

# A Snapshot of James Madison's Reading List

When it comes to reading and literacy, America is having a hard time. [Statistics show](#) that 14 percent of adults can't read, and 50 percent of adults can't read a book written at an 8th-grade level.

Fortunately for our nation, America's founders did not fit into the illiterate or ill-read category. Their [book lists](#) and library collections show amazing depth, and [James Madison's](#) is no exception.

Madison had over 1,500 volumes in his personal library. Below is a snapshot of the more recognizable titles. How many have you read?

1. An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding – David Hume
2. Epistles to Atticus – Marcus Tullius Cicero
3. Essays – Sir Francis Bacon
4. Hamlet – William Shakespeare
5. History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire – Edward Gibbon
6. Law of Nature and Nations – Hugo Grotius
7. Lives – Plutarch
8. Nature of True Virtue – Jonathan Edwards
9. Tales from Shakespeare – Charles Lamb
10. The Age of Reason – Thomas Paine
11. The Commonwealth of Utopia – Sir Thomas More
12. The First Part of the Institutes of the Laws of England – Edward Coke
13. The Imitation of Christ – Thomas A. Kempis
14. The Spirit of Laws – Montesquieu
15. The Talisman – Sir Walter Scott
16. Treatises on Government – John Locke
17. Works on Religious Subjects – Sir Isaac Newton

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