

How to Choose Scholarly Sources

Why Should I Use Scholarly Sources?

- When conducting research, you want to use resources that are authoritative and credible.
- You will get the most accurate and current information from scholarly sources.
- By using scholarly sources, you will improve the quality of your paper.
- Use of scholarly sources is expected in academic course work.

Scholarly vs. Non-Scholarly Sources

Scholarly sources (also known as academic, peer-reviewed, or refereed sources) are written by experts in a particular field. These sources keep others who are interested in that field up-to-date on the most recent research, findings, and news. Sources are cited in one of the official scholarly styles (APA, MLA, etc.) and there is a reference or bibliography page. Scholarly sources will provide the most accurate information for your research paper.

What is Peer-Review?

Peer-reviewed is a type of scholarly source. When a source has been peer-reviewed, it has undergone the review and scrutiny of a review board of colleagues in the author's field. They evaluate this source and make recommendations regarding its publication in a journal, revisions prior to publication, or, in some cases, reject its publication.

Examples of scholarly sources:

- JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association
- The Journal of Military History

Non-scholarly sources are easy to identify because they often have these common features:

- Advertising and/or glossy photos and are more visually entertaining
- Articles are **NOT** peer-reviewed
- Articles may be written by a variety of staff members, **NOT** by scholars in that particular field of study
- Articles focus on providing information to a broad and general audience
- Usually produced by commercial publishers
- No references/citations are provided

Examples of Non-Scholarly sources (Periodicals/Journals/Magazines):

- Forbes
- National Geographic
- TIME

