articles in <i>Newsweek</i> , <i>National Review</i> or books published by Scribner written by a journalist or professional writer without footnotes.