# HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT JOURNAL FOR PUBLISHING

## A Complete Guide

- THE IMPORTANCE OF JOURNALS
- WHY FIND THE RIGHT JOURNAL?
- TOOLS TO FIND THE RIGHT JOURNAL

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Dear Reader,

Greetings from Enago Academy!

As you may be aware, the number of studies getting published in international peer-reviewed journals and the number of journals, both continue to increase every year. It thus becomes imperative to find the right journal to communicate your research breakthroughs to the target audience to improve its impact. This ebook provides step-by-step guidelines and important tips to help you find the appropriate journal for your manuscript. We cover topics ranging from journal/article types to citation metrics and provide insightful tips for identifying predatory journals. Towards the end, you will also find a list of authentic e-resources. It would be our pleasure to help you with your publishing requirements. Please make it a point to visit enago.com/academy for further help. We have posted 1,000+ original articles on this knowledge e-platform.

Happy reading!

Regards,

The Enago Academy Team

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# WHY PUBLISH?

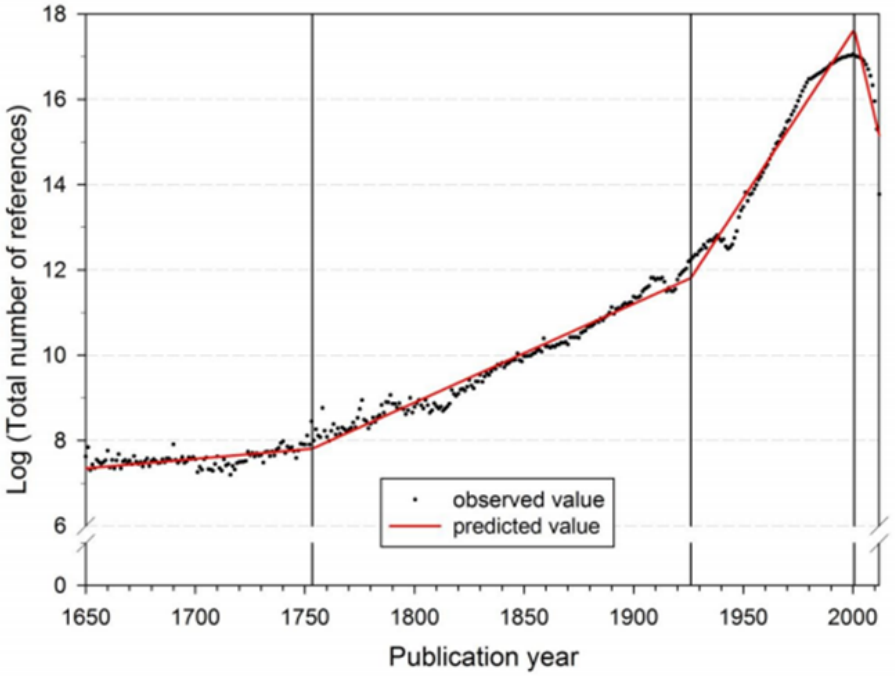
Research outcomes become relevant when shared and communicated within and outside the scientific community. This not only prevents work duplication but also encourages other researchers to work on the existing gap areas. Researchers often share their findings [1] to:

- Maximise the impact of research by disseminating information to the target audience
- Advance academic/research career
- Seek opportunities to collaborate on international projects
- Increase the odds of getting extramural funding
- Assess 'research quality'
- Validate findings and receive feedback
- Receive recognition for ideas/innovation
- Archive research outcomes permanently in the public domain

## Growth in Scientific Output and Journals

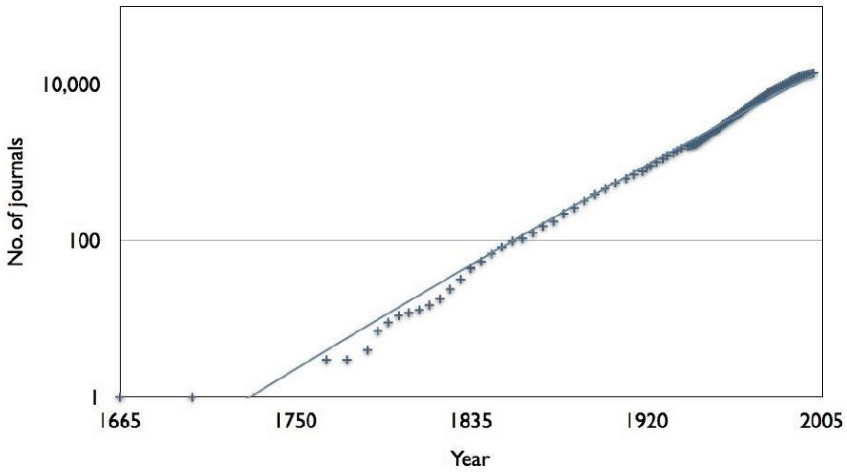
Peer-reviewed journals are one of the most important means for communicating and disseminating research. The history of scholarly publication dates back to 1665 when *Journal des Sçavans* and *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* began publishing. Since then, the growth in scientific output and the increase in the number of journals have been tremendous. A study conducted in 2014 concluded that the growth in science was about 1% in the mid-18$^{th}$ century, 2–3% during World War I & II, and 8–9% in 2012, thus, indicating that scientific output doubles every 9 years [2].






**Annual Growth in the Number of Cited References (1650–2012)** (Van Noorden R. Global scientific output doubles every nine years: News blog [Internet]. Blogs.nature.com. 2014 [cited 31 July 2017]. Available from: http://blogs.nature.com/news/2014/05/global-scientific-output-doubles-every-nine-years.html)

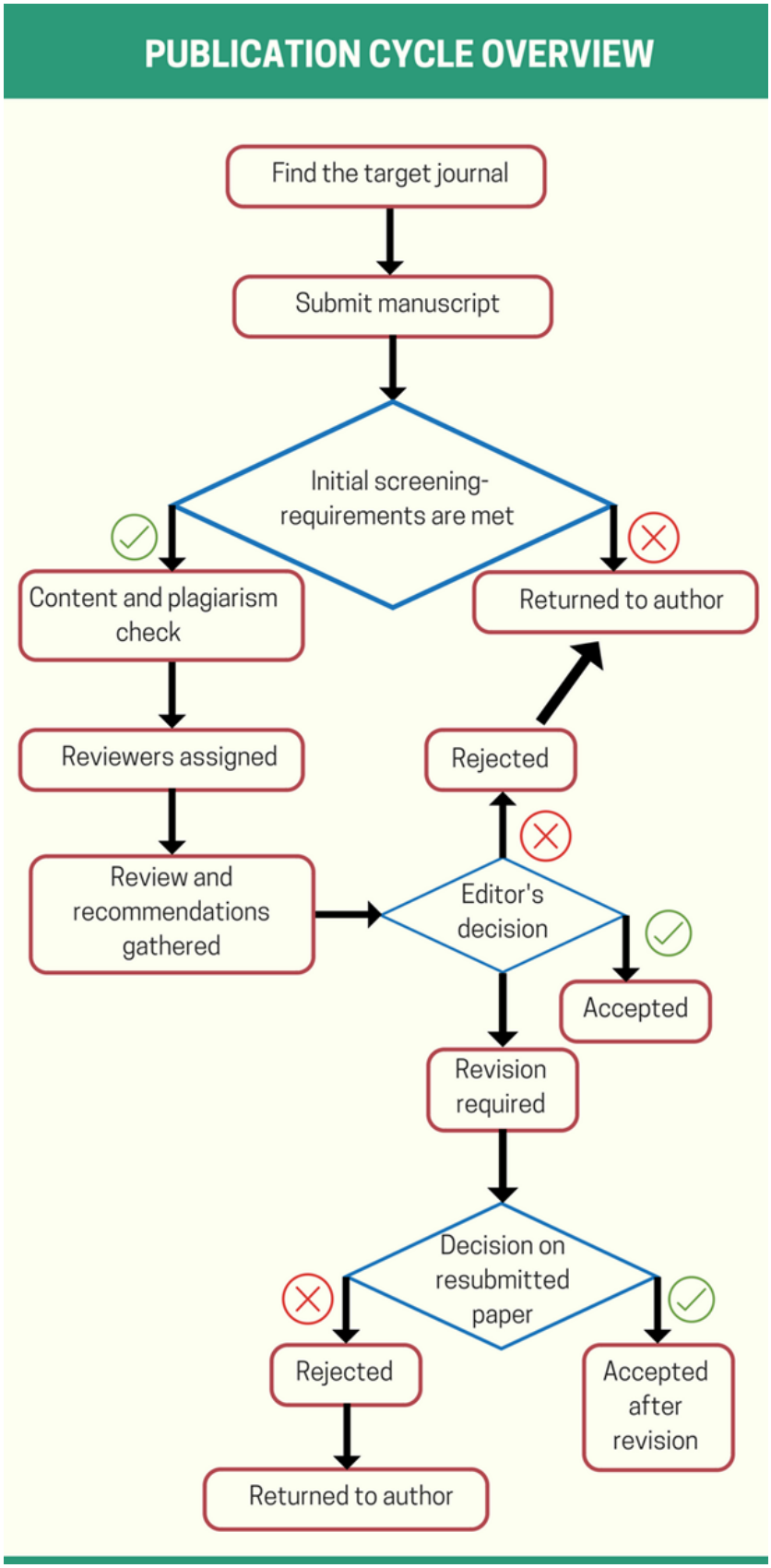
Interestingly, less than 1% of the scientists are able to publish their work every year [3]. A study analyzed the data of 15 million scientists who published their work between 1996 and 2015 and found that over 150,000 scientists were most prolific (and were part of the list of authors) in 41% of the publications [3].




**Growth in the Number of Journals** (Ware M, Mabe M. The STM Report. An overview of scientific and scholarly journal publishing [Internet]. 2015 [cited 20 July 2017]. Available from: http://www.stm-assoc.org/2015_02_20_STM_Report_2015.pdf)

It was estimated that there were over 28,000 English language and more than 6,000 non-English language peer-reviewed journals in late 2014. The number of journals has consistently increased over the last two centuries, at the rate of 3.5% per year [4].




PUBLICATION CYCLE OVERVIEW
Find the target journal
Submit manuscript
Initial screening- requirements are met
Content and plagiarism check
Returned to author
Reviewers assigned
Rejected
Review and recommendations gathered
Editor's decision
Accepted
Revision required
Decision on resubmitted paper
Rejected
Accepted after revision
Returned to author



# IMPORTANCE OF JOURNALS

Research journals are one of the prominent means for disseminating information. Scientific innovations and advancements are regularly shared with researchers, industry experts, policy makers and society as a whole. Journals help in [5]:

- Maintaining the intellectual output of a researcher by giving appropriate recognition
- Archiving and preserving the reviewed and accepted research results
- Facilitating communication in the scientific community
- Validating the research output through a peer-review process
- Expediting knowledge dissemination

## Types of Journals

Journals can be broadly classified as follows:

- **General or all-purpose journals** contain elements of important social, political, and economic issues. They are usually designed for a broad audience.
- **Review journals** contain the current state of knowledge or practice in a particular field. They provide background information to those who want an overview on the status in a field.
- **Research journals** are predominantly devoted to reporting original Investigations, including research in the basic sciences. They are usually read by subject experts.
- **Clinical or practice journals** primarily document the state of current practice. This is done through the publication of case reports, discussions, commentaries, etc.



# Types of Articles

The nature of the research and the protocol followed directly influences the format of the manuscript. The articles can be of the following types [6]:

- Original Research: Well-rounded studies that clearly advance prior knowledge on a specific topic
- Case Reports: Reports featuring a specific anonymous patient presenting an unusual disease, treatment, or drug interaction
- Reviews: Scholarly investigations of published research
- Perspectives: Personal opinions/ narratives on a specific topic
- Analyses: In-depth analyses of new policies or medical advances
- Symposia Pieces: Summaries of conferences or symposium presentations
- Book Reviews: Assessments of newly published books
- Profiles: Information on notable people in the field
- Interviews: Transcripts of the interviews or a personal reflection
- Focus Topic Articles: Articles under a specific topic/section featured in one edition

Original research articles can be further subdivided into two categories:

- Argumentative – author takes a declarative stance in the presentation of research.
- Analytical – rather than taking a clear position, author presents the research in the form of a question.



## Structure of a Research Paper

- Title: A clear and precise one-line description that grabs attention
- Authors names: This section identifies the first author, co-authors, and the corresponding author
- Affiliations: Official university/institutional address of each author (and contact details for the corresponding author)
- Abstract: Short summary of the manuscript's primary focus area (permitted word counts generally vary from 100 to 300 words)
- Graphical Abstract (requested by many journals): A visual summary of the central theme of the manuscript
- Introduction: Reveals the main problem under investigation
- Materials & Methods: The resources and procedures used to address the problem
- Results: A summary of findings
- Discussion: An interpretation of the findings
- Acknowledgment (if any): Credit people/institutions contributing to the study
- References: List the relevant sources



# WHY FIND THE RIGHT JOURNAL?

A paper can be rejected by a journal because of several reasons. The ratio of submitted to published manuscripts is large, especially for top-tier journals. The most common reasons for journal rejection are outlined below [7]:

- Article content not within the scope of the journal
- Non-conformity with the journal style, format, or guidelines
- Duplication or large overlap with existing work or apparent plagiarism
- Results not novel or significant enough; they lead to only an incremental advance in the field
- Article covers information superficially
- Topic not of interest to the journal's target audience
- Poor quality of research
- Results or interpretation are too preliminary or speculative
- Lack of clarity in the overall presentation

The following may occur in the above cases:

- Acceptance with minor revisions: author(s) expected to reorganize, rewrite parts for clarity, add or correct specific points as directed by the referees
- Acceptance after major revisions: author(s) expected to re-organize the paper, re-calculate data, and write for a different audience or from a different viewpoint.
- Rejection with an invitation to re-submit: author(s) expected to completely re-write the manuscript (or perform additional experiments) based on the referee suggestions prior to re-submission.
- Outright rejection: manuscript not suitable for the journal because of some major methodological error that renders it unpublishable.



# 6 TIPS TO AVOID JOURNAL REJECTION


## 1. CHOICE OF JOURNAL

- Make sure that your manuscript is within the **scope of the journal** and its target audience.
- **Seek advice** from senior researchers before shortlisting a journal.
- Always submit to **one journal at a time** and never re-submit to the same journal if rejected.

## 2. FOLLOWING AUTHOR GUIDELINES


- **Adhere to all instructions** in the journal guidelines & highlight the key points.
- Prepare a checklist and **check all the points** before submission.
- **Hire a science editor** to help you out with these instructions if you lack time.

## 3. AVOIDING DUPLICATION & PLAGIARISM


- Always acknowledge sources through **proper referencing**.
- **Avoid paraphrasing** content from a source.
- Use a **plagiarism detection tool** to check for any inadvertent plagiarism in your manuscript.

## 4. SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

- Publish only **significant or new findings**.
- Clearly **highlight the novel properties** of your research to justify publication.
- **Choose a low impact journal** if results are insignificant.

## 5. TECHNICAL FLAWS

- **Avoid discrepancies** between the Abstract and manuscript.
- Ensure that the Results and Conclusions **answer the study question**.
- Ask all authors to **check the manuscript at least twice** for inaccuracies.
- Have your paper edited by a **professional editing service** to improve its overall quality.

## 6. ADDRESS ETHICAL CONCERNS


- Agree on authorship before writing the manuscript and ensure all authors **meet the authorship criteria**.
- Disclose all potential **conflicts of interest** in the manuscript and to the journal editor.
- **Adhere to the ethical guidelines** and indicate that the study has proper approvals.



# HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT JOURNAL?

The process of selecting the appropriate journal has become increasingly complex because of the proliferation of journals, areas of specialization, and emergence of interdisciplinary topics. Authors have to optimize several criteria and overcome constraints before reaching a decision about where to publish.

## Step 1: List the Fields of Study and Related Subjects

The first step in selecting a journal is to consider as many fields of study as possible that relate to your manuscript. Try to create a list of at least five fields of study that overlap with the proposed manuscript's content. Think broadly at this stage; the journal choices can be narrowed down later.

For instance, a sample list for a Physics researcher could be as follows:

Research Topic: Fabrication of carbon nanotubes

- Subject 1: Nanotechnology
- Subject 2: Materials Science
- Subject 3: Applied Physics
- Subject 4: Physical Chemistry
- Subject 5: Biomedical Engineering

## Step 2: Find Journals Related to the Listed Fields/ Subjects

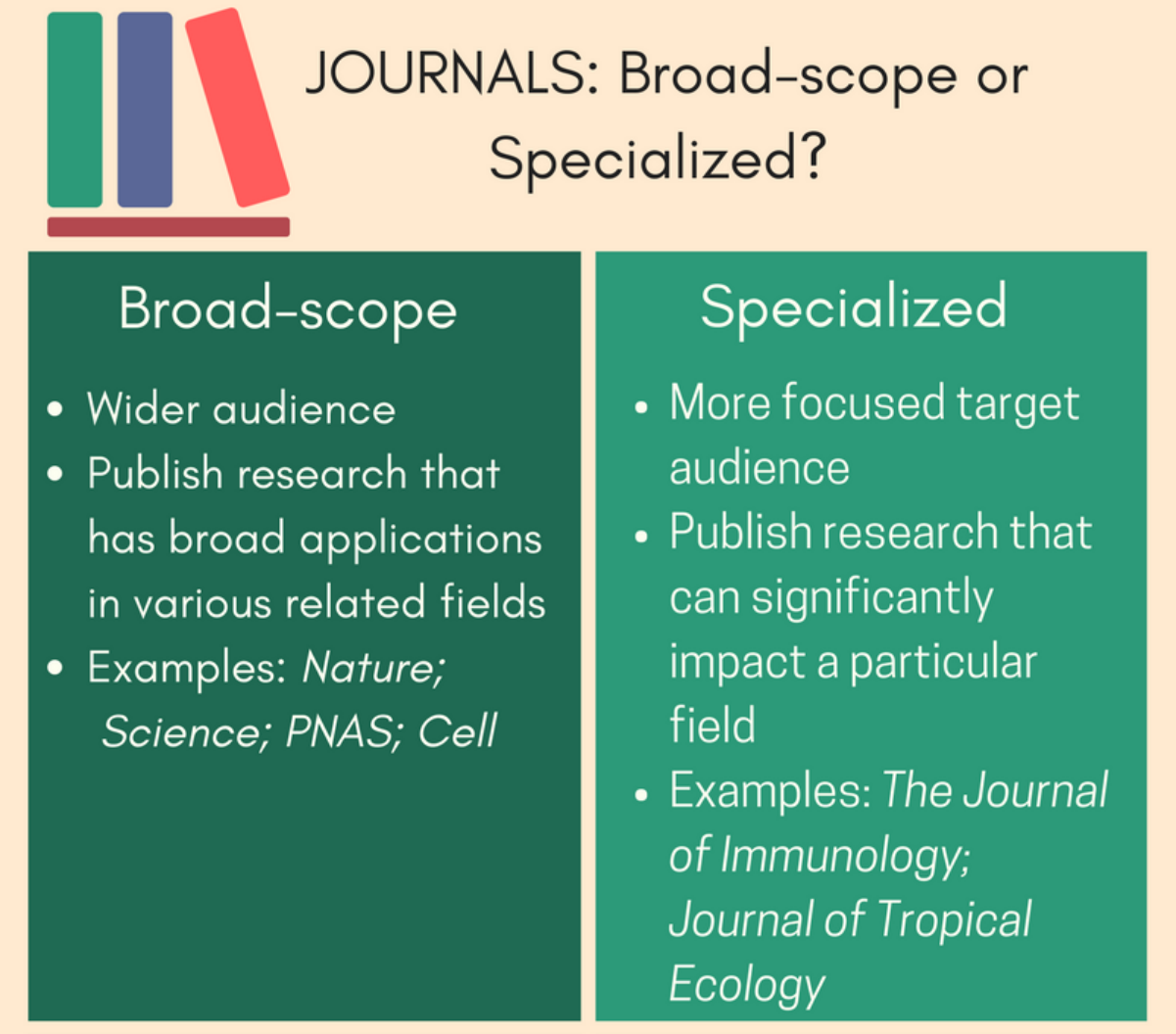
Once you have listed the fields of study that overlap with the manuscript's content, consult online resources, a university librarian, and/or professionals in the fields to identify the journals that are published in each field. The reference list from your thesis may also provide clues to journals that publish in these topic areas. At this point, you should also consider the stated purpose of the journal.



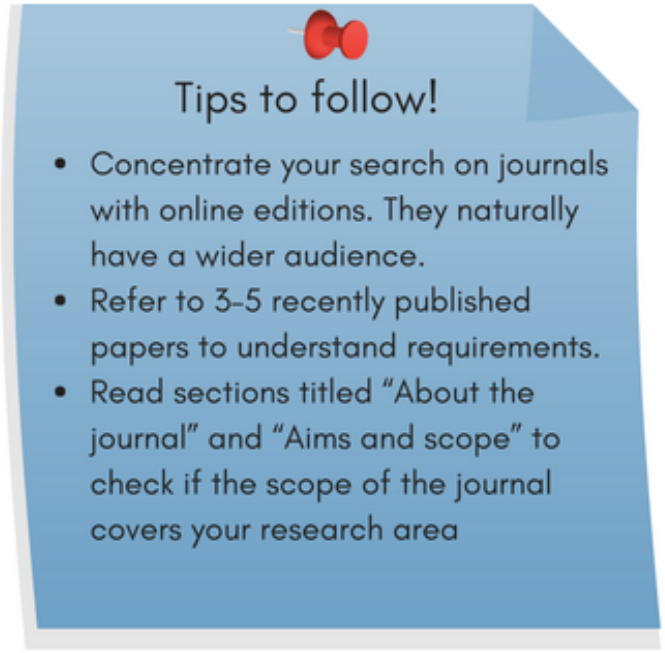
For instance, a sample list for a Physics researcher could be as follows:

- General or all-purpose journals: *Nature*, *Science*
- Review journals: *Review of Modern Physics*, *Applied Physics Reviews*
- Research journals: *Nano Letters*, *Advanced Materials*

Revisiting the different types of journals listed in the above section can help you optimize your publication strategy. Matching the scopes and aims of your manuscript to those of the journal becomes important here. One of the factors that influence the scope of the journal is identifying if the journal falls in a 'broad scope' or 'specialized' category.





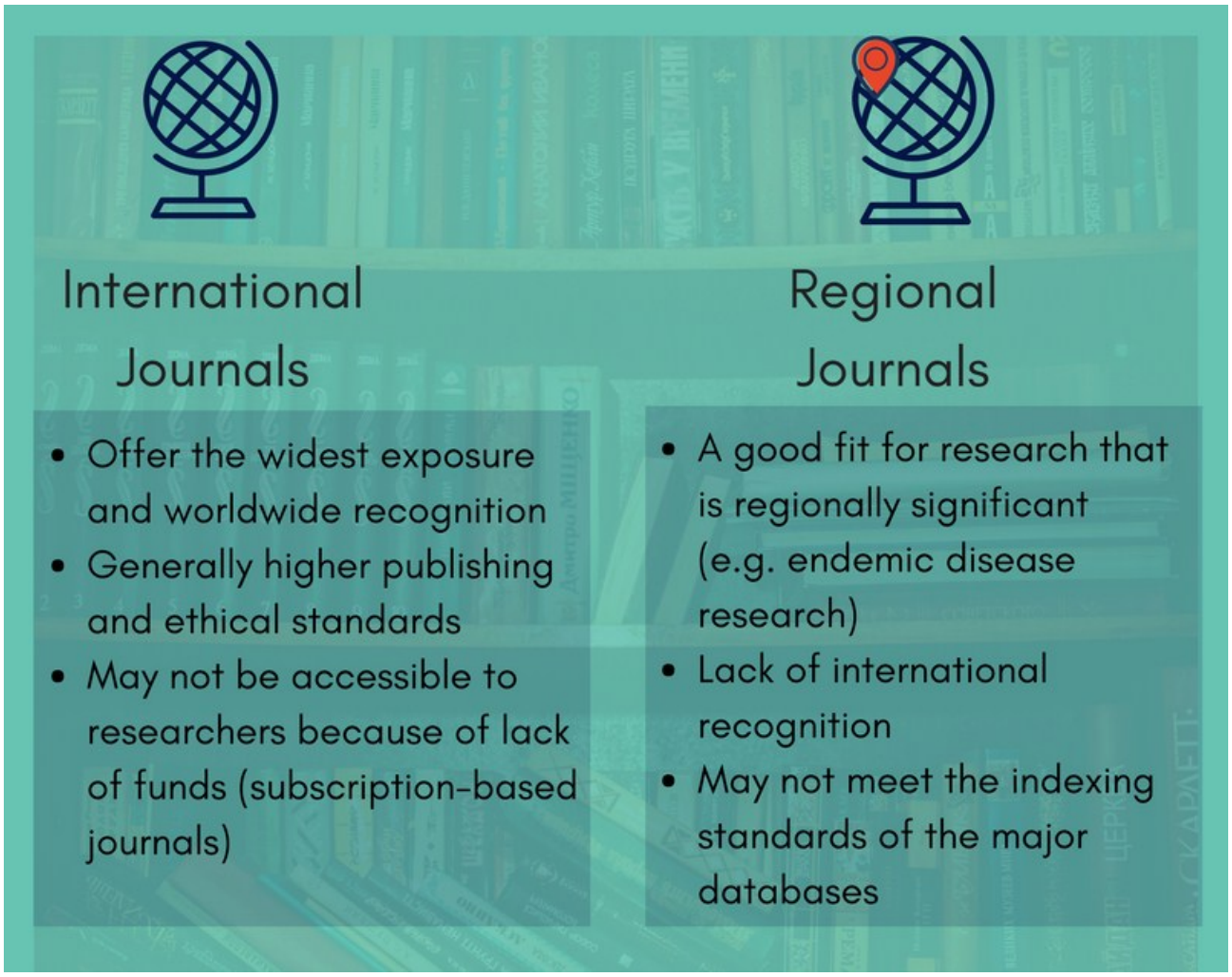




## Step 3: List and Compare Journal Characteristics and Competitive Factors

**Content and coverage**: Scientific journals publish numerous types of articles, including original articles, review articles, letters to the editor, editorials, news reports, commentaries, brief/short communications, and case reports as discussed in the above section. Research articles are the most common types of articles published in medical journals. Journals reporting original research are more likely to report unique contributions to a field and are, therefore, selected more often than those containing only case reports.

**Readership/accessibility:** International peer-reviewed journals attract a wider readership than regional journals. English is the mostly widely and commonly used language for scientific communication. Therefore, journals that are more important to the international research community will publish only in English. This is especially true for fields such as natural sciences. Most regional journals have now started to publish abstracts in English.






Moreover, open access (OA) journals provide higher visibility, wider audience, and increased discoverability and impact, leading to higher citation rates.

OA refers to the digital online content (journal articles, reviews, conference proceedings, or monographs) that is free from paywall (subscription and/or licensing fees) and permission (copyright and/or licensing agreements) barriers. OA journals can follow gold-no APC, gold-APC, gold-hybrid, or green (self-archiving) business model–depending on how and when they content is made open for public dissemination.



# Open Access Types

## GOLD

**OUTLET**

Final publisher version of the articles is made open

**FEES**

APC may apply

**ACCESSIBILITY**

Article becomes OA with-out any embargo period

**VARIANTS**

**Hybrid:** Final publisher version of the articles in a subscription-based journal are made OA immediately after APC or off-setting agreement
**APC:** Final publisher version of the articles are made OA after APC; no subscription model
**No-APC:** Final version of the articles published in fully open-access journals which do not charge an APC

## GREEN

**OUTLET**

Authors self-archive articles (not final version) in an institutional or subject repository

**FEES**

No fees/charges are applicable

**ACCESSIBILITY**

Article can be subject to embargo period by publisher

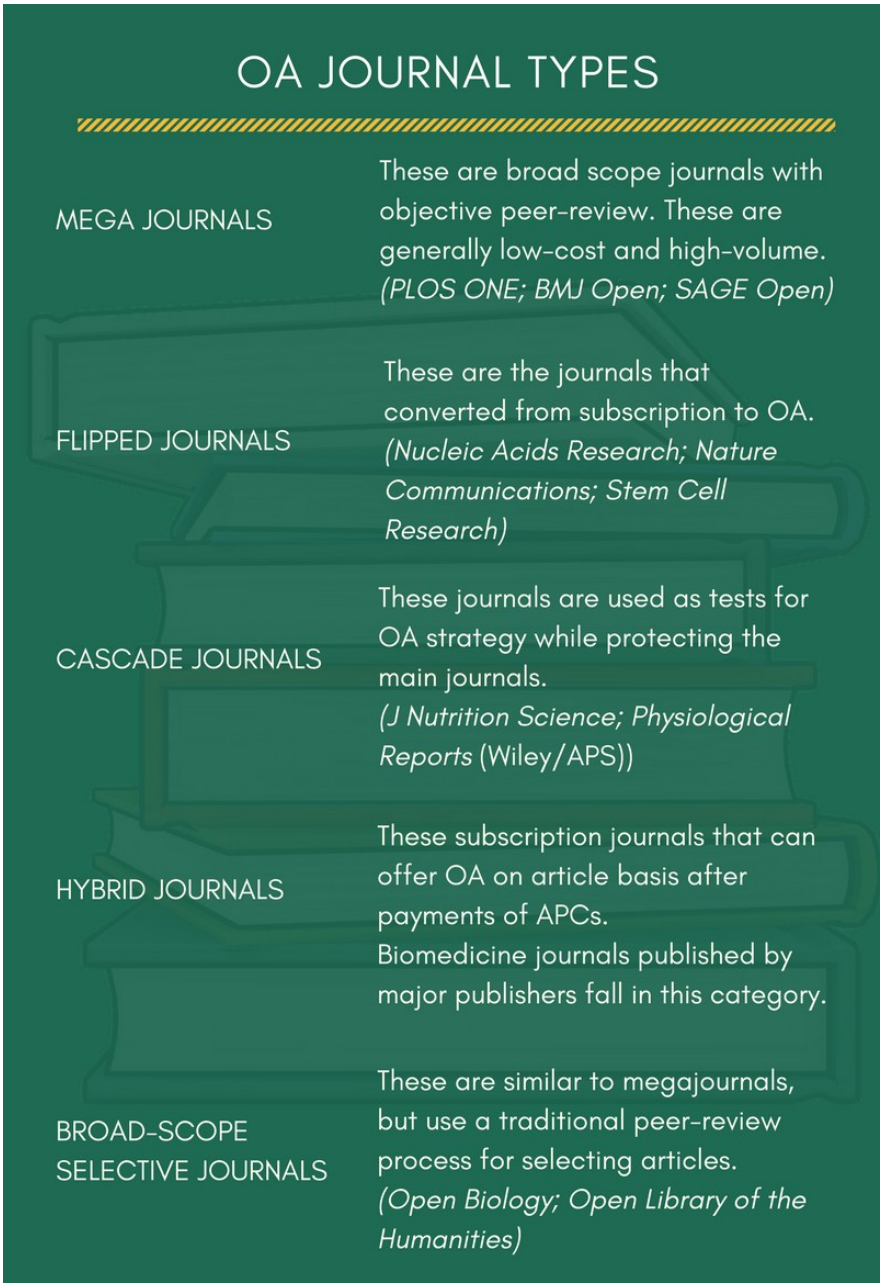
**VARIANTS**

**Pre-print:** Author's copy of the article before peer-review
**Post-print:** Author's copy of the article after peer-review and before formatting by publisher

In addition, publishers publish different types of OA journals based on the above business models.



These options are publisher-specific and authors can choose appropriately (please refer to the infographic below).




**Publication lag time and frequency of publication:** Different journals have different lag times for acceptance (from the date of submission) and publication (from acceptance to print). This depends on the submission format and publication frequency For example, rapid communications are published faster than original research or review articles.