

10 MUST-HAVE
RESEARCH TOOLS
FOR ANY PROJECT



ASHLEY WARREN
RESEARCH



ASSEMBLING YOUR RESEARCH TOOLKIT

It's easier than ever to access research right at our fingertips. But this much information can be daunting, so it's important to be organized and prepared when conducting research. After being a researcher in many roles — as a graduate student, an archivist, a journalist, a college teacher, a data scientist — I've come to rely on my favorite research tools.

I've compiled the top 10 tools every researcher should have in their toolkit. These are tools to help you get organized, manage your process, and store your data.



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GOOGLE DRIVE

Google Drive offers a whole suite of tools perfect for any project. Every program in the suite is cloud-based, so you don't have to worry about saving as you go. Google Docs is a robust word processor for documenting your research. Google Sheets is similar to Microsoft Excel, and includes chart-making tools. Google Forms is an easy survey maker. The best part? It's all free, and you just need one Google account to use it.

EVERNOTE

Also a cloud service, Evernote functions as a minimal digital notebook. Save multimedia files to your notebook, and sync it across mobile devices so you can take notes on the go.

IF THIS THEN THAT (IFTTT)

If you're conducting research independently, it's useful to automate your process. Automation tools like IFTTT help connect one tool to another. For example, if you want to get an email every time an article appears on Twitter using a designated hashtag, you can set up that funnel. There are a multitude of applications for researchers.

MENDELEY

Mendeley is a web app that helps researchers organize and annotate sources. Store PDFs and files, and tag them or organize them via category. Their library is a nice, simple, searchable archive if you're looking for some additional sources to add to your study or paper (funny enough, this is how I found some of the primary sources I used for my Master's thesis). There's also a social component where you can connect with other researchers.

ZOTERO

Free and open source, Zotero makes it easy to manage and organize your citations and references. Bookmark your findings and generate citations as you go.

EASYBIB

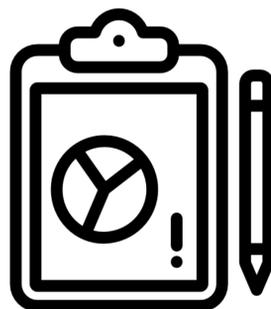
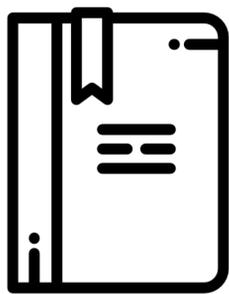
Citation isn't just something that English teachers made you learn just to make you miserable. It's what connects research to other research, and it's necessary to ensure that credit is given to the right people for their theories and findings. EasyBib is a good, free tool that can help you form your citations. You should always double-check the citations it generates, but it's a good first step!

POCKET

Don't lose any great potential references or sources! Pocket is a bookmarking tool you can add to your web browser. When you are on a webpage you want to save, simply click the pocket icon, and it will automatically save the page to your Pocket. A very handy tool to help you save as you go.

SCRIVENER

Scrivener is a premium word processing program but it's a robust, versatile tool for writers and researchers. If you're writing a novel or a longform project, you can create folders to store your data, and link them directly to chapters in your story. Upload images, documents, maps, and more for easy reference.



SURVEYMONKEY

SurveyMonkey is made for researchers, so it's not only a user-friendly platform, but it gives you the tools you need to safely collect and store data. It's important to prioritize security when you're collecting data, especially personal information. They also offer analytics tools to easily identify trends in your results.

ASANA

A project management tool makes the research process so much easier. Asana works with Google Drive, so you can create deadlines and store documents that are linked to specific tasks. Being organized makes research much less stressful, and Asana's excellent interface makes it a good choice for researchers in any industry.