

# Embargo (academic publishing)

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In academic publishing, an **embargo** is a period during which access to academic journals is not allowed to users who have not paid for access (or have access through their institution). The purpose of this is to ensure publishers have revenue to support their activities,<sup>[1][2]</sup> although the impact of embargoes on publishers is hotly debated, with some studies finding no impact<sup>[3]</sup> but publisher experience indicates otherwise.<sup>[4][5]</sup> A 2012 survey of libraries by the Association of Learned, Professional, and Society Publishers on the likelihood of journal cancellations in cases where most of the content was made freely accessible after six months suggests there would be a major negative impact on subscriptions,<sup>[6]</sup> but this result has been debated.

Various types exist:

- A 'moving wall' is a fixed period of months or years.
- A fixed date is a particular time point that does not change.
- A current year (or other period) is setting a time point on Jan. 1 of the current year, so that all material earlier than that is available. Although fixed during the year, it will change each year.

## Purpose

There are various purposes:

- For delayed open access journals, the embargo separates the most recent period, for which a subscription is needed, from an older period, where a subscription is not needed and anyone may access the article. This can range from a few months to several years.<sup>[7]</sup>
- For self-archiving, the embargo is a period of time set by the publisher in the copyright transfer agreement where access to the archived version of the article in a digital repository is restricted until the embargo period expires. Typical embargo periods range from 6 to 24 months, though some publishers may require an embargo of up to 48 months.<sup>[8]</sup>
- In full-text databases, such as those of EBSCO Publishing or ProQuest, it separates the most recent period, where only a title or abstract is available, from an older one, which is openly accessible.<sup>[9]</sup>

## Moving wall

In academic publishing, a moving wall is the time period between the last issue of an academic journal available in a given online database and the most recently published print issue of a journal. It is specified by publishers in their license agreements with databases (like JSTOR), and generally ranges from several months to several years.<sup>[10]</sup>

## References

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