

Making MACREX Backup files

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<CTRL><ALT>F1 or <CTRL><ALT>F10)

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Introduction

The MACREX backup file contains the whole index in a compact form. It can be recognised in because it has the extension .MBK. It is the **single most important MACREX file** because it can be used to recreate your index exactly in the event of computer crash or other mishap that causes you to lose the copy on which you are working .

Backup files should be made at regular intervals during your work on an index – every 100 or so entries or at approximately 30 minute intervals. It is a good idea to make a backup file every time you leave the computer or stop for a break. The backup file is a much more secure way of guarding against the accidental loss of your work than anything else including writing to disk or automatic saving. Cumulative backup files can be made so that each backup file has a new name and does not overwrite the previous one. This means that if you make some major change to the structure of your index and then have second thoughts, you can return to a previous version. Click [here](#) to see how to set up cumulative backups.

[Restoring a lost index](#) from a backup file can be done simply by double clicking on it.

If you have made a backup file there is no need to back up any of the 11 index (.IND) files. Queries can also be saved in the backup file. Note that [keywords](#) are saved in a separate file in Version 8, although they can be [loaded](#) from a backup file prepared with any previous version of MACREX. Backup files should not be loaded back into the index you are working on – they are there in case your working index files become corrupted, or for you to store an archive file of an index. A backup file of the entries under one or more letters can also be made. NEVER send an .MBK file to your publisher or printer. Files that you send to a publisher or printer should be created by making a [word processor](#) file from the [Output Menu](#). It is a good idea to call the backup file by the name given to the index and this is the name suggested by the program. The extension .MBK (for MACREX BacKup file) is automatically added to the filename chosen. (When backing up a page number order index from the Main Menu this will be given the extension PNO). When loading a backup file it is necessary to include the extension (.MBK or .PNO) as well as the file name.

Uses of a backup file

- i. It acts as a safety device in case the original files are lost.
- ii. It can be merged into any other index using Input->Read Backup from the main menu. This can be useful for cumulating indexes or for combining an index that may have been made in several sections by different indexers.
- iii. It may be edited using any text editor or word processing program capable of handling

ASCII (text) files. This may be useful to make modifications if the editing program being used provides features which are not present in MACREX, such as complex global changes or spell checking. Note that wordprocessor may not be able to accommodate a long line length and may land up wrapping some of the entries. It is usually possible to overcome this by setting a large paper size, a landscape layout and a small font size. It is also necessary to save the backup file as a text file before re-loading it into MACREX. Note that a word processor file (made from the [Output subprogram](#)) cannot be returned to MACREX unless it has been radically altered.

- iv. By selectively backing up and reading different alphabetical sections of an index you can split a large index into alphabetical sections. This feature was originally introduced for indexes that were so big that they could not be backed up on one floppy disk. It can also be useful to split an index (for example you might have put all the authors under a temporary heading a, and all the subjects under s,).
- v. The backup file is much more compact than the ordinary MACREX files and uses considerably less disk space. If you want to store an index for future use (such as updating next year) you should keep the .MBK file of that index and [delete](#) the .IND files.
- vi. A backup file may be directly – or indirectly – transferred to other software, such as a database program. However this is usually done more easily by using Output->Database/text Output from the main menu.
- vii. Backup files with different names may be made at different stages during the preparation of an index thus keeping a record of your first, second, third ... and ultimate thoughts on the matter. This can be accomplished very readily by using [cumulative](#) backups.
- viii. A number of separate utility programs provided with MACREX work on Backup files.

Creating a backup file

Use Backup->Backup index from the main menu (either click with the mouse or use the arrow keys). You will then be asked

Select drive on which to WRITE a backup file ==>

and to the right of this prompt you will see a vertical list of the available drive letters. You can select the drive either by using the mouse, or the arrow keys followed by <ENTER> or by pressing the drive letter you want. The default drive will be the one that your index is on.

You will then see the file selection screen. The default folder is the one that your index is in, and the name is the name of the index, with the extension .mbk. If you want to use a different folder use the file selection screen controls to navigate to, or create a new folder. If you want to use a different name backspace over the one suggested and type the new one. Be careful not to backspace over the drive and folder specification - only backspace up to the first backslash (\). When done press <ENTER>.

It is a good idea to keep backups on external media such as a USB drive, a memory card or a DVD ram drive as well as on your hard drive. It may also be a good idea to use a network drive. You can select any of these before making the backup file by using the file selection screen controls.

The next screen is:

Ready to back up file: <drive><path><index name>

- A - First letter A
- B - Last letter ?
- C - Cumulative backup? No

Change options as needed then press <RETURN> ==>

You will be most likely to want to save a complete index including any queries or keywords you may have made, in which case you have no need to alter the above setting, but if, for example, you only wanted to save the entries beginning with B you would choose B as both the first and last letter. If you set [Cumulative backup](#) to **Yes** a unique filename for the backup file will be generated automatically, and the index saved.

When you have confirmed your choices by pressing <ENTER> MACREX will go ahead and start saving the backup file. A counter lets you know how many entries have been saved. You can interrupt by pressing F1 or <CTRL>Q, but if you do so none of the entries will be saved. If a previous .MBK file with the same name existed it will be renamed with the extension .BAK. You will be warned if there is a file of the name you have chosen on the disk, and are given a chance to retype the name. If a previous .BAK file of the same name existed it will be deleted. If you interrupt the making of a backup file the previous .MBK file is left intact. If the disk gets full while backing up you will be warned that the backup file could not be completed. Try deleting .BAKs, copying the previous .MBK file to another disk and generally getting rid of anything else that you can do without.

Macro to make automatic backup files when editing

This macro will automatically save a backup file if you use it when you are on the Inspect and Edit screen. It will also return you to the point in the index where you were working. First of all make a backup file in the usual way. Then go to the add, Inspect and edit screen and press the following keys:

<CTRL>F1	Start recording macro
<ALT>L	Store the current line number
<ALT>F8	Choose a key for the macro
	<i>the message Recording macro ALT 8 will appear</i>
F1	Exit to the main menu
<ALT><SHIFT>B	Select backup dropdown
<ALT>B	Select backup index
<ENTER>	Select default drive
<ENTER>	Select default name
Y	Select Yes to confirm overwrite
<ENTER>	Select default options
<ALT><SHIFT>I	Select Input dropdown menu
<ALT>I	Select Inspect
<ALT><SHIFT>L	Go to the stored line number
<CTRL>F1	Stop recording macro

You will be returned to the edit screen. Once you have made this macro, pressing <ALT>F8 will save the index and return you to the editing screen without you having to do anything else. Since this whole process only requires one keystroke you can make backups with the minimum of interruption to your concentration.

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