Journals and magazines are important sources for up-to-date information in all disciplines. The Library provides access to a large collection of journals, both in print and electronic formats.

Faculty often request that their students use scholarly journals in their research. It is important to be able to ascertain scholarly journals from popular press ones. The following guide will help you identify whether a journal is scholarly or not.

**Distinguishing Scholarly Journals from other Periodicals**

**Finding Articles on a Topic**

The best way to find articles on a certain topic is to use an article database (also known as a periodical index).

1. **Selecting an Index / Database**

   To identify relevant indexes / databases, go to:

   - **Research by Subject**: To find out what databases are recommended for your subject area, check the subject guides prepared by librarians, which are available under the “How-to & Help” menu.
   - **Articles**: Find an article index by selecting a subject, browsing an alphabetical list, or entering a specific journal index name (“Find Information” menu, Databases).
   - **Ask a Librarian**: Staff at the research help desk can help you find the right index(es) or database(s) for your topic (“Locations & Hours” menu, Contact Us).

   NOTE: If you are off campus, you will need to login using your Queen’s NetID.

   When selecting a database, also consider:

   - **Date Range**: The date coverage varies with each database. For older material you may also need to use a print index.

   - **Geographic Area**: The geographical area covered by each database varies.

   - **Format**: Some databases include the full text of the article online; others may only provide a reference to an article.
2. Searching an Index / Database

Before searching, think about your topic and identify key terms. Break your topic down into key concepts and consider synonyms, alternate spellings and related terms. Also consider narrower or broader keywords.

For information on how to develop an effective search strategy, check out University of Saskatchewan's guide.

3. Understanding Citations

A citation is the information you need to find the article in the Library or to request a copy from another library. Citations give you the title, author, journal title, volume and pages. Here is a sample of a journal citation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title of article</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midgley, Clare.</td>
<td>&quot;Anti-slavery and Feminism in Nineteenth-century Britain.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender &amp; History 5, no. 3 (1993): 343-362.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal title</td>
<td>Vol. &amp; Iss.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Finding Specific Articles

In order to find specific articles, you will need to first determine if the Library owns the journals, in which the articles are contained.

**Full Text Available in the Database:** GetIt@Queens

- Many of our article indexes and databases provide the "Get It! @ Queen's" button for instant access to online copies of journal articles. There may also be a link to a PDF or other full text format.

- To access article indexes and databases or to download full text journal articles from home, go to Off-Campus Access.

- If there is no "Get It! @ Queen's" button or if you are prompted to find a print copy of an article, you can search QCAT to find the item.
Full Text Not Available in the Database:

Sometimes, the article you find in a database is not available full text right in the database and you will have to check if Queen's Library subscribes to the journal you need.

In order to check whether the Library has a particular journal or newspaper and whether it is available in print, on microfilm or online, you will have to search in the library catalogue, QCAT.

Click the Journals A-Z tab on the library home page and enter the title of the journal or directly go to the library catalogue.

For most journals, magazines or newspapers, search QCAT by Journal Title. If the journal title is a common one, such as 'Review', 'Annual Report', or 'Annals', you can also search by name of the issuing body (e.g. the name of a corporation, government department, association or conference). e.g. American Academy of Political and Social Science.

For example, we will search QCAT by journal title exact, Developmental Psychology.

Two results are found - the print and electronic versions. Check the Holdings Information to see if the Library holds the year and/or the volume of the journal you need. If the journal is in print, you will need to write down the call number for the journal and note the location. Bound journals are shelved by call number on the second floor; unbound journals are alphabetically shelved on the second floor in Current Periodicals.

You can also use the article look-up form on the Articles page (go to Search—Types of Information) to find specific articles when you already have the citation. To do this, click on the link, Citation Linker: Find Journal Articles by Citation.

NOTE:
If the Library does not own the journal you need in either print or electronic format, you may wish to request an interlibrary loan via Racer.

Citing Journal Content

- To avoid plagiarism, you must properly cite resources you used in preparing your assignment. Check if your department, professor, or TA has a preferred style.
- Consult the appropriate style guide by going to Help & Services and clicking on Citing Sources.
- There are citation managers available. Check our guide for information.