

Annotated Bibliographies

What is a bibliography?

A bibliography is a list of books, articles, websites, and other academic sources that are focused on a specific topic or subject. A bibliography is written in a particular citation style, such as MLA, APA, or Chicago.

What is an annotation?

An annotation is a comment or explanation connected to a specific text, image, diagram, or other data.

So what is an annotated bibliography?

It is a bibliography that contains comments on the individual books, articles, and other sources listed. These commentaries usually summarize the source objectively. They may also evaluate the source's credibility or explain how it relates to a paper, essay, or project.

Why should I write an annotated bibliography?

Annotated bibliographies are useful for learning about a topic. They also help in formulating a thesis by determining what others have written or debated about a subject. Additionally, they sometimes help other researchers by providing information on a specific topic that may or may not be published.

How do I write an annotated bibliography?

1. Track your sources as you read them: print out the articles, save the files to your computer, or create reference entries using a citation generator like Noodle Tools or RefWorks (http://libguides.montgomerycollege.edu/citation_tools).
2. Take notes for your annotation as you read your sources. Summarize important points, explain why the source is useful, and write down what is relevant to your paper and how/where you can use it.
3. Compile the reference entries according to MLA, APA, Chicago, or some other format.
4. Add the annotation in paragraph form using complete sentences. Use first- or third-person point of view.

Example of an entry in an annotated bibliography (MLA style):

Gonsalves, Chris. "Wasting Away on the Web." *eWeek.com*. Ziff Davis Enterprise Holdings, 8 Aug. 2005. Web. 16 Feb. 2006.

In this editorial, Gonsalves considers the implications of several surveys, including one in which 61% of respondents said that their companies had the right to spy on them. The author agrees with this majority, claiming that it's fine if his company chooses to monitor him as long as the company discloses its monitoring practices. He adds that he would prefer not to know the extent of the monitoring. This article, though not entirely objective, offers an employee's perspective on Internet surveillance in the workplace. It also contradicts some of my other sources, which claim that employees want to know and should know all the details of their company's monitoring procedures.

Example of an entry in an annotated bibliography (APA style):

Crowston, C., & Kammerer, E. (1998). Communicative style and gender differences in computer-mediated communications. In B. Ebo (ed.), *Cyberghetto or cybertopia? Race, class, and gender on the Internet* (pp. 185-203). Westport, CT: Praeger.

This brief study examines how the dominant communication style (masculine versus feminine) of an online discussion group affects men's and women's desire to participate. The findings, while limited, provide evidence that in fact both women and men were less interested in joining forums that were dominated by masculine-style language. These findings seem to contradict the pronounced gender inequality found in the other sources in this bibliography.