How to recognize peer-reviewed (refereed) journals

Three categories of information resources:

• Newspapers and magazines containing news – Articles are written by reporters who may or may not be experts in the field of the article. Consequently, articles may contain incorrect information.

• Journals containing articles written by academics and/or professionals – Although the articles are written by “experts,” any particular “expert” may have some ideas that are really “out there!”

• Peer-reviewed (refereed or scholarly) journals – Articles are written by experts and are reviewed by several other experts in the field before the article is published in the journal in order to insure the article’s quality. (The article is more likely to be scientifically valid, reach reasonable conclusions, etc.) In most cases the reviewers do not know who the author of the article is, so that the article succeeds or fall on its own merit, not the reputation of the expert.

Questions:

Is it scholarly, using technical terminology? Does the article format approximate the following – abstract, literature review, methodology, results, conclusion, and references? Are the articles written by scholarly researchers in the field that the periodical pertains to? Is advertising non-existent, or kept to a minimum? Are there references listed in footnotes or bibliographies? If you answered yes to all these questions, the journal may very well be peer reviewed.