Key Words Index Style Guide, 2017-2023+  
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This style guide builds on the styles used for the online Key Words Index, 1994-99 and Key Words Index, 2000-2016. This style was used for the Key Words Index, 2017-2023 (vol. 25-31) consolidation written by seven different indexers.

Materials to be indexed: Feature articles, conference reports, editorials, letters, columns (column name and author(s) only), reviews, ASI business, and other bylined items. Each item should be indexed under the author’s name, and appropriate subject headings. Article titles should be indexed only as subheadings — not as main headings. Do not index ads, footnotes, endnotes, bibliographies, or introductory matter (pp. 1-2).

Locator format: vol. # (issue#): page #, e.g., v.29(1):16-22.  
Note that the year is not used in the locator since the volume and issue number is sufficient for identifying the issue on the Key Words page at https://www.asindexing.org/key-words/.

Depth of indexing: In general, in-depth indexing is not required for a journal index. Index major concepts or subsections only and ignore passing mentions. Featured articles (excluding conference reports) should average 3-6 entries per article, including both subject and name entries, focusing especially on concepts in titles. If the title is non-descriptive, e.g. “Great time was had by all in San Antonio!”, index what the article is about rather than using the article title verbatim as a subheading for all references to that article.

Conference reports and presentations: The promotional name of a conference is somewhat irrelevant to the index users. Global entries with the name of the conference and the metatopic, e.g., “AI impacts on indexing,” should appear under the name of the sponsoring organization and the global subject. Entries about individual presentations should be indexed under the presenter’s name, title, and subject(s) of that presentation. The title of the conference should rarely appear as a subheading under the presenter’s name.

Subject headings include metatopics for articles, proper names, concepts, and subjects. Use word-by-word order for sorting, and do not invert leading article in titles; just hide them from the sort. Up to two levels of subheadings may be used. Consult the 2017-2023 index to see how similar articles, topics, or personal names have been indexed previously.

Personal names: Use qualifiers to distinguish between names as author, subject, conference presenter, etc. Following is an example of a cumulated name entry array, showing multiple types of entries by or about the same individual:
Mertes, Kate

“Announcement of Hines Award Recipient for 2014: Kate Mertes,” 22:45 (photo)

Beyond Book Indexing: How to Get Started in Web Indexing, Embedded Indexing, and Other Computer-Based Media (Brenner and Rowland) (rvw), 8:104–105

“Indexing the Hard Stuff: Theology, Literary Criticism, and Public Policy” (Mertes and Towery) (conf rpt), 14:91

“On Aboutness Workshop: Kate Mertes” (Flatoff) (conf rpt), 18:88 photo

President’s File (column), 10:88–89

“Into Thin Air, for an Indexer: Defining and Hiking Towards Goals in a Rarified Climate.,” 11:36

“Of Conferences and Chrysanthemums,” 10:144–146


Indexes and indexing as subjects should be indexed under the specific indexing-related concept, e.g., art indexes; embedded indexing; genealogical indexing; newspaper indexing. Use UPPER CASE for easy visual online identification of indexing-specific subject headings. Do not double-post under broader terms. Following is a recommended (but not exclusive) list of potential indexing-specific subject heading:

automated indexing
bilingual indexing
biographies
business issues
children’s book indexing
computer-assisted indexing
database indexing
electronic media, indexing
embedded indexing
fiction, indexes in
fiction, indexing
foreign-language indexing
foreign names, indexing
genealogical indexing
geographical indexing
government agencies
history, indexing
HTML indexing
legal indexing
medical indexing
moving image document indexing
newspaper indexing
online indexing
periodicals, indexing
personal names, indexing
plant name indexes
scholarly indexing
software
standards
technical documents, indexing

**Articles about ASI business:** index names of award recipients, officers, and other information of long-term value to the association. See the 2017-2023 consolidation for handling under the “ASI (American Society of Indexing)” heading of items such as Treasurer’s Reports, Business Meeting reports, Chapter and SIG reports, etc. In addition, official reports and recurring columns (Treasurer’s report, President’s report, Editor’s column, etc.) should be double-posted under the appropriate personal name but should not be analyzed; use only the name of the item and locators in chronological order.

Obituaries and similar notices such as announcements of awards to current and past members should always be indexed under personal names and event or title only. Follow the style used for the 2017-2023 *Key Words index*.

**Entry formats**

1. Italicize titles of major works (books, movies, journals, etc.). Use quotes around titles of articles and other short works; these rarely need to be double-posted as main headings. Use book indexing standards in sorting on initial articles in article titles.

2. Recurring columns with standard titles, e.g., President’s Column; Editor’s File: Invert the name of the individual columnist, with locators for all columns by that author. When appropriate, unique titles of individual columns may be posted under the column name and double-posted as warranted. Indexing of column content is rarely needed.

3. Capitalize *See* and *See also* cross-references.

**Reviews** should be listed under the medium, e.g., Book Reviews; Software, as well as title, author(s), and reviewer name.

**Abbreviations and Qualifiers:**

- (author)
- (column)
- (conf rpt) – report of a professional meeting
- (letter) – letter to the editor
Recurring Columns: List title entries under the inverted name of the author with a (column) qualifier, and double-post under the column title, e.g.:

Combs, Michele
   President’s Message (column), v.30(1):3

Editor’s File (column)
   Heila, Daniel, v.30(2):4, 30(3):4

Perlman, Janet, v.30(1):2,

Guilinger, Gina
   President’s Message (column), v.30(2):3, v.30(3):3,

President’s Message (column)
   Combs, Michele, v.30(1):3,

If the name of a column changes over time (e.g., President’s Column -> President’s Message), index under the current title with appropriate cross-references from the previous title(s). Subject analysis is rarely necessary for columns such as these but may be used in exceptional circumstances.

Appropriate double-postings (example):
   It is rarely necessary to analyze journal articles in depth. Focus primarily on the metatopic and major subtopics that are not obvious from the title of the article.

ART INDEXES AND INDEXING
   “Sunday in the Park with George: Controlling Art-Book Index Length” (Paratext) (Mertes), 2022, v.30(4):6

Mertes, Kate
   “Sunday in the Park with George: Controlling Art-Book Index Length” (Paratext) (author), 2022, v.30(4):6

Paratext (column)
   “Sunday in the Park with George: Controlling Art-Book Index Length” (Mertes). 2022, v.30(4):6