

How to Determine if a Journal is Peer Reviewed

When scholars submit their papers for publication in academic journals, those papers undergo a process called *peer review*. During the process of peer review, papers are read and examined by experts in the field of study and those experts make recommendations about whether a particular paper should be published in an academic journal. Once a paper passes scholarly and editorial scrutiny that paper is published and it can be read by the wider academic community.

Alternative terms for peer review are: *academic journals, blind review, juried, refereed, or scholarly journals.*

BEGINNING OF YOUR SEARCH

When searching for articles in a database such as *Academic Search Premier, CINAHL, or Health and Wellness Resource Center*, use the check box option to limit your search to peer reviewed journals.

DURING YOUR SEARCH

Step 1: Check either the *List of Periodicals* booklet in the library or search the catalogue (<http://darius.uleth.ca/search~S2>) by *Periodical Title* to determine whether or not the library subscribes to the journal in question.

Step 2: If you have a paper copy of the journal:

- ~ Check the publication's information page(s) for the words "peer reviewed", "refereed", or "blind review," etc. These information pages will be located near the front of the journal and are usually in smaller print. "Peer reviewed" may also be mentioned in a section for authors, which is often at the back of the journal.

Examples:

Orthopaedic Nursing is a refereed journal; all manuscripts submitted undergo review by the Editor and blind reviews by three reviewers from the Editorial Board and/or Manuscript Review Panel.

THE REVIEW PROCESS

A postcard acknowledging receipt of manuscripts can be expected by the primary author. Scoring guides used by the reviewers for clinical and research manuscripts are available from the editors upon request.

This is a refereed journal.

Manuscripts that have been revised one or more times will be reviewed by the original reviewing team to ensure consistency.

The JOURNAL invites for consideration manuscripts from individuals or groups active in teaching or research. All manuscripts considered go through the classic peer review procedure common to the most respected professional journals. Your anonymous peers approve or disapprove your manuscripts based on merit and clarity of presentation. This process, we believe, reinforces not only the integrity of the JOURNAL, but also your professional knowledge. The ideas and opinions expressed in the *Journal of Nursing Education* do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, the editorial board, or the publisher. The acceptance of advertising in no way implies endorsement by the editor, the editorial board, or the publisher.

If you were unable to find the words "peer reviewed" and the publication looks like it might be peer reviewed, always double check using the following method.

IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A PAPER COPY OF THE JOURNAL

SERIALS DIRECTORY

1. At the library home page (<http://www.mhc.ab.ca/library>), select *Journal, Magazine, and Newspaper Articles*
2. Select: *Information About Periodicals*
3. Select the "Connect to Database" to access the *Serials Directory*.
4. Type in the title of the journal.
5. Select the title of the journal from the results and scan the record for: "Peer Reviewed: Yes."
6. If the journal you are looking for is not listed in *The Serials Directory*, use an Internet search engine (Google, Yahoo, etc.) to search for the journal's website. It is advisable to do this as a means of verifying the *Serials Directory's* content.

SEARCH ENGINE/PUBLISHER SITE

1. Navigate to your favourite search engine (e.g., Bing, Google, Yahoo, etc.)
2. In the search box, type the name of the journal (e.g., "Journal of Gerontological Nursing")
3. Select the applicable Web site
4. Look for the words "peer reviewed" (or one of its variants) in the information about the journal or information for authors section.

ADDITIONAL TIPS

- ~ If an article does not have references at the end of the article, it is not peer reviewed. If it does have references, it may be peer reviewed. Search for proof that it is peer reviewed by using the aforementioned methods.
- ~ An article may not be suitable to use even if it is from a peer reviewed journal. For example, it may be an editorial, book review, or letter to the editor. Peer review only applies to longer articles with references.
- ~ Check with your instructor if there is an article you would like to use and you have not been able to determine whether it is peer reviewed.