

Evernote for Writers

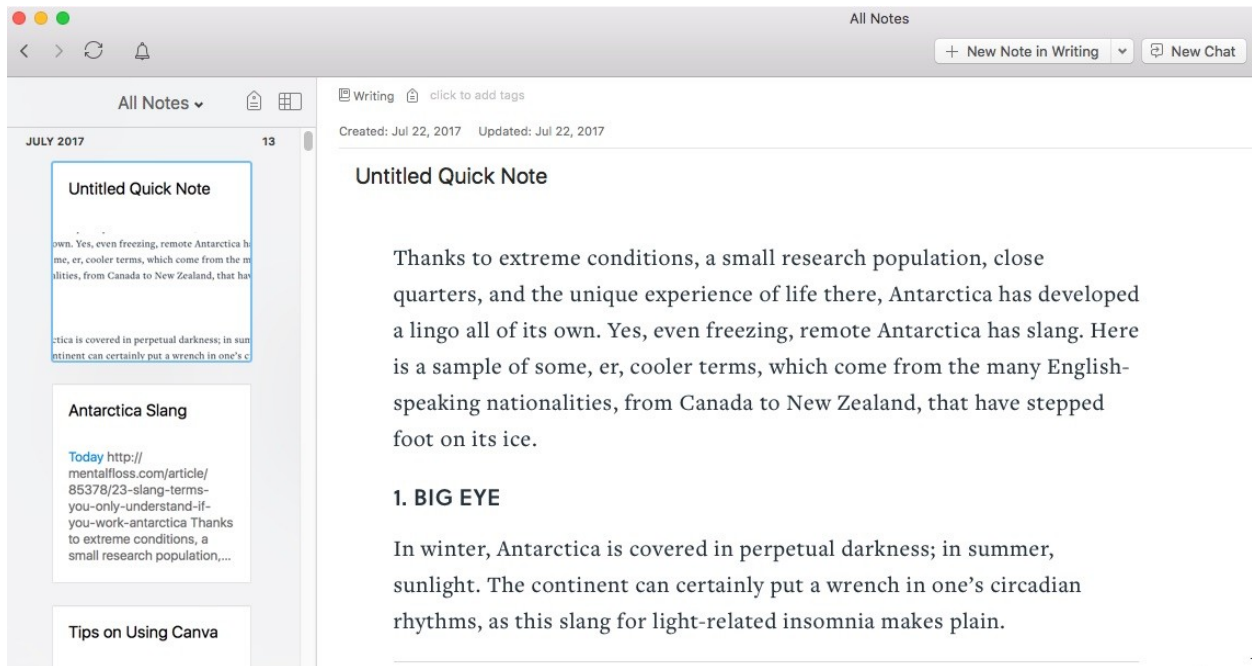
by Vanessa Kier

The other day, I came across an interesting article on slang in Antarctica. While I don't have any plans to write a story set in Antarctica, I wanted to save the link in case such a story came to me in the future. I could have saved the link to my Safari bookmarks, but instead I decided to save it to Evernote.

What is Evernote?

Evernote is a cloud-based program for taking, organizing, and storing notes. It works across multiple platforms. You can access your notes via the Evernote website or you can download the application for your computer and mobile device(s). The free plan* allows you to sync notes between two devices. Move up to a paid plan and you have unlimited device syncing.

If you install the Evernote web clipper browser extension, you can clip and save the part of the website that's currently visible on your screen, or select just a portion of the visible content to be saved directly into Evernote. The below screenshot is from Evernote on my computer, showing the clipping I did of just the first part of that article on Antarctica. On the left is the sidebar showing my most recently added/modified notes.



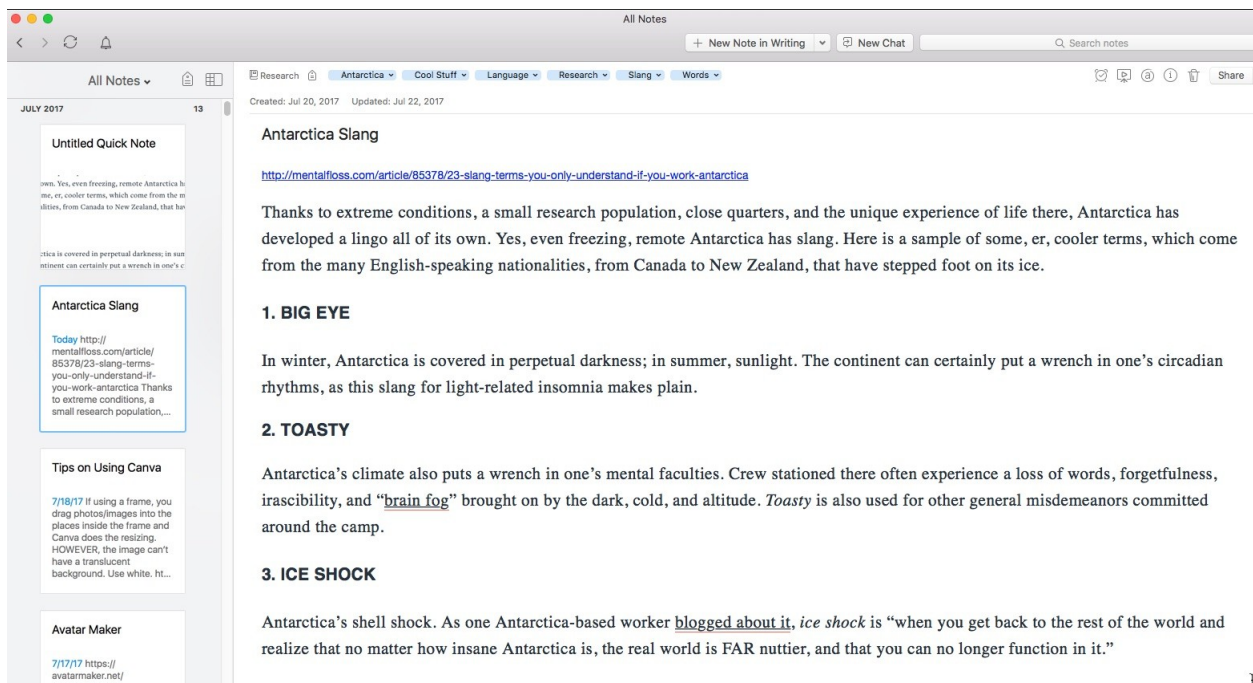
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Why Did I Choose Evernote?

I chose Evernote to store that Antarctica article because Evernote gives me a wider range of options for finding the note in the future. What do I mean by this? Although I can rename a link when I'm saving it to my Safari bookmarks, that's a limited number of characters for getting my reason for storing the link across. Plus, I have a tendency to save websites as bookmarks and then forget that I ever did that. Since I'm in Evernote a lot, and I frequently search there to see if I've saved information, I'm less likely to lose track of the information if I save it in Evernote.

In Evernote I can tag a note with multiple references, aka reasons why I thought I needed to keep this information. In the below example, you can see that I assigned the following tags: Antarctica, Cool Stuff, Language, Research, Slang, Words. Within Evernote, this note will show up if I do a search on these terms or if I filter my notes on any one of those tags.



Instead of creating a separate note, I could have added the Antarctica link to my master note “Cool Phrases, Slang, and Regionalisms.” This note includes a lot of cool information I heard on podcasts or on the radio that I then typed into Evernote. I have also copied relevant text from forums and group email digests and pasted it into appropriate notes.

In the above screenshot, you’ll notice that I’ve pasted the text of the article underneath the url. This was done through copying and pasting, not the clipper tool. The clipper tool only gives you access to what you see on your screen at the moment you activate the clipper.

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What Else Can Evernote Do?

You add a note to Evernote using the keyboard or, at least in the Mac version, by using the built-in Mac OS dictation feature. You can take a photo from within Evernote, attach a photo saved on your computer, or attach a PDF or another type of file. Another handy feature is that you can create a checklist, such as a conference packing list, and easily check off each item with a click or a tap on the check box.

One of the key organizational features of Evernote is that you store your notes in notebooks. This allows me to store both business and personal information in the same account. For example, I have one notebook for research, one for marketing, and one for tracking when books by my favorite fiction writers are coming out. I can add a reminder to a note so that Evernote will notify me at the set time.

With Evernote, you can create a public link to your note on the web then share it with other people. You can also import notes into Scrivener. The Mac version allows you to see a complete visual version of your note. The Windows version[^] will only show you the url of the public link that will take you to the note on the internet.

In the paid plans, you can store notes for off-line viewing and forward emails to your Evernote account. I like to do this with hotel, conference, and airline reservation confirmation emails.

So, that's the overview of why I love Evernote. I hope you found this article helpful. If you have any questions about Evernote, feel free to drop me a line.

Happy organizing!

* * *

This article first appeared in the *Tech Talk* column of the August 2017 issue of the *Heart of the Bay*, the newsletter of the San Francisco chapter of Romance Writers of America.

*Data is accurate as of July 22, 2017. For a comparison of the free plan to the various paid plans, check out their blog post on pricing: <https://blog.evernote.com/blog/2016/06/28/changes-to-evernotes-pricing-plans/>

[^]Data is accurate as of July 22, 2017 and Scrivener for Windows 1.0.