

How to Read a Scholarly Article

Academic research involves a lot of reading.

It can feel overwhelming!

Luckily, there are strategies you can use to read scholarly articles more efficiently!

You should aim to read each article twice, focusing on different aspect each time.

That's right – you can read less, and learn more.

To start, read the IMRD!

That's the introduction, method, results, and discussion.

Many scientific articles follow this structure.

The introduction will provide enough information for basic understanding of the article.

Read it carefully.

Next, skim the methods section.

The methods section details the experiments done to answer the question in the introduction.

It uses technical language, and provides a high level of detail.

If there are any charts, figures or tables, read them carefully.

Then, skip forward to read the results section.

This is a statement of what was found by the experimenters.

Last, you need to review the discussion.

This section will provide a clear answer to the question posed in Introduction & explains how the results support the conclusion.

Read this section carefully.

Now that you've reviewed the IMRD, it's time to read the article a second time.

The second time, skim the entire article – start to finish, and maybe several times!

But don't worry about reading it and catching every detail – if you've reviewed the IMRD, you will have enough to move forward.

Highlight words you don't know, and look them up.

Underline key points and make note of questions or ideas the article raises.

You've now absorbed enough to decide if you want to use this article as part of your research.

Reading this way will do wonders for your productivity, making your research more efficient and more effective.

Happy reading!