

Top Web Annotation and Markup Tools

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Contextual feedback is crucial for remote teams working online to have **fast and efficient feedback system**. Asking and taking feedback is tedious and usually happens off-context using email and text message. There are some tools, however, that allow teams to **discuss things and collaborate online** in much better way.



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Web Annotation and Markup tools help you to **comment, discuss and collaborate** right on web pages or screenshots or PDFs. Such tools **add context to the content** and make use of **highlights, sticky notes, comments**, etc. for

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making discussions with context.

In this post, we’re showcasing the **best yet freely available tools** for contextual feedback. These tools let you **annotate, comment and discuss on the web** — quickly and easily.

Scrible

Scrible helps building your own online **library of annotated articles** or research materials and owing to the same, it’s a perfect tool for researchers and remote teams. It allows you to **save and bookmark pages**, save files (docs, presentations, etc.), create and search your library, and share the annotated articles with others for getting feedback.

Here's another note!

Add the scrible Toolbar Chrome Extension: [Install now](#)

Install the scrible Toolbar Bookmarklet

A bookmarklet is a **small software application** that adds functionality to your browser. It lives in your browser's Bookmarks Bar as a bookmark. While browsing the Web, click it to load the scrible Toolbar on webpages.

Installation Instructions for Chrome.

- Make your Bookmarks Bar visible. Click on the "Customize and control Google Chrome" button (the 3 horizontal lines to the right of the address bar). From the menu that opens, choose *Bookmarks* and ensure *Show bookmarks bar* is checked.
- Drag the bookmarklet button shown at right to the left end of your Bookmarks bar

Here's a sample note!

scrible



Scrible offers **bookmarklet and an extension** for Chrome. On any page, you can click its bookmarklet or button to activate **Scrible Toolbar**. Once it’s there, you can select text and press “**Highlight Text**” to highlight text in various colors or click “**Add Note**” to add a sticky note.

“**Bookmark Page**” and “**Share**” buttons perform as expected and you can **share the annotated page using Permalink** in case you seek feedback. On visiting that link, others would see a similar toolbar, using which they can **comment, highlight, add notes and tags**, etc.

A close-up image of the Das Keyboard 5Q, a black mechanical keyboard with blue and red keycaps. A red box highlights the top right corner, and a blue arrow points to a specific key.

Das Keyboard 5Q - the keyboard that receives notifications from the Internet

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A hand holding a small, round, silver smart home gadget with a camera lens and a microphone.

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Pros:

- **Shows zero ads** — even in its free *Basic* plan
- **Offers Classroom feature** for [educators](#) with class structure and library as well as sync support for *Google Classroom*

Cons:

- **Doesn't allow adding links** to add more resources/references
- **Doesn't support mobile apps** as compared to few tools listed below

[Diigo](#)

Diigo is a reading assistant that lets you **build your own research library** and that's why, it suits well **for bloggers and remote teams**. This tool allows building **shared knowledge repositories** by sharing libraries with groups (say classmates or colleagues). The group members can view as well as **add annotations to the shared materials**.



Diigo offers **bookmarklet (called Diigolet)** and a **Chrome extension**. Upon clicking the Diigolet or Diigo button, you'd see **Diigo Toolbar** on top-right of the page. You can use **“Highlight”** button to highlight text in different colors and click **“Sticky Note”** to add notes.

The toolbar's **“Bookmark”** and **“Read Later”** buttons work as expected. For sharing the annotated article, click **“Share”** and choose **“Get Annotated Link”**.

Using this link, **people can see your highlights and notes** but can't add their own (use group sharing for same).

Pros:

- Works with **mobile apps for Android and iOS**

Cons:

- **Shows ads** in its free plan
- **Highlights limited words** in the free version
- **Shares** annotated articles in **read-only** mode

Marqueed

Marqueed is an **image markup and discussion tool** that offers a freehand tool to draw over images to **share ideas or make discussions**. It supports taking screenshots of web pages to have discussions on the same and also **supports importing images from *Dropbox***.



You can create **collections of images (as libraries)** and share them with people to seek feedback or **create a shared collection** of annotated images/screenshots. Its activity stream tracks each and every activity and shows the complete progress at a single place.

To start with this tool, just login and **upload or import an image** to create a new collection. Then after, open the image and use “**Freehand**” or “**Rectangle tool**” to draw or **select a portion of the image and add your comments**. For sharing the same, just share the collection.

Pros:

- Lets you **visually communicate** on images

- Supports creating **tasks in Basecamp and Asana**

Cons:

- It's **more an image discussion tool** than a web page annotation tool
- Its **link sharing feature doesn't work**

Pundit Annotator

Pundit Annotator is a **much simpler annotator** (than the above tools) and packs in just the necessary features for a solopreneur to **grab ideas from the web** and add comments. It provides only a **Chrome extension** (and not bookmarklet unlike others).

After installing its extension, you'd see its button beside address bar. On any page, click it to bring the **“Pundit Sidebar”**. Then after, you can **select any text on the page and you'd see two options/buttons: “Comment” and “Highlight”** (both of these work as expected). For checking out your annotations, you can login to your account and browse **“Notebooks”**.

Cons:

- **Lacks sharing** and collaboration features
- **No support for online storage** services



Hypothesis

Hypothesis is developed with the mission to *“bring a new layer to the web”*, and in fact, it does its job very well. It's a **simple tool** like *Pundit Annotator* that offers a bookmarklet, a Chrome extension and even **allows entering a web link for making annotations** directly.



The tool allows creating groups (even public ones) to share the annotations with others and building a **shared annotations repository**. Its **link sharing doesn't work as of other tools** and shares only the page you're annotating, and the other person needs to be in same shared group to view or comment on the annotations you're saving on the shared page.

Upon clicking its bookmarklet or button, you'd see the **"Hypothesis Sidebar"**. Now, you can select any text on the page and you'd see two options: **"Annotate"** and **"Highlight"**. These functions let you **add comments and just highlight** the text respectively.

Pros:

- **Allows searching** among the list of annotations

Cons:

- **Lacks support for online storage** services

Notable

Notable is an easy collaboration tool with **superb sharing and feedback options**. You can make teams to **share the annotated images or screenshots** with your group easily. It allows uploading images and capturing URLs (doesn't work well, though) for adding annotations. It also offers **extensions for Chrome, Firefox, IE and Safari** browsers.



After installing its plugin, open the page you wish to annotate, and click “**Notable**” button and choose one of “**Capture Visible Screen**” and “**Capture Entire Page**”. After processing the shot, you’d be presented the chosen page with “**Notable Toolbar**” on the top of the page.

Now you can **select any area of the page and add your comments**. Click “**Share**” button from the toolbar to share the annotated page. Notable allows sharing via email or you can also **directly share the given link with your friends or colleagues**. You can even download the annotated materials as PDFs to discuss or present them offline (premium feature).

Pros:

- Offers **applications for Windows and MacOS** to take and upload screenshots
- **Allows sets and workspaces** to organize your annotated works
- Lets you **set visibility of workspaces** to gain control over sharing

Cons:

- **No text highlighting** feature
- It’s **more a design/image discussion tool** than a web annotation tool

AnnotateIt

AnnotateIt can be added to any web page for **annotating its page content**. The tool is **super simple to use** and has just the minimalistic features for any solopreneur to annotate pages. It **offers a bookmarklet** (but no browser plugin) to add annotations.



Upon browsing a web page, **click its bookmarklet to load its annotation tool**. Then select any text on the page, click the pencil button and add your comment. You can also **set the permission options** in the annotation box while writing the comment.

Pros:

- Allows writing **annotations in Markdown**
- Offers **per-annotation permissions** for managing access

Cons:

- **No social or sharing options** for getting feedback
- It's **just a basic annotation tool** and lacks sticky notes and other options

Genius Web Annotator

Genius Web Annotator is just as simple to use as *AnnotateIt* (above). It offers a **Chrome extension and a bookmarklet** for creating annotations. You can login to your Genius account to check your annotations and therein, you can also use the “**Share**” button to **share an annotation via link or via Twitter or Facebook**.



While you’re browsing any web page, click the Genius Web Annotator’s bookmarklet to load its annotation tool. Then you can **select any text on the page and click the Annotate button** to add your comments.

Pros:

- Allows using **Markdown format in annotations**
- Allows **following other people** like an annotations network
- Allows **sharing particular annotations**

Cons:

- **Doesn’t support highlighting text**
- **Doesn’t support creating teams** or sharing with groups

Honorable mentions

Here are few others that didn’t quite make the list, but might interest you.

- [Twiddla](#) – An online whiteboard for groups that want to brainstorm together. You can annotate websites, graphics and images all while browsing the web together.
- [Wired Marker](#) – A permanent highlighter for the web. Highlighted text is saved as bookmarks and can be organized into folders.
- [Yawas](#) – An annotation tool for Firefox and Chrome that lets you highlight text and store it in Google Bookmarks.

To conclude

That’s all folks about web annotation and markup tools. How do you plan to use

these tools to **improve your team’s productivity and make contextual collaboration**? Do you know more such tools worth mentioning in this list? Do let us know using the comments.



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Alexis Coubron

This tools are not avaiable anymore:

- * Awesome Highlighter
- * Crocodoc
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- * iComment
- * Layers
- * Reframe It
- * ShiftSpace
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Brian Morris · Partner at Hey Cupcake

Thanks for the info. Any tools you would recommend?

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