
Quotable Facts About America's Libraries

ALA American
Library
Association

Did You Know?

Libraries are a smart investment. A recent study shows that for every dollar spent on Ohio public libraries, Ohioans received \$5.48 in economic value.

Reference librarians in the nation's public and academic libraries answer nearly 6.6 million questions weekly. Standing single file, the line of questioners would span from Miami, Florida to Juneau, Alaska.

Americans go to school, public and academic libraries more than three times as frequently as they go to the movies.

Sources:

ALA Office for Library Advocacy

ALA Office for Research and Statistics

All facts compiled in 2017.

Public Libraries

There are more public libraries than Starbucks in the U.S.—a total of 17,566 including branches. Nearly 100% of public libraries provide Wi-Fi and have no-fee access to computers.

In 2013, there were 1.5 billion in-person visits to public libraries across the U.S., the equivalent of more than 4 million visits each day. That's 2,854 per minute.

Americans check out an average of eight books a year. They spend \$36.96 a year for the public library – about the average cost of one hardcover book.

There were 96.5 million attendees at public library programs in 2013, more than all Major League Baseball and NBA games combined.

Academic Libraries

Academic libraries held approximately 252.6 million e-books and public libraries held more than 87.2 million in 2012.

Academic librarians provide information services for almost 38 million people each year – reaching almost six million more than attend men's college basketball games.

College libraries receive fewer than three cents of every dollar spent on higher education.

School Libraries

Cutbacks in school librarians may be yielding unintended consequences. According to a recent study by Stanford University, more than 80% of middle schoolers cannot tell the difference between sponsored content and a real news article.

Research shows the highest achieving students attend schools with well-staffed and well-funded school libraries.

Students make almost 1.3 billion visits to school libraries during the school year, the same as attendance made to movie theaters in 2014, or four times as many visitors to national parks.

Americans spend 22 times more on home video games (\$16.7 billion) than they do on library materials for their children in public schools (\$758,408,000).

Libraries Transform

Libraries strengthen local economies.

- 73% of public libraries assist patrons with job applications and interviewing skills;**
- 68% help patrons use databases to find career openings;**
- 48% provide access to and assist entrepreneurs with online business information resources;**
- More than 36% offer work space for mobile workers.**

Libraries create healthier communities.

- 77% of public libraries offer online health resources;**
- 59% provide programs on finding health insurance.**

Libraries Transform

Libraries are the place for lifelong learning.

- **Public libraries offer 4.3 million programs per year;**
- **95% provide online homework assistance;**
- **95% offer summer reading programs for children.**

Library access equals opportunity.

- **100% of public libraries offer access to the Internet;**
- **90% help patrons with basic Internet skills;**
- **97% help people complete online government forms.**

**Learn more at
www.librariestransform.org.**

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www.ilovelibraries.org.**

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Investing in America's Libraries

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