

Publication Arrangements: Acceptance/Rejection rates

Our acceptance rates are approximately 25%, similar to the American Psychological Association's primary journals. For perspective, it is worth comparing our acceptance/rejection rates to the following APA journals, listed in order of their rejection rates (below). The values for the APA journals range substantially.

Journal of Experimental Psychology: Animal Behavior Processes (43%),
Journal of Comparative Psychology (44%)
Behavioral Neuroscience (54%)
Psychological Bulletin (73%)
JEP: Applied (74%),
JEP: Learning, Memory, and Cognition (75%).
Psychological Review (81%)
JEP: General (85%),

(The above values were published in the July-August, 2008 issue of the *American Psychologist*, p. 504).

The acceptance rates of *Psychological Reports* and *Perceptual and Motor Skills* are similar to the three main *Journals of Experimental Psychology* (JEP) published by the APA.

Often, the acceptance rate is used as a measure of "quality," with the idea that the best journals tend to have the lowest acceptance rates because they have the highest standards, and thus, it is hardest to get published in them. However, this is a misunderstanding in a variety of ways. Many of those reasons have nothing to do with quality. Instead, acceptance rate is strongly influenced or even determined by purely practical issues, such as decisions about how many pages will be allowed in a given journal. For example, if only 200 pages are budgeted, but 80 manuscripts with a total of 900 pages are submitted, then many will be rejected simply because there isn't room, regardless of the quality as assessed by reviewers. In fact, they all could be exactly the same quality, but one would still see the same rejection rate. The editors can and do eliminate manuscripts that may require more editing, that have other minor problems, or that have a single negative criticism from one of the reviewers. We hear stories like this from authors and colleagues with some frequency.

Perceptual and Motor Skills and *Psychological Reports* are not subject to these pressures, since both journals are published by an independent press. Numbers of pages printed in each issue are determined by the number and length of articles ready for publication. Special issues in June and December ensure that articles do not languish due to lack of journal space, and acceptance rates are not arbitrarily determined by other factors but reflect the merit of each paper as assessed by three reviewers and two editors.