

Zotero [zoh-TAIR-oh] is a free, easy-to-use Firefox extension to help you collect, manage, and cite your research sources. It lives right where you do your work — in the web browser itself.

Zotero is an easy-to-use yet powerful research tool that helps you gather, organize, and analyze sources (citations, full texts, web pages, images, and other objects), and lets you share the results of your research in a variety of ways. An extension to the popular open-source web browser Firefox, Zotero includes the best parts of older reference manager software (like EndNote)—the ability to store author, title, and publication fields and to export that information as formatted references—and the best parts of modern software and web applications (like iTunes and del.icio.us), such as the ability to interact, tag, and search in advanced ways. Zotero integrates tightly with online resources; it can sense when users are viewing a book, article, or other object on the web, and—on many major research and library sites—find and automatically save the full reference information for the item in the correct fields. Since it lives in the web browser, it can effortlessly transmit information to, and receive information from, other web services and applications; since it runs on one's personal computer, it can also communicate with software running there (such as Microsoft Word).

The Zotero Pane

Zotero runs in your Firefox web browser, which must be open in order for you to access your research collection. You do not have to be online, however to use Zotero; features such as notes, search, organization will work perfectly well offline, although obviously you will not be able to view some online items in your collection or to acquire other online materials.

The Zotero pane contains your entire collection: bibliographic references and whole documents and files, your notes, and other items like images and snapshots of web pages.

Click the Zotero icon in the bottom right corner of your browser window to open your Zotero window.

This brings up a pane with all of your citations, collections, and notes.

You can close Zotero by clicking on the X icon in the upper right of the Zotero pane or by clicking on the logo again. You can open or close the Zotero pane at any time from within Firefox. The Zotero pane does not have to be open for you to do "quick saves" of material you want to add to your research collection.

When Zotero Senses Items on a Web Page

Perhaps the most important feature of Zotero is its ability to sense when you are looking at an item (or items) on a web page. For instance, if you are looking at the record for a book on an online library catalog, Zotero's book icon will appear in Firefox's location bar (at the top of the browser window, where the current web address, or, appears), like so:

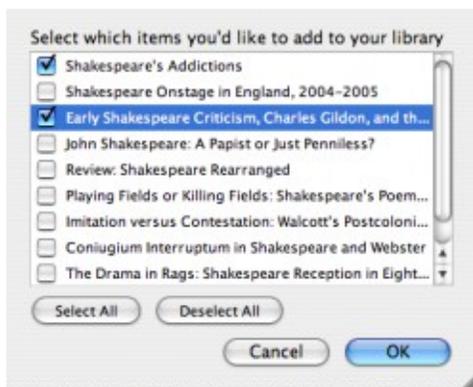


Simply click on the book icon and Zotero will save all of the citation information about that book into your library. (The Zotero pane does not have to be open for this to work.) If you are looking at a group of items (e.g., a list of search results from Google Scholar or LexisNexis), a folder will appear. Clicking on the folder will produce a list of items with check boxes next to them; choose the ones you want to save and Zotero will

do the rest.

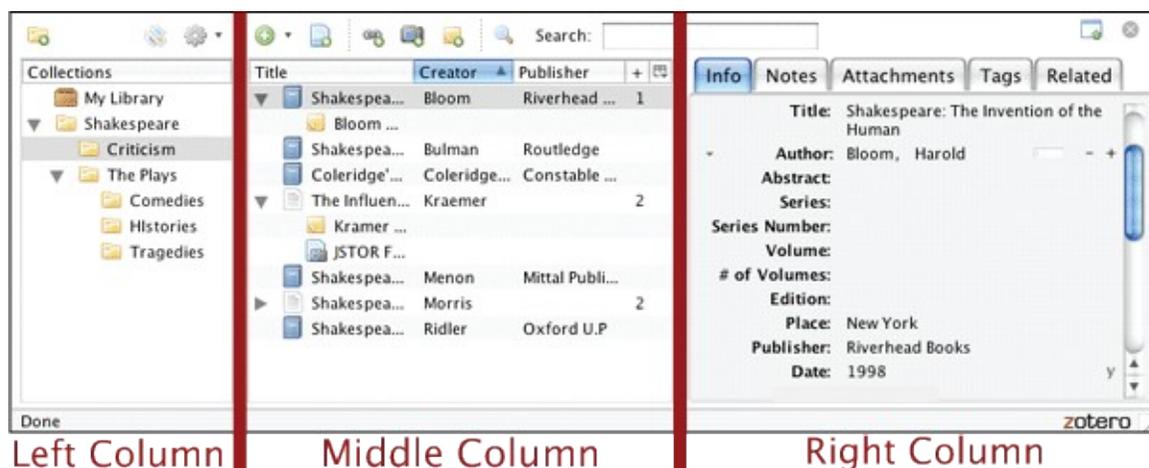


If you are currently working in a specific collection (that is, a collection is highlighted in the left column rather than "My Library"), the references will be copied to that location as well as your overall library.



Zotero senses information through *site translators*. Zotero's translators should work with most library catalogs, some popular websites such as Amazon and the New York Times, and many gated databases. Just look for icons in the location bar. The Zotero team will be adding support for additional sites over time. You need not check back here for these extra translators; they will be automatically added to your Zotero installation every so often.

The Three Columns of the Zotero Pane



The left column contains your full library ("My Library") and your individual collections, which are subsets of "My Library"; the middle column shows the items in the collection that is highlighted in the left column; the right column shows information about the item that is selected in the middle column.

"My Library" holds all references, files, and notes you have saved, uploaded, downloaded, or written. To place these items into a specific collection, drag and drop them into the folder icon for that collection. Any collection can have an unlimited number of subcollections or folders. You can also create saved searches that display all items that match criteria you define. To delete an item or collection, just highlight it and press the

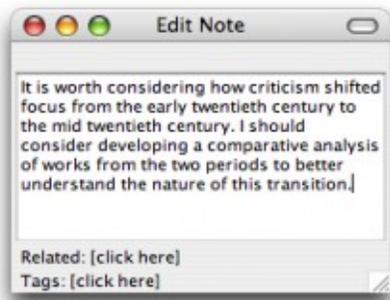
"delete" key. Right-clicking (or control-clicking on a Mac) on items and collections brings up a menu of other actions you can take.

Note-taking

Most users don't just like to read and gather sources; they like to take notes on them. We've all got little scribbles in the margins of books, on post-its, and on notepads (real and virtual). Zotero makes it easy to keep all those annotations, jots, and notes all in one place, and all searchable.



Five icons appear at the top of the middle column in the Zotero column. The yellow square with a plus sign at far right is the "standalone note" icon. Click this button to create a new note and then type your note.



You can also take notes about individual items. To take a note about an individual item select the item and click the notes tab in the right column. Now you can click the "add" button to add notes.

