

Guide to Reference Sources, 12th Edition

Overview of Selection and Entry Formulation Guidelines

Guide to Reference will describe resources for academic libraries. It will support curricula for undergraduate and graduate students, the research efforts of faculty and other academic staff, and the advanced information needs of the public.

Guide to Reference will be both selective and broad in coverage, identifying the best available reference sources in a range of academic disciplines.

Identifying and Evaluating Resources

Editors are expert in their areas, often working in leading libraries for their subject. They first review titles listed in the current *Guide to Reference Books*, 11th edition. Many titles from the 11th edition will have been superseded by newer editions; others will have been supplanted by superior or more current works.

Selections will reflect the editors' use of and familiarity with the sources. Editors will rely on the acquisitions procedures of their libraries to identify new reference titles of potential interest. As they contribute to selecting titles for their libraries' collections, they routinely see the bibliographies, scholarly and trade journals, alert services and reviewing media, websites, and publishers' announcements. They will also access the collections of other research libraries and consult with colleagues in the field. Editors are expected to personally examine all titles considered.

Criteria

Usefulness. Editors will consider the content of the work as well as how often and under what circumstances they consult it. Usefulness traditionally has been the chief criterion for inclusion in *Guide to Reference Books*.

Breadth of scope. Editors will favor works that are broadly focused.

Quality. Editors will consider the reputation of the editor, compiler, or publisher; the accuracy and completeness of the work; its currency; and how well it carries out its stated intention. Annotations will describe such factors.

Imprint date. Editors will emphasize titles recently published and currently in use.

Language. Editors will select primarily English-language works published in North America. Works in other languages, particularly European and Asian languages, will be included as sections require them.

Format of Publication

Editors will comprehensively evaluate reference works, applying the same criteria to titles in all formats. Sources from governments, professional societies, commercial publishers, or other organizations with a publishing history will take precedence. If an Internet source not produced under these traditional auspices nevertheless meets selection criteria, an editor will weigh the creator's commitment to maintaining content and assess the permanence of the source.

Generally, editors will prefer online sources if multiple formats are available. Annotations for online or print versions of a source will take into account alternate formats.

Although print resources will usually be monographs, editors may include works in periodicals if they are significant for research in the subject and have no substitute.

Annotations

Guide to Reference is a working bibliography, not a reviewing medium. As such, annotations will help readers to understand the utility of listed resources and quickly choose among similar works.

Editors will strive for clear, concise annotations of no more than 125 words. Some works may be described in a few words. Salient information will be listed first. Editors will sketch the essential features of a work and as necessary discuss its purpose, coverage (subjects, dates, formats), content (kinds of materials listed, subtopics), arrangement, indexes, appendixes, and bibliographies.