# What is a journal? By Joanne Farmer [Video Transcript]

Journals are publications that are produced on a frequent basis for instance weekly or quarterly. They may be in print format or electronic format.

Each publication is divided into volumes and sub-divided into issues or parts. The number of issues produced each year will vary from title to title.

Journals contain articles, written by different authors on topics relating to the theme of the journal.

## Why use journals?

You will be expected to use journals in university because the information they contain is more up to date than books. They also contain specialised information and are widely preferred in the academic environment.

## Types of journals.

There are two main types of journals and it is important to be aware of the differences when you are searching for information.

Sometimes you’ll need theory to support your arguments and other times you will need practical evidence.

**Academic or scholarly journals:** written by academics, contain theory and research peer-reviewed articles, lengthy articles, references.

Academic or scholarly journals are comprised of articles that are written by academics or researchers in universities, these cover theory and research and these articles are often referred to as peer reviewed because they are evaluated before they get published. The articles themselves tend to be quite long usually more than five pages and they will have references at the end.

**Practitioner or trade journals**: written by practitioners, current practice and thinking, short articles, few or no references.

Practitioner or trade journals on the other hand are sometimes referred to as magazines. The articles in these publications are written by practitioners in the field that the journal is concerned with. These journals cover current practice and thinking. The articles tend to be very short, typically less than five pages, and they will have few, if any, references at the end.

## Where to find journals?

You’ll find a small collection of print journals on the ground floor of the Learning Hub and these are filed alphabetically by title. You can also search online via NELSON or use specific databases such as Emerald or Science Direct, these can be accessed from the a-z list of databases linked from the NELSON homepage.

And, finally don’t forget to look at our other videos on the Skills Hub for more information.