

Melbourne Indexers Bulletin

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June meeting: Five things from the indexing puzzle bag

Preparing for Melbourne Indexers meetings I keep a list of possible topics. For this meeting we decided to tackle what Max and I thought would be topics that would not take long to discuss. The topics chosen were:

1. American spelling – traps for Australians.
2. What is the common way to display pages ranges?
3. How do you index book introductions or the long preface, particularly those with Roman numerals?
4. How and why do you turn an indexing job down?
5. How do you index concepts known in professions by acronyms or abbreviations? How do you file them?

Allocating them out between us, I started preparing material on acronyms and abbreviations. It soon became very clear there was a lot on this topic, so we held that over for a future meeting.

1. American spelling

Spelling can always trip me up. It isn't helped by variations used in different professions and in different regions. The basic rule is to always use the spelling used in the book. If this varies, go with the majority or seek guidance from the editor. One trap is to be aware that some professions have preferences, and these may not be the same as the common local spelling. One example is foetus. This is typically spelt in medical texts as fetus. Another is percent in mathematics, while usually per cent locally.

We are all aware of the usual American spelling variations but one area that can be confusing is compound words with or without hyphens such as anti-, non- or semi-. Is it a trade mark, trade-mark or trademark? It is all the same thing, could you be consistent in the text please?

Take care of terms meaning different things. For example, to table an item on an agenda to an American means to postpone the discussion indefinitely. Not usually what we mean.

Food terms are a wonderful example of different terms meaning the same thing. For example, aubergine or eggplant, couchette or zucchini. Cross-references may be appropriate. Then there are state variations, such as cantaloupe (Vic or Tas) or rockmelon.

Like all things, fashion in spelling can change. For example, program or programme, for the non-computer usage, goes in and out of favour.

In summary, if you find the spelling in the text isn't as you would expect, pause before changing as there may be a good reason it is spelt that way. Consider adding appropriate cross-references to guide readers.

For further guidance consider consulting:

New Oxford style manual, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2016.

Peters, Pam. *Cambridge guide to Australian English usage*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Peters, Pam. *Cambridge guide to English usage*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004.

2. Page ranges

How you display page ranges in an index can depend on the publisher's house style. What are the usual styles and what are the options offered by the various indexing software packages?

The main styles are Chicago and Hart's Rules (now being called New Oxford style).

Chicago style

This is the style recommended by the *Chicago Manual of Style* 16th edition (16:14).

| First number | Second numbers | Examples |
|---|--|---|
| Less than 100 | Use all digits | 3–10, 71–72, 96–117 |
| 100 or multiples of 100 | Use all digits | 100–104, 1100–1113 |
| 101 through 109, 201 to 209, etc | Use changed part only | 101–8, 808–33, 1103–4 |
| 110 through 199, 201 through 299, etc. | Use two digits unless more are needed to include all changed parts | 321–28, 498–532, 1087–89, 1496–500, 11564–625, 12991–3001 |

New Oxford style (Hart's Rules)

This is the style recommended by *New Oxford style* (11.1.4).

A span of numbers is often elided to the fewest figures possible:

30–1, 42–3, 132–6, 1841–5

But retain as many digits as necessary when they change across the range:

65–71, 352–62, 1491–560, 89,999–90,000

In any event, do not elide digits in (or ending with) the group 10 to 19 because of the way they are read or spoken:

10–12, 15–19, 114–18, 310–11

Indexing software

Each software package has several options for page ranges. It is interesting to compare what they are and the subtle variations between each.

CINDEX

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Complete | 3–10, 16–18, 100–104, 107–108, 210–213, 321–325, 1496–1504, 1536–1538 |
| Chicago | 3–10, 16–18, 100–104, 107–8, 210–13, 321–25, 1496–1504, 1536–38 |
| Hart | 3–10, 16–18, 100–4, 107–8, 210–13, 321–5, 1496–504, 1536–8 |
| Aggressive (Full) | 3–10, 16–8, 100–4, 107–8, 210–3, 321–5, 1496–504, 1536–8 |

Macrex

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Unsquash | 3–10, 16–18, 100–104, 107–108, 210–213, 321–325, 1496–1504, 1536–1538 |
| Chicago Manual | 3–10, 16–18, 100–104, 107–8, 210–13, 321–25, 1496–1504, 1536–38 |
| Modified Chicago | 3–10, 16–18, 100–104, 107–08, 210–13, 321–25, 1496–1504, 1536–38 |
| Hart/Oxford Guide to Style | 3–10, 16–18, 100–4, 107–8, 210–13, 321–5, 1496–504, 1536–8 |
| Penguin | 3–10, 16–18, 100–104, 107–8, 210–213, 321–5, 1496–504, 1536–8 |
| Maximum | 3–10, 16–8, 100–4, 107–8, 210–3, 321–5, 1496–504, 1536–8 |

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| None | 3–10, 16–18, 100–104, 107–108, 210–213, 321–325, 1496–1504, 1536–1538 |
| Chicago 15th Ed. | 3–10, 16–18, 100–104, 107–8, 210–13, 321–25, 1496–1504, 1536–38 |
| Chicago 14th Ed. | 3–10, 16–18, 100–104, 107–8, 210–13, 321–25, 1496–504, 1536–38 |
| Hart’s Rules | 3–10, 16–8, 100–4, 107–8, 210–3, 321–5, 1496–504, 1536–8 |
| Hart’s (modified) | 3–10, 16–18, 100–4, 107–8, 210–13, 321–5, 1496–504, 1536–8 |

3. Indexing book introductions or the long preface, particularly those with Roman numerals

- Book introductions have various names: introductory chapter, preliminary chapter, preface, chapter 0 or chapter 1.
- Should this introductory chapter be indexed?
 - If the material is indexable, then it should go in. Definitions of terms (which may not be defined elsewhere) should also be indexed.
 - Some authors use the introductory chapter as an expanded table of contents, outlining the material that will be covered in subsequent chapters. Even if the material itself is not indexable, take note of the terminology used, as it can provide indications of what terms to look for in the text.
- Having decided to index the introductory material, you need to handle the locators, which in most instances, will be Roman numerals.
 - For the lower Roman numerals, e.g. xii–xiv, most people have no problem.
 - However, if the chapter is very long, you could encounter the following: lxxi–lxxix or even xcv–xcix. If you find yourself in this situation, what should you do? Contact the editor, pointing out that most people are comfortable with Roman numerals up to xxx, but after that, their knowledge falls away. Hopefully, the editor will organise with the typesetter to have the Roman numerals converted to Arabic, and the rest of the text repaginated, before you start the indexing.
- With indexing software, Roman numerals file before Arabic numerals by default, so: iv, viii–ix, 3, 8, 11–14.
- However, the software allows for other options, including interfiling the entries, e.g. 3, iv, 8, viii–ix, 11–14 or even 3, iv, viii–ix, 8, 11–14, though I can’t think of a realistic situation where you would need to do this. Figure or caption numbers could possibly be interfiled with page numbers, however I will leave it to the MIB readership to provide a real-world scenario.
- If the text you are indexing uses upper-case Roman for the introductory pages, e.g. IV, VIII–IX, XV–XVII, do you follow this style in the index, or do you just choose lower-case Roman? The trend is to use lower-case Roman numbers for the index and leave upper-case Roman, if used, for Plate numbers, e.g. Plate VIII, or section numbers in loose-leaf publications, e.g. IV.15–17.

- As an aside, upper case is used when referring to Roman numerals, but lower case is used when discussing roman typefaces.

4. Reasons for turning down a job

When you commence your indexing career, you may feel that you must take on every job that is offered to you. However, there are a number of situations where it is pragmatic to turn a job down. Don't feel guilty, you are showing your professionalism in doing so. Here is the list of reasons presented at the meeting, grouped by theme.

Time issues

- Too busy – too much other work on; going away or currently away
- Insufficient time frame
- Job has arrived early/late, so you can't fit it in
- Longer job than expected.

Subject issues

- Dislike of the subject
- Subject beyond your skill level
- Subject outside your experience
- Topic causes strong emotions or conflicts with your ethical beliefs.

Skill issues

- Type of index required is beyond your skill level, for example, ebook or embedded.

Budget issues

- Insufficient budget offered
- Budget reduced after the job arrives.

Publisher issues

- Don't trust the publisher – prior experience/information from colleagues has taught you to be wary.

Mary Russell – American spelling; Page ranges

Max McMaster – Indexing book introductions or the long preface; Reasons for turning down a job

Melbourne place names

You may know how to spell Melbourne place names, but how are you on pronouncing them? Will you be taken for a local? This article explains the local preference for Mel-BEN not Mel-BORN (only it is apparently heading to MAL-BEN), Prahran is Pr-AAN, Reservoir is Reser-VORR not Reser-VWAH and Lalor is LAY-lor, not LAW-ler as in Peter Lalor. For other tips see article from *The Age Domain* 10 June 2018.

<https://www.domain.com.au/news/how-to-pronounce-melbourne-suburb-names-prahran-st-albans-malvern-berwick-20180606-h111jv/>

Institute of Certified Indexers Purple Pen Competition 2018



The Institute of Certified Indexers have announced the Purple Pen Competition for 2018. It is open to new indexers who have completed an indexing course in the last five years. Since the application form talks about non-US citizens paying checks, it appears to be open to all. <http://www.certifiedindexers.com/> Applications close end July.

Upcoming meetings

Day: First Thursday of the month

Venue: Hawthorn Library meeting room 1 (called Glenferrie), 584 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn

Time: 6.00 – 8.00 pm

Carparking is available down the side of the building. If you are travelling by public transport there is a tram stop nearby, and Glenferrie Station is just a couple of tram stops away.

After the meeting we will go to a local restaurant for a meal (at own expense). For those travelling by public transport, there is always plenty of space in members' cars to enable us to all get to the restaurant quickly. You will also be well located for getting home afterwards, with the train station and tram stops just a short walk away.

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| July 5 | Improving indexing speed | More haste, less speed, they say (and we have probably all experienced). We will discuss tips on how to improve your indexing speed. |
| August 2 | Abbreviations and acronyms | How do you index concepts known in professions by acronyms or abbreviations? How do you file them? |

Contributions to *Melbourne Indexers Bulletin* are welcome at melbourneindexers@gmail.com