Differentiating Between Types of Sources
When doing research, it’s important to know what type of source you are reading.

For example, your instructor may want you to cite only peer-reviewed journals.

And certain APA Style formatting rules apply to one type of source, but not another.
But determining the type of source can sometimes be confusing.
In this video, we’ll look at some types of sources that are commonly confused.
Academic Journals, Magazines, and Trade Journals
Academic journals are sometimes also called scholarly journals, refereed journals, or peer-reviewed journals.
Magazines are publications that contain articles and usually specialize in a certain area of interest, such as current events or gardening.
Trade journals are a specific type of magazine aimed at people working in a particular trade or career field.
Academic journals are often confused with magazines and trade journals because they have some things in common.

They all contain articles, are usually published on a regular schedule, and are usually divided into volumes and issues.
Let’s take a look at how they differ.
Authors:

- **Academic Journals**: Researchers and academics
- **Magazines**: Staff writers and journalists
- **Trade Journals**: Staff writers and people working in that career field
Audience:

- **Academic Journals**
  - Researchers

- **Magazines**
  - General Audience

- **Trade Journals**
  - People working in a specific career field
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Journals</th>
<th>Magazines</th>
<th>Trade Journals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To advance knowledge in the area of study. Examples of common types of articles are case studies, experiments, and literature reviews.</td>
<td>To inform a general audience about topics such as current events, trends, and other items of interest.</td>
<td>To inform people in a career field about topics important to that field, such as current events, new technology, and trends.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reviewers:

- **Academic Journals**: Experts in the field of study
- **Magazines**: Editors
- **Trade Journals**: Editors
# Pictures and Graphics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Journals</th>
<th>Magazines</th>
<th>Trade Journals</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Few if any. Usually charts and graphs.</td>
<td>Usually has many colorful photos and illustrations.</td>
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</table>
Advertisements:

- Academic Journals: Few, if any.
- Magazines: Many
- Trade Journals: Many
Article Length:

- Academic Journals: Long, in-depth articles
- Magazines: Short articles – a few paragraphs to a few pages
- Trade Journals: Short articles – a few paragraphs to a few pages
Vocabulary:

- **Academic Journals**: Uses highly technical language for scholars.
- **Magazines**: Uses vocabulary written at the level of 8th grade to college graduate. Not very technical.
- **Trade Journals**: Uses some technical terms and jargon specific to the field.
APA References

Remember how we said the type of source can affect your APA references? Here’s an example using two print articles. The differences are highlighted in red.
Academic Journal:

Magazine:

A more specific date is given for the magazine article and a DOI number is usually given for the academic journal article.
Newspapers and Newsletters

Newspapers

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

THE GRAND RAPIDS PRESS

The New York Times

Newsletters

Focus

Backstage
Newspapers and newsletters are two types of sources that are also often confused.

Newsletters are publications written by groups such as professional associations or civic organizations.

Both feature short articles written in easy-to-understand language.
Let’s take a look at how they differ.
Authors:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Newspapers</th>
<th>Newsletters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authors can be staff writers at the newspaper, or from a news cooperative such as The Associated Press (when the newspaper uses one of the cooperative's articles).</td>
<td>Authors are people who work for the organization.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
**Audience:**

<table>
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<th>Newsletters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articles are written for a general audience. Some, but not all, newspapers are written for people living in a certain geographic area.</td>
<td>Articles are written for people affiliated with the organization.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Topics Covered:

<table>
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<th>Newsletters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articles can cover a wide variety of topics. Many newspapers are divided into sections such as World News, Local News, Sports, and Arts.</td>
<td>Newsletters only feature items of interest to the organization, such as upcoming events and interviews with key people.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APA References

Here is another example of how the type of source can affect the APA reference. Here we have a newspaper article and a newsletter article, both accessed online. Differences are highlighted in red.
Newspaper:


Newsletter:


For the newspaper, we give the url of the paper’s homepage, while for the newsletter, we provide the exact url.
For more information on formatting your references using APA style, check out the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 
Thank you for watching!

If you have questions, please contact us:

http://libanswers.davenport.edu       Text: 616-504-1696