UNP Indexing Guidelines

October 2021

Our guide for indexing is *The Chicago Manual of Style (CMS)*, 17th edition, chapter 16. The critical elements of CMS indexing style are reproduced in these guidelines, which we expect authors to read carefully and follow precisely. Before you begin, consider consulting your project editor, who can send relevant index examples if requested. After you begin, consider submitting a draft of your index to your project editor.

**File Preparation**
- The index should be emailed to the press as a **Word document** (a .docx file).
- The index should contain **just one hard return at the end of every main entry** and no tabs at all.
- **Do not** format the entries into columns.
- Leave one hard return (i.e., a blank line) between alphabetical sections. **Do not** insert letter headings “A,” “B,” “C,” etc.
- Use either an **en dash or a hyphen** between **inclusive numbers** (i.e., page ranges).

**Do Not Use Indexing Software**

Please note: UNP does not accept indexes created with indexing software. Indexes generated from indexing software over-index and are more rightly concordances.

**Length**

There is no prescribed length for an index. CMS suggests that the length of a typical scholarly index is usually about 2 to 5 percent of the length of the text. Your **draft index manuscript** can be up to **about 10 percent** of the length of your original manuscript. Another way to gauge length is by number of entries: five or six references per text page will yield a fairly short, basic index; fifteen to twenty references per page will make a long, more comprehensive index.

**What to Index (Main Entries)**

“An index with relatively few main entries but masses of subentries is unhelpful as a search tool.”

——CMS 16.127
• Only index terms in the context of a **substantial discussion** about the idea, person, etc. in the text. Rather than indexing a term simply because it appears, first consider whether a reader will be likely to consult the index in order to locate that term. Do not index passing mentions. While informed readers may disagree on what constitutes a passing mention in the context of a given book, please use your best judgment. If there is only one page locator for a certain term, consider whether it is worthwhile to include that term.

  • **CMS 16.31** offers the following example and advice regarding indexable content: “In a work on the history of the automobile . . . an author might write, ‘After World War II small sports cars like the British MG, often owned by returning veterans, began to make their appearance in college towns like Northampton, Massachusetts, and Ann Arbor, Michigan.’ An indexer should resist the temptation to index these place-names; the two towns mentioned have nothing to do with the theme of the work. The MG sports car, on the other hand, should be indexed, given the subject of the work. Similarly, names or terms that occur in passing references and scene-setting elements that are not essential to the theme of a work need not be indexed.”

  • **Do not** index tables of contents, lists of abbreviations, part titles, acknowledgments, glossaries, or bibliography/reference pages. Introductions and forewords (and sometimes prefaces and prologues) are typically the only front matter material that is appropriate to index; back matter appendices may or may not be indexed depending on their content. Substantive note content should be indexed (see “Indexing Notes” section on page 9). **Do not** list an entire chapter’s page range for any subject—in general, long page spans are not useful.

  • Main entries in an index should be **nouns** or **noun phrases**. An adjective is almost never appropriate as a main entry, though adjectives modifying nouns as part of a main entry are perfectly acceptable. Verbs appearing as main entries should be in the gerund form (e.g., *running* rather than *run* or *runs*). All main entries should be **lowercased** unless they are proper nouns.

  • Do not be afraid to repeat modifiers: the sort of repetition illustrated in the first column below is commonplace in quality indexing. In the second column, the main entry consists of a standalone adjective, which is not an indexing best practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct</th>
<th>Incorrect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>artifacts, chiefly, 234 OR 234</td>
<td>chiefly artifacts, 234; names, 89, 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>names, chiefly, 89, 92 OR 92</td>
<td>chiefly names, 89, 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native artwork, 64, 99</td>
<td>Native: artwork, 64, 99; education, 13, 19–21, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native education, 13, 19–21, 25</td>
<td>language terms; 47, 62, 106, 107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native language terms, 47, 62, 106, 107</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

  • **Index terms exactly as they appear in the text.** Spelling, capitalization, hyphenation, and formatting (italic, roman) of entries in the index should match their treatment in the text.
Common sense must be applied to this rule. For example, a common noun appearing at the start of a sentence will be capitalized in the text but should be lowercase in the index; a short story title appearing in single quotation marks inside another quotation in the text should be enclosed in the standard double quotation marks in the index; a term that is italicized for emphasis in the text should appear in roman in the index. In a text that sets non-English words in italics on first use and roman thereafter, set such terms in *italics* in the index.

- **Names of persons** should be inverted and alphabetized by last name.
  
  - Note that names of **fictional characters** are not inverted—such entries may benefit from a parenthetical clarification as well.

- A main entry that requires **more than six to eight locators** should usually be divided into **subentries**.

- **No end punctuation** should appear following index entries.

- In a **biography** or a book with a very narrow focus, readers will assume all entries relate to the primary subject. Thus a very long main entry for the primary subject is not necessary.

  - **Abbreviations**: According to *CMS* 16.26, “Organizations that are widely known under their abbreviations should be indexed and alphabetized according to the abbreviations. Parenthetical glosses, cross-references, or both should be added if the abbreviations, however familiar to the indexer, may not be known to all readers of the particular work.”

    **Examples**:

    - EEC (European Economic Community)
    - MLA. *See* Modern Language Association
    - NATO

- **Academic, military, and civil titles** (such as Rev., Prof., Dr., Sen., and Gen.) are not included in index entries.

*CMS* offers guidance on a number of very specific indexing scenarios, including how to index pseudonyms, monarchs, married vs. maiden names, and personal names according to various language traditions (Arabic, Japanese, Spanish, etc.). Don’t hesitate to consult your project editor with questions.

**Letter-by-Letter Alphabetizing**

- Use **letter-by-letter alphabetization** for main entries, subentries, and cross-references.

  - The letter-by-letter system is summarized in *CMS* 16.59: “Alphabetizing continues up to the first parenthesis or comma; it then starts again after the punctuation point. Spaces and all other punctuation marks [including periods and colons] are ignored. The order of precedence is one word, word followed by a
parenthesis, word followed by a comma, then (ignoring spaces and other punctuation) word followed by a number, and word followed by letters.”

- **Acronyms, initialisms, and most abbreviations** are alphabetized as they appear, not according to their spelled-out versions (e.g., “FBI” is alphabetized as f, b, i, not f, e, d . . .).

- An **ampersand** (&) should be treated as if spelled out (e.g., “Hernandez & Sons” would precede “Hernandez Automobiles”).

- Isolated entries beginning with **numerals** are alphabetized as though spelled out (e.g., 1984 would be alphabetized n, i, n . . .).

- **Place-names** beginning with an article should be alphabetized under the article, such as El Paso alphabetized under e.

- Words that begin with or include **accented letters** or other letters containing diacritic marks are alphabetized as though they were unaccented (e.g., the umlaut ö in “Motörhead” should be alphabetized as an o).

**Letter-by-Letter Alphabetical Order:** Examples from CMS 16.61 (the first term in column 2 follows the last term in column 1):

| NEW (Neighbors Ever Watchful) | new economics |
| NEW (Now End War)             | newel         |
| New, Arthur                  | New England   |
| New, Zoe                     | “new-fangled notions” |
| new-12 compound              | Newfoundland  |
| newborn                      | N. Ewing & Sons|
| newcomer                     | newlyweds     |
| New Deal                     | new math      |

**Page Locators**

- If discussion of a **topic continues for more than a page**, join the first and last page of the discussion into a range: 349–51. If a topic appears on consecutive pages, but other topics intervene between the mentions, provide the individual page numbers: 127, 128, 129.

- **Do not** use passim or ff. Provide specific page locators instead.

- Please follow CMS number style for **eliding inclusive numbers**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct</th>
<th>Incorrect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>86–88</td>
<td>86–8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>178–81</td>
<td>178–181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200–204 (first number is an even hundred; do not elide)</td>
<td>200–04 and 200–4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206–7 (both numbers x01 through x09; do not repeat hundred or zero)</td>
<td>206–207 and 206–07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Subentries

- Readers should be able to find topics with a quick scan, so subentries should be concise—two to four words are usually enough. The key word should be the first word or the first word after a conjunction or preposition that links the subentry to the main entry. More often than not, modifiers and articles are unnecessary. Keep in mind you need only guide readers to the topic; it is not necessary to tell readers what argument they will find on the page. For example, in a book of literary criticism, under the heading “aesthetics,” the subentry “imitation vs. invention as fundamental modern problem of” could be shortened to “imitation vs. invention in” or “modern problem of,” depending on which concept is more important, and the reader will find the full argument in the main text.

- Alphabetize subentries disregarding prepositions and conjunctions (see “Letter-by-Letter Alphabetizing” section on page 3). Articles in titles of works are not inverted and are ignored in alphabetizing. When names of persons are used in subentries, however, use full names and sort by first name.

- Use the run-in style: subentries follow the main entry and one another on a continuous line. Hard returns should appear only at the end of each main entry. Multiple subentries are separated by semicolons. If the main entry is immediately followed by subentries, it is separated from them by a colon. If the main entry is immediately followed by page locators, the pages follow a comma and any subsequent subentries follow a semicolon.

Examples:

- Bible, 2, 8; as educational tool, 122; Harriet Tubman and, 44, 200
- Black Americans: as abolitionists, 36, 40, 42, 60; as prisoners of war, 107; rights of, 36, 39, 175

- It is best to furnish at least one subentry for every five to ten references (a range of pages, such as 53–58, is considered one reference).

- Subentries should form a logical and grammatical relationship with the main entry. Usually a conjunction or a preposition will suffice as a link. The subentry should not repeat the main heading. Use the gerund (“ing”) form of a verb in subentries. A “list” relationship may also be utilized when appropriate (e.g., skyscrapers: Burj Khalifa, 300–302; Lippo Centre, 306–8; Turning Torso, 293–95).

- We prefer only one subentry level beyond the main heading. Contact your project editor if you believe there is a compelling need to include sub-subentries in the index.

- When indexing place-names in the United States, use a two-letter state abbreviation. Do not spell out state names unless the state name is the main entry.

- Most subentries that begin with numbers are alphabetized as if spelled out (e.g., sort “1492” under f for “fourteen”).
Example:

allotment, xiv–xv, 18; and Dawes Act, 4; and 1882 legislation, xiv, 16–17; and Native Americans, 26

● In rare cases, numerical order or chronological order may be appropriate for a given set of subentries, for example if subentries include multiple numbers (such as for military regiments, even when spelled out) or dates. If numerical order is used, these subentries should precede alphabetical subentries.

Examples:

Olympics: 1972 Munich, 207–10; 1996 Atlanta, 16–17; 2000 Sydney, 4; and disability, 99, 104

If all subentries for a given entry reflect a sequence of time, a chronological rather than an alphabetical arrangement can be used, but this option should be used sparingly.

Example:

Ali, Muhammad: birth of, 10, 12; childhood of, 16–34, 35, 37; boxing career of, 6, 38–60, 62–63; death of, 65

● Though it will occasionally be appropriate to repeat page locators across more than one subentry, repetition of the same page locators across many subentries is contrary to the intended purpose of subentries. As well, one should guard against creating too many subentries, in particular subentries that are linked to the immediate surrounding text in an excessively granular fashion. An index is more a conceptual map and less a literal concordance. Consider the shortcomings of the example below:

Text: From the same period dates a cantilever from Salisbury Cathedral, sculpted in stone, which Mills interprets as a three-headed Trinity.

Index entry: stone: sculpted in, 25

Cross References

General considerations for See cross-references from CMS 16.16:

See references direct a reader from, for example, an informal term to a technical one, a pseudonym to a real name, an inverted term to a noninverted one. They are also used for variant spellings, synonyms, aliases, abbreviations, and so on. The choice of the term under which the full entry appears depends largely on where readers are most likely to look. See references should therefore be given only where the indexer believes many readers might otherwise miss the full entry. . . . If . . . the entry to which the see reference refers is [relatively short], it is often more useful to omit the see reference and simply give the page numbers under both headings. Such duplication (or “double posting”) will save readers a trip.
• See also cross-references link main entries containing page locators to other closely related main entries or subentries that the reader may find useful.

In both cases, the cross-reference follows a period and is both capitalized and italicized.

Examples:

bison, 8, 11, 38, 44; in American Progress, 1–2; Bonneville party and, 46, 49
Bonneville, Benjamin, 45, 49
buffalo. See bison

Cafaro, Philip, 254n26
Cahokia, 11, 13. See also Mississippian people

• Note that See also references require that at least one unique page locator appears in the linked entry. There is no benefit to linking entries that merely reproduce the same page locators.

• A cross-reference should exactly match the entry it leads to. Given that the name of a person should be inverted, for example, a cross-reference to the main entry “DeMille, Cecil B.” should read: See DeMille, Cecil B. Such a cross-reference should not read: See Cecil B. DeMille, or See DeMille, or See Cecil DeMille.

Parenthetical information following a main entry should be included in the cross-reference.

• If a cross-reference is itself italicized, See or See also should be set in roman type.

Examples:

Batmobile, 42, 49. See also Batman Returns
Pierre Bezukhov (character). See War and Peace

• Cross-references should never immediately follow subentries but rather should be gathered at the end of the entire main entry. A string of cross-references should be listed in alphabetical order, with entries separated by semicolons.

Example:

sheep, 134–36, 141, 142. See also alpacas; goats

• When a cross-reference leads directly to a subentry, a colon should separate the main entry and subentry.

Examples:

John Deere, 206, 300n8. See also agriculture: mechanization of shawls. See fiber art: wool
● If a **generic cross-reference** must be used, the entire cross-reference should appear in italics (e.g., *See also specific Native American tribes*). If a generic cross-reference appears along with other specific cross-references, the generic cross-reference appears last, regardless of alphabetical order, preceded by “*and.*”

  **Example:**

  *See also OPEC; and individual nations*

● Avoid what is known as a **“blind” cross-reference**, that is, a cross-reference that leads to an entry with no page locators. For example, if an entry for “German shepherd” says “*See dogs,*” the entry “dogs” should include page locators, not only additional cross-references such as “*See household pets.*”

### Indexing Works

● **For titles that begin with articles** (*A, An, or The*), **include the article in its initial position but ignore it in alphabetizing**. Note that this UNP style choice is contra CMS.

  **Example:**

  phantoms, 210, 212
  
  *The Phantom Tollbooth* (Juster), 95
  pharaohs, 75

● **Subtitles** of works are omitted in both main entries and subentries.

● **Include author/creator last names in parentheses** following titles of works (books, essays, films, paintings, etc.). The title of a work should match the text and appear in quotation marks or italics as appropriate. In many cases the named author, artist, director, etc. should also have his or her own entry with the title of the work as a subentry.

  **Example:**

  *Look Homeward, Angel* (Wolfe), 34–37
  Wolfe, Thomas: childhood of, 6–8; literary influences on, 7–10; *Look Homeward, Angel*, 34–37; and Maxwell Perkins, 30–41

● Alternatively, in cases where a main entry for an author would contain several works, titles can be gathered alphabetically on a line immediately below, preceded by —Works:

  **Example:**

  Wolfe, Thomas: childhood of, 6–8; literary influences on, 7–10; and Maxwell Perkins, 30–41
  —Works: “Circus at Dawn,” 99–100; *The Face of a Nation*, 205–8; *Of Time and the River*, 242–46
• Note that articles—but not prepositions—are ignored in alphabetizing English titles and that articles are never inverted. (Prepositions used as linking words in subentries, however, are ignored.)

• For titles of works in languages other than English, follow the guidelines below as appropriate:
  • Articles should not be inverted. Unlike in English titles, however, articles in foreign-language works should be considered in alphabetization.
    • If the work was published only in a language other than English and is referred to in the text by its original title, use only the original title in the index. First references to such works generally offer a translation for convenience, set in roman type with no quotation marks and with sentence-style, rather than headline-style, capitalization; this translation need not appear in the index.
    • If the work has been published in English (English title given in quotation marks or italics, with headline-style capitalization) and is generally referred to in the text by its English title, use only the English title in the index.
    • If any work is presented as having been published in translation (English title in quotes or italics, with headline-style capitalization) but is referred to in the text by its original title, use the original title in the index, followed by the translated title in parentheses.

Indexing Notes

• Only index substantive information in the endnotes per CMS 16.110: “Notes should be indexed only if they continue or amplify discussion in the text.”

• Do not index the text page on which the endnote reference number appears. Only index the page on which the endnote itself appears, in the following forms:

| Indexed word or phrase appears in a single note: | 177n1 (n means “note”) |
| Indexed word or phrase appears in consecutive notes: | 177nn1–3 (nn means “notes”) |
| Indexed word or phrase appears in nonconsecutive notes: | 177n1, 177n4 |
| Indexed word or phrase appears in a single note spanning two pages: | 177n1 (list only the first page, even if the content appears on the continuation page) |
| Indexed word or phrase appears in consecutive notes spanning more than one page: | 177–78nn1–5 |
| Indexed word or phrase appears in a note, the number for which appears more than once on a page under two different chapter headings (such that “note 2” could refer to more than one endnote): | 265n2 (readers will logically continue to the second note 2 on the page if the content is not found in the first) |

• Do not index names of authors or works appearing in in-text parenthetical citations.

• Do not index source citations in endnotes.

Indexing Illustrations, Maps, Tables, Etc.

• Page locators referring to illustrative material (not including tables) should be italicized. The press will insert an explanatory headnote regarding the use of italics or other designations such as t (see below).
● Italicized page locators for illustrations should appear **sequentially**, interspersed with the rest of the page locators. If an illustration page number is identical to the first number in a text page range or falls between the first and last number in a range, the illustration locator should appear *after* the range.

**Example:**

quilts, 12, 14–17, 15, 19–20, 19

● **Do not index** illustrations that appear in a **gallery**, as galleries appear on unnumbered pages.

● To index content given in a **table**, add a *t* after the page locator: 24t.

● For books containing different forms of **illustrations enumerated separately** (for example, a list of photographs, a list of maps, and a list of illustrations, categorized separately), a **generic italic page locator** for all types will suffice, even if different types appear on the same page. The content of the images themselves in combination with the captions should eliminate any ambiguity.

Your book is unique, and as you complete your index you will probably come upon a situation not mentioned here. As always, don’t hesitate to get in touch with your project editor for assistance.
Index Checklist

Entries and subentries

___ The index is formatted in the run-in style.
___ Indexed pages lead to substantive discussions only.
___ Main entries containing more than six to eight locators are divided into subentries.
___ Main entries and subentries are alphabetized letter by letter, and terms appear as they do in the text.
___ Subentries are alphabetized by first substantive word (ignoring introductory articles, prepositions [except in titles of works], and conjunctions).
___ Subentries form a logical phrase with the main entry (or exist in a “list” relationship) and are no more than three or four words long; the gerund (“ing”) form is used for verbs in subentries.
___ No page locators are for bibliographic or citational content.
___ Index entries do not use end punctuation.
___ Commas, semicolons, and colons appear correctly throughout the index. Examples of correct usage:

Vance, William, 64, 249n31, 249n35; and Bo Walker, 60, 62, 63; and Shirley Alton, 66, 68–71
vaqueros: in María Amparo Ruiz de Burton, 17, 139–40, 143–46; Washington Irving on, 45, 47

Page locators

___ Page locators are in sequential order.
___ Page locators to endnotes have been correctly formatted.
___ Inclusive numbers have been elided per Chicago number style.

Cross-references

___ Cross-references exactly match the entry they lead to (select cross-reference text and hit CNTRL + F to view match results on a PC).
___ “See” and “See also” are capped and follow a period at the end of the entry; if the entry is italic, “See” and “See also” are set in roman; “See also” references lead to unique page locators; “See” vs. “See also” forms are correctly employed; a colon separates the main entry and subentry when a cross-reference is to the latter.
___ When multiple cross-references appear, they are in alphabetical order and separated by semicolons.

Names and Works

___ Articles are not inverted but are ignored in alphabetizing.
___ Names of real persons are inverted in main entries. Names of persons, whether real or imaginary, are not inverted in subentries and are alphabetized by first name.
___ When several works by the same author are cited, they are gathered on a separate “Works” line preceded by an em dash.