

LIBRARY TIPS #4
HOW TO AVOID PREDATORY PUBLISHERS & JOURNALS

Predatory publishers & journals:

- * Prioritize financial gain over scholarly integrity.
- * Misuse the open access model to benefit from **publication fees** without complying with scientific publishing standards.



Dobusch, L., Heilmstädt, M., Mayer, K., & Ross-Hellauer, T. (2020). Defining predatory journals: no peer review, no profit. *Nature, 580*(7801), 25. doi:10.1038/s41586-020-02011-x

Have you ever received an **unexpectedly flattering email inviting you to publish** in a journal you have never heard of? Or perhaps stumbled upon a **journal that promises an easy, fast, and seemingly low-cost publication process**? If so, you might be on the radar of a predatory journal!

IF YOU ARE SUSPICIOUS OF THE JOURNAL LEGITIMACY, FOLLOW THIS CHECKLIST

✓ LOOK UP THE MAIN INFORMATION

- **Contacts** - does the website provide complete contact information, including a verifiable address?
- **Publisher website** - does it mimic other journals' names or design? Does the site design look reliable?
- **Editorial board** - check their affiliations, identifiers, and if they are active researchers in the field.

Consider contacting the editors directly about their experience with the journal

✓ CHECK INDEXING & METRICS

- **Not listed in trusted indexes** - always check databases (PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science...) or ranking portals (Scimago and Journal Citation Reports). Cross-check with directories like DOAJ and ROAD.
- **False metrics** - made-up impact factors and unverifiable citation metrics are a common feature in these journals.

Check our resources suggestions below

✓ QUALITY CONTROL

- **Spelling or grammatical errors** in content or email invitations often indicate predatory practices.
- **Unclear peer review process** - credible journals have a rigorous peer review process.
- **Articles' quality** - is the content relevant to the journal's scope? Are they recent?

✓ EVALUATE AUTHORS FEE POLICIES

- **Unclear or deceptive fee practices** - hidden costs or initially low fees to lure researchers.
- **Final high article processing charges (APCs)** - exorbitant fees may be charged later.

✓ CONSIDER PUBLICATIONS' SCHEDULE

- **Promises of fast publication** - the review process in a credible journals typically takes months.
- **Induced sense of urgency** - rushing for a closing issue or requiring authors to sign away copyright at submission is suspicious.

✓ ASK FOR HELP

- **Discuss with your peers**
- **Ask a NOVA Medical School Librarian**



RESOURCES

Ranking portals

Journal index directories

Associations & others

SJR

Scimago Journal & Country Rank



ROAD

DOAJ

CASPA CABELLS

! THINK ✓ CHECK ➔ SUBMIT