Em dash. For use of the em dash in run-in indexes that require occasional sub-subentries, see example B in 18.27.

En dash. The en dash is used for page ranges and all other inclusive locators (e.g., "dogs, 135–42"). See 6.83, the index to this manual, and examples throughout this chapter.

The Mechanics of Indexing

**BEFORE INDEXING BEGINS: TOOLS AND DECISIONS**

**18.100 Schedule.** Anyone making an index for the first time should know that the task is intensive and time consuming. An index for a three-hundred-page book could take as much as three weeks' work. See also 18.3.

**18.101 Proofs.** The indexer must have in hand a clean and complete set of proofs before beginning to index. For a printed work, page proofs are required; for an electronic work, the indexer typically requires a printout showing both content and locators. For a journal volume, the work may begin when the first issue to be indexed has been paginated, and it may continue for several months, until page proofs for the final issue in the volume have been generated. For a nonprint work, the final version must be available. See also 18.107–8, 18.118–27.

**18.102 Publisher’s preferences.** Before beginning work, the indexer should know the publisher’s preferences in such matters as alphabetizing, run-in or indented style, inclusive numbers, handling of numeric entries, and the like (all matters dealt with in earlier sections of this chapter). For a journal volume index, the style is likely to be well established, and the indexer must follow that style. If the publisher requests an index of a particular length, the indexer should allow more than the normal time for editing (see 18.133). See also 18.134.

**18.103 Software.** Software programs commonly used by professional indexers require more learning time than most authors can afford. Less complicated ones are becoming available (check with your publisher or the American Society of Indexers). But an index can be prepared with patience and an ordinary word processor.

**18.104 Using the text files.** Authors often request a copy of the final electronic files that correspond exactly to the page proofs and thus include page numbers or other locators. Unfortunately, those files are heavily formatted for typesetting and perhaps other uses; to convert them for use by the indexer is therefore extremely expensive. A copy of the publisher’s edited files could be used for searches and other tasks, but it may not include locators.

**18.105 Typing and format.** Before beginning to type—typing is used here to mean keysetting on a computer as well as on a typewriter (see 18.106)—consult the publisher about the format in which the index is to be submitted (see 18.134). Although the index will eventually appear in flush-and-hang style, you may find it easier to type it in the form of simple paragraphs, flush left, with a hard return at the end of each entry. In indented style, use the hanging-indent feature after the main entry and all but the final subentries; use a hard return only at the end of the entire entry. Avoid the tab; just let the return lines wrap normally. Use your regular software to create italics and boldface, if needed.

**18.106 The old-fashioned way.** Indexers used to handwrite or type preliminary entries and subentries on 3 x 5-inch index cards, then alphabetize and edit the cards, and finally type the index, while further refining it, on 8½ x 11-inch sheets. For details, consult Nancy Mulvany, Indexing Books (bibliog. 2.5), or the thirteenth or fourteenth edition of this manual (no longer in print but available in large libraries). The procedures described in the following sections can be adapted to the index-card method.

**WHEN TO BEGIN**

**18.107 Preliminary work.** Although some planning can be done at the manuscript stage, most indexes are prepared as soon as a work is in page proof or, if electronic, in its final form. For indexes in which the locators are paragraph or section numbers rather than page numbers, galley proof or, for an electronic work, a nonfinal printout can be used. Authors who are not preparing their own indexes may compile a list of important terms for the indexer, but doing much more is likely to cause duplication or backtracking.

**18.108 Pagination of printed works.** Once an indexer has started work on an index that uses page numbers, adding or moving an illustration or more than two or three words of text will affect pagination. No index using page numbers should be begun, let alone completed, until page numbering is final.
18.117 Illustrations, tables, charts, and such. Illustrative matter may be indexed if it is of particular importance to the discussion, especially when such items are not listed in or after the table of contents. References to illustrations may be set in italics (or boldface, if preferred); a headnote should then be inserted at the beginning of the index (see 18.145 for an example).

Alternatively, references to tables may be denoted by t, to figures by f, plates by pl, or whatever works (all set in roman, with no space following the page number). Add an appropriate headnote (e.g., "The letter f following a page number denotes a table"). If the number of an illustration is essential, it is safer to use table, fig., and so on, with no comma following the page number.

titi monkeys, 69, 208t, 209t, 210f
authors and printers, 88 table 5, 89-90, 123-25, 122 fig. 7

MARKING PROOFS AND PREPARING ENTRIES

18.118 The initial review. Experienced indexers usually begin by perusing the table of contents and scanning the rest of the proofs to establish what is in the work and where.

18.119 Highlighting terms and beginning to type. Highlighting terms to be used as main headings or subentries is the first essential step in preparing an index. It is normally done by hand-marking a set of proofs. Inexperienced indexers are advised to mark the proofs—at least in the early stages—with the same kind of detail as is illustrated in figure 18.1. Most indexers prefer to mark one section (or chapter or journal issue) at a time and to type and alphabetize the marked terms in that section before going on to the next section. The notes belonging to the section, even if endnotes, should be checked and, if necessary, indexed at the same time (see 18.110-13). As the indexer becomes more skilled in marking the proofs, less underlining and fewer marginal notes may suffice.

18.120 How many terms to mark. The number of terms to mark on any one printed page obviously depends on the kind of work being indexed. As a very rough guide, an average of five references per text page in a book will yield a modest index (one-fiftieth the length of the text), whereas fifteen or more will yield a fairly long index (one-twentieth the length of the text). If the publisher has budgeted for a strictly limited number of pages, the indexer should work accordingly. Remember that it is always easier to drop entries than to add them; err on the side of inclusiveness. See also 18.30–31, 18.102, 18.114–17, 18.133.

18.121 Marking entries. To visualize the method advocated here, suppose you are indexing a chapter from Wayne Booth's *For the Love of It* (University of Chicago Press, 1999), a discussion of work and play and work as play (see fig. 18.1). You have read through the chapter once and now have to go back and select headings and subheadings for indexing this particular section (of which only the first paragraphs are shown here). You decide that the whole section (pp. 54–56) will have to be indexed under both work and play, so you mark the section head as shown. (On the marked proofs, a colon separates a proposed principal heading from a proposed subheading.) Going down the page, you underline Bliss Perry (noting that it is to be inverted—Perry, Bliss—as a heading; similarly for the other personal names). You also underline amateur and professional (modifying them to the plural). In the second paragraph, you underline work and love, with proposed subheads, and Churchill (if you have to look up the first name, note it in the margin). You pass by Chicago Symphony Orchestra as tangential, but politicians may be considered as a heading.

18.122 Planning subentries. For each term marked, you should write in a modification—a word or phrase that narrows the application of the heading, hence a potential subentry. Although some such modifications may eventually be dropped, they should be kept on hand in case they are needed. Otherwise you may end up with some headings that are followed by nothing but a long string of numbers, which makes for an all but useless index entry. The modifications can be altered and added to as the indexing proceeds.

18.123 Inclusive numbers. If a text discussion extends over more than one page, section, or paragraph, both beginning and ending numbers—which will depend on what locator system is being used (see 18.12)—must be written in.

18.124 Typing and modifying entries. Each entry at this stage should include three elements: a heading, a modification (or provisional subentry), and a locator (page or paragraph number). While typing, you will probably modify some of the headings and add, delete, or alter subentries and locators. After typing each entry, read it carefully against the page proof. You are unlikely to have time to read the final printout against the marked-up proofs,
those who feel the hurting of others far, no argument against it can fully succeed, and the history of efforts to explain why "human nature" inflicts such iniquities and when we might do as combatants could fill a library, books on the history of Satan and the Fall, on the comparative nature of our times, on secularization, on nature and why it is terrible or defensible. And so on. I'd just hope that there are not all agree that to hurt or be hurt or for the sake of it is self-evidently a loving choice.1

One encouraging qualification, we ascertain, is that cross-references do often reflect past on other. We just don't do it on purpose.

18.126 Final check of proofs. After typing all the entries, read quickly through the marked-up proofs once again to see whether anything indexable has been omitted. You may find some unmarked items that seemed peripheral at the time but now, in the light of themes developed in later chapters, declare themselves significant. Or you may have missed major items. Now is the time to remedy all omissions.

18.127 Noting errors. Although not engaged to proofread, the indexer has to read carefully and usually finds a number of typographical errors and minor inconsistencies. If indexing a book (rather than a journal volume, most of which will already have been published), keep track of all such errors and send a list to the publisher (who will be very grateful) when, or before, submitting the index.

EDITING AND REFINING THE ENTRIES

18.128 Deciding on terms for main headings. The assembled entries must now be edited to a coherent whole. You have to make a final choice among synonymous or closely related terms—agriculture, farming, or crop raising; clothing, costume, or dress; life, existence, or being—and, if you think necessary, prepare suitable cross-references to reflect those choices. For journals, the terms may have been established in the indexes for previous volumes and should be retained.

18.129 Main headings versus subentries. You also have to decide whether certain items are best treated as main headings or as subentries under another heading. Where will readers look first? In a work dealing with schools of various kinds, such terms as kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, and public school should constitute separate entries; in a work in which those terms appear but are not the primary subject matter, they may better be treated as subentries under school. An index with relatively few main entries but masses of subentries is unhelpful as a search tool. Furthermore, in an indexed index an excessively long string of subentries may begin to look like a set of main entries, so that users lose their way alphabetically. Promote subentries to main entries and use the alphabet to its best advantage.

When to furnish subentries. Main entries unmodified by subentries should not be followed by more than five or six locators. If, for example, the draft

Alphabetizing. Many indexers alphabetize as they type; others let their software do it, intervening as necessary. By this time the indexer should have decided whether to use the letter-by-letter or the word-by-word system (see

18.105). If the system chosen proves unsatisfactory for the particular work as the index proceeds, a switch can be made if the publisher agrees.

18.125 Alphabetizing. Many indexers alphabetize as they type; others let their software do it, intervening as necessary. By this time the indexer should have decided whether to use the letter-by-letter or the word-by-word system (see
Example B (improvement with fairly inclusive subentries)

For arrangement of subentries, see 18.66-68.

Example A

For arrangement of subentries, see 18.66-68.

Example C (improvement with sub-subentries)

Example B shows greatly improved subentries that conserve space. Example C adds sub-subentries, making for quicker reference but requiring more space (see 18.25-28). For arrangement of subentries, see 18.66-68.

Example A (not to be emulated)

Example B (improvement with fairly inclusive subentries)

Example C (improvement with sub-subentries)