

# Personal Research Toolbox

**What is a “Personal Research Toolbox?”** A *Personal Research Toolbox* is a **collector** for links to your **favorite websites** plus any other **reference information** that you refer to on a regular basis. This toolbox can be: 1) a folder on your personal computer; 2) a Dropbox or other online storage folder; 3) a personal blog or website; or 4) all of the above.

## A “Personal Research Toolbox” is quick and easy to create.

1. Create a **destination point**. It is easiest to create a folder on your desktop and then drag it to other destinations later. To create a folder on your desktop 1-Right Click; 2-Choose “New” and then “Folder”; 3) Name the folder while “New Folder” is highlighted in blue; 4) If you click out of the folder before getting it named, Right Click and Choose: “Rename”.
2. Create **sub-folders** within this folder that will be the destinations for your web-links and reference material. Open your Toolbox folder and follow the same procedure above to create these sub-folders.
3. To create a **web-link** in a folder:
  - a. Open the web page that you want to create the link for.
  - b. Highlight the URL address and Right Click to copy it.
  - c. Open the folder where you want to create the web-link.
  - d. Right click inside of the folder and choose “New” then “Shortcut”.
  - e. Paste the address that you copied in step 2 into the address box and click next.
  - f. In this box, name the shortcut. Names can be quite long if you want to include some description, but not all of this will display without hovering over the link in the contents list of the folder.
  - g. Click “Finish”
4. To add **reference material** to other folders, copy and paste or drag it from other folders on your computer. You can also copy and paste from other destinations such as an internet web page.
5. It is best to keep only your most **used items** in your toolbox. Otherwise it becomes harder to find the items and you are less likely to use the toolbox. I would create a separate location for research notes and to-do lists.
6. Consider creating a folder for links to web-sites that look **promising**. If you go back to the web-link and want to put it permanently in your toolbox, you can then drag it to the appropriate folder.
7. Consider creating a web-link to <http://www.preservingtime.org/>. This is my personal web-site and contains the “Web-Site Project” –which is my personal shortcuts file.
8. You can store a copy of your Toolbox on a **jump drive** to take with you where ever you go. The downfall with using a jump drive is keeping it and your personal computer synced and up to date. Better yet, store your toolbox folder in “**the cloud**” so that it is available to you anywhere you can get on the internet.

## Store your “Personal Research Toolbox” in Dropbox (or somewhere else in the cloud).

After joining and downloading Dropbox, storing this folder there is as simple as dragging it into your dropbox folder. There are many other cloud storage options—Dropbox happens to be my favorite and the easiest one for most people to use.