

Italian names

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Modern usage

Personal names are generally found in the pattern familiar to anglophones, with the surname following one or more forenames, and should be inverted when indexed:

Antonioni, Michelangelo
Giulini, Carlo Maria
Lualdi, Antonella
Morante, Elsa
Pasolini, Pier Paolo

Care should be taken with official documents, in which the surname may be given first, e.g. Rossi Giovanni, where Rossi is the surname, and the name should be indexed as:

Rossi, Giovanni

Compound surnames and names of married women

Italian compound surnames should be indexed under the first element:

Poggio Bracciolini, Gian Francesco

Italian women often add their husbands' surnames to their own. If Maria Rossi marries and takes her husband's surname, Martinelli, in addition to her own, the name should be indexed under the first element of the surname:

Rossi Martinelli, Maria

Alternatively Italian women may continue to use their maiden names alone after marriage, especially in business contexts and on legal documents, so it should not be assumed that they and their husbands will have the same surname.

Surnames with prefixes

Modern surnames with prefixes (usually prepositions) are indexed under the prefix:

D'Annunzio, Gabriele
De Sica, Vittorio
Della Casa, Lisa
Di Stefano, Giuseppe

Other prefixes you may find are *A*, *Da*, *Del*, *Li* and *Lo*.

Titles of nobility

These are placed after the family name when the latter is better known:

Savoia, Luigi Amedeo di, duca degli Abruzzi
Boiardo, Matteo Maria, conte di Scandiano

Such titles are dropped for professional purposes:

Visconti, Luchino
(where the film director's title of 'conte di Modrone' is not used)

When the person is known by the title of nobility, the name is indexed under the title:

Montecucculi, Raimondo, conte di

Religious titles

These include Fra (brother), Suor (sister) and Padre (father). They are normally placed after the actual name, but before the forename if both surname and forename are used:

Benincasa, Suor Orsola
Lippi, Fra Filippo
Maria Celeste, Suor
Pio, Padre

In an English text (in contrast to Italian practice where popes tend to be called by their family name), popes are normally indexed by the names they have taken on being elected to the papacy, for example:

Pius V, Pope

If a pope's original name is mentioned in the text, it may be helpful to include it in brackets:

Benedict XVI, Pope (earlier Cardinal Joseph Alois Ratzinger)
John Paul II, Pope (earlier Cardinal Karol Wojtyła)

There may also be occasions when it might be appropriate (for example, in the biography of a single pope) to split the index entries between 'before' and 'after' election to the papacy. There is no need to give the Italian version of the name, such as Benedetto or Giovanni Paolo.

Medieval and Renaissance usage

During the Middle Ages and Renaissance, surnames as we know them today were not universally used, the person possessing only a given name, along with a phrase to distinguish between persons with the same name. Examples are given below. Surnames became increasingly used as they were needed, especially during the Renaissance and in early modern times, and names from this period often show a mixture of forms and usage.

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It can therefore be difficult to know which element of a name is the one under which it should be indexed. In such cases it is usually best to index under the name by which the individual is best known, particularly in the case of artists and other prominent persons:

Giorgione [Giorgio Barbarelli, also called Giorgio da Castel-franco]
Michelangelo Buonarroti [not Buonarroti, Michelangelo]

But there is not always a consensus about this: the poet Dante is sometimes indexed as Dante Alighieri and sometimes as Alighieri, Dante. In such cases it may be helpful to use cross-references, if space allows.

Before the modern period (see above), prepositions such as *de*, *de'*, *degli*, *dei* and *de li* were not usually part of the surname, so Lorenzo *de'* Medici is indexed as Medici, Lorenzo *de'*.

Some individuals are known by alternative names rather than surnames as we know them today. The rule of thumb is to index them under the name by which they are best known, with the original name in brackets if appropriate. The categories below indicate known names that derive from factors of other given names:

Descriptive names derived from personal characteristics

Such as Guercino ('squint-eyed'), actually Antonio Barbieri:

Guercino (Antonio Barbieri)
Sodoma (Giovanni Antonio Bazzi)

Descriptive names derived from occupations

Such as 'calzolaio' (shoemaker) or 'fabbro' (ironsmith). The master of a guild may be identified as 'maestro'. Sometimes these descriptives become the name by which the person is best known. Domenico di Tommaso Bigordi was apprenticed to a goldsmith, known as a metal garland-maker or *ghirlandaio*; Jacopo Robusti became known as Tintoretto after his father's profession of dyer (*tintore*):

Ghirlandaio, Domenico (Domenico di Tommaso Bigordi)
Tintoretto (Jacopo Robusti)

Diminutives and other variations on forenames

Masaccio (Tommaso Giovanni di Mone)

Patronymics and names derived from those of associates

Filippo, son of Michele, is identified by his father's name with the prefix 'di'. The grandfather's name may also be added, with or without a family name to follow:

Filippo di Michele
Filippo di Michele di Giovanni
Francesco di Giorgio

Piero di Cosimo adopted the name of the artist under whom

he studied, Cosimo Rosselli. Andrea del Sarto was the son of a tailor (*sarto*).

Andrea del Sarto
Piero di Cosimo

Geographic names

Derived from the individual's birthplace or home town. Leonardo da Vinci, to use a well-known example, came from the town of Vinci (the word 'da' means 'from'). The artists Caravaggio and Correggio also took their names from their home towns, and the name of Perugino is derived from Perugia.

Antonello da Messina
Caravaggio (Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio)
Correggio (Antonio Allegri)
Leonardo da Vinci
Mino da Fiesole
Palestrina, Giovanni Pierluigi da
Perugino (Pietro Vannucci)

Some well-known figures are known only by a forename, sometimes anglicized in anglophone use:

Raphael (Raffaello Sanzio or Santi)
Titian (Tiziano Vecelli)

In the absence of more information about the individuals concerned, there is no infallible way of recognizing names that should be indexed in one way or another. Wellisch (1995: 364) advises consulting reference works and catalogues for guidance. The indexer must use his or her own judgement to decide when to use *see* references from given or other names; this is advisable particularly when the author uses them also. Again, the decision may depend on space constraints.

To quote an Italian proverb, *Chi cerca, trova* (seek and you shall find).

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Sources

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