

Reading MACREX Backup files

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Introduction

The primary purpose of this option is, as would be expected, to read a backup file to restore an index which may have been accidentally destroyed, lost or simply archived as a MACREX Backup File. See [Making MACREX Backup Files](#) to find out how to make them and what you can do with them.

Users of MACREX before version 8 should note that this option is equivalent to the Read and Correct a backup file function on the Utilities menu of previous versions and performs checks on the structure of the entries loaded. Backup files can be loaded in a way equivalent to Version 7 by using Input->Read, no checks from the main menu.

Additional uses for Read backup

- To import a text file prepared with some other software

A MACREX backup file is simply a text file which stores the whole content of the index at the time it was made. A text file of an index derived from any source can be read into MACREX, provided that it is in the correct format - this includes having each entry on a separate line (see below for details), adjusting indented and run-on subheadings appropriately and coding any bold, italic, underlined, and special characters correctly. Text files appear under a number of guises and may be described as ASCII files, DOS Text files or ANSI text files. The basic set of 26 non-accented characters and 10 numbers is the same for all of them, but

the special and accented characters may differ, so that they may appear in different in MACREX compared to the original file. MACREX can will be able to translate automatically between some of these. See the section on [types of text file](#) below for more information.

A text file can also usually be made from a wordprocessor file by using "Save as" option from the wordprocessor software.

- To cumulate indexes. When a backup file is loaded into an index the entries are added to those already there. This means that the Input->Read Backup option can be used to cumulate indexes or to amalgamate different parts of a big index. As many files as you like can be loaded into an index; the only restriction is the capacity of your disk drive.

Backup files made for safety should not be reloaded into an existing index. If you do so you will find that many of the entries are duplicated. To get rid of the duplicated entries you need to [Merge](#) the index.

If something goes wrong with your existing index and you want to restore it from a backup file you have the following choices on how you do it.

- Double click on the backup file. Use Windows Explorer to locate the backup file (it has the MACREX icon and the extension .mbk). A new index will be created in the same folder as the backup file, with a name based on the name of the backup file.
- Start MACREX and then choose the option Load a backup (MBK) file into a new index from the startup screen. You can then choose the backup file you want to load. A new index will be created in the same folder as the backup file, with a name based on the name of the backup file.
- Open a new index and read the backup file as shown below. This has the advantage that you can choose the name and location of the index, which does not need to be the same as the name of the backup file.

Reading the backup file

After you have pressed R for Read a backup file you will be asked a series of questions. For each of these you may either answer the question, press <ENTER> (in which case the "default" answer is supplied) or press F1 (or CTRL Q) to abandon reading the backup file and return to the Main Menu. The first question is:-

Select drive from which to read a backup file ==> *(a list of available drives is displayed)*

When you have selected the drive, the [file selector](#) screen will appear, showing the current directory with the file specification *.MBK. Select the backup file that you wish to load using F5 and the arrow keys or use the name suggested on the bottom line of the screen by pressing <ENTER>. Be careful not to backspace over the drive name or colon.

Note on file names:

When loading a backup file which has been made using the B - Make a Backup file option, remember that it will have had the extension .MBK added automatically so you will need to provide this extension when reloading it. When you ask MACREX to read a backup file it will suggest a filename with the .MBK extension added. If you want to load a MACREX backup file with a different

name make sure that you keep the .MBK extension. If you want to load an text file produced by a program other than MACREX you can backspace over the suggested name and substitute the one you want. The extension does not have to be MBK.

When you have pressed <ENTER> a screen similar to this one will appear:

Ready to load file: D:\mx8temp\cows.MBK

A - First letter A
 B - Last letter ?
 C - Messages on printer? No
 D - Ignore missing ^ and \ in volume numbers? No
 E - Ignore bad page ranges? No
 F - Test page ranges allowing for squash? Yes
 G - Check for mismatched (<>[]«»"')? Yes
 H - Check for mismatched code pairs? Yes

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

Note for previous MACREX users:

MACREX versions from 7 onwards will not allow you to enter bold or italic

volume.page numbers in the form ^vv.pp^ or \vv.pp\ . The correct form is

^vv^.^pp^ or \vv\.\pp\ . If you have a lot of volume.page numbers that will

not be accepted set option E above to Yes, and after you have loaded the index

go to the MERGE OPTIONS MENU and use option 9 to insert missing ^ or \ automatically.

Loading the backup file will also automatically check for bad page ranges (eg

cows 22-21). If you may be loading a lot of squashed page references (eg

cows, 221-6) make sure option G is set to Yes to avoid being asked to correct

them. You may also wish to set option F to Yes to disable testing for bad page

ranges and use option 8 to tag them from the MERGE OPTIONS MENU later.

Usually you will just press <ENTER> to accept the settings and the index will [start loading](#). However you may wish to change some of the options (as is indicated by the note that appears on the screen).

A - First letter

B - Last letter

These options can be used to read a part of the backup file. To read one letter set the both the first letter and last letter to the one you want to load. Use ? to indicate entries in the query file, which are placed after the letter Z. You might use this if you had prepared a subject and author index simultaneously, putting all the subject entries under s, and all the author entries under a, and you subsequently wanted to split them into to entirely independent indexes.

C - Messages on printer?

Setting this option to **Yes** will cause error messages to be printed on your default printer. This is really a historical option from the days when computers were so slow that you didn't want to watch them. However it will still work.

D - Ignore missing ^ and \ in volume numbers?

In previous versions of MAC REX it was possible to enter bold or underlined page and volume numbers in the forms like \12. 24\ or ^3. 246^. This produced some limitations in the flexibility of the page and volume number options and so it was made mandatory to embolden (or underline) the page and volume numbers individually (\12\, \24\ or ^3^, ^246^). If you are reading a file prepared with an old version of MACREX the old style will prompt you to edit each entry individually. If you know that this is the case it is better to set this option to **Yes** and change the style afterwards by [merging](#) the index using the Merge option [9 - Insert missing ^ and \ in vols](#).

E - Ignore bad page ranges?

Normally MACREX will check any page ranges in the entries as they are loaded. If a page range finishes at a number before it starts (for example *cows*, 27-22) you will be asked to correct it before the reading will continue. If you set this option to **Yes** these bad page ranges will be loaded into the index without question. You can check them later by running the [merge](#) with option [8 - Tag bad page ranges](#) set to **Yes**.

F - Test page ranges allowing for squash?

The file you are loading may have squashed (or concatenated) page references, such as *COWS*, 223-9 instead of *COWS*, 223-229. If this option is set to **Yes**, these page references will be tested for bad ranges as though they were expanded, avoiding unnecessary messages.

G - Check for mismatched ()<>[]«»"'"?

If this option is set to **Yes**, the various bracket and quotation characters will be checked to see if they are matched, that is that each opening character is matched by a corresponding closed one. If any are found that are not matched, you will be prompted to edit the entry.

H - Check for mismatched code pairs?

If this option is set to **Yes**, any corresponding pairs of codes (such as { [S] } and { [S] } to turn superscript on and off) will be checked to see if they are matched. The code pairs that are checked are those defined in [General Options Menu 2](#), option [E - Edit matched pair table](#).

Checks while reading a backup file

When you have pressed <ENTER> to accept the options, a message similar to this one will appear:

```
Loading C: TEST.MBK into index E: TEST
```

```
Press F1 or ^Q to interrupt
```

and the index will begin to load. Before the loading begins the file being loaded will be scanned for the length of the longest line. If the longest line is longer than the current record length, a screen like this will appear

Checking length of lines in D:\MX8TEMP\cows.mbk

The longest line in D:\MX8TEMP\cows.mbk is 294 characters

The current record length is 100 characters

Do you want to change the record length before loading (Y or N)?

If you choose to change the record length MACREX will automatically make it long enough to accommodate the longest entry and the loading will continue. If you do not change it, you will be prompted to edit every entry that is too long. If you have chosen to do this and you find it impossible to shorten an entry, you can still increase the record length at that point by pressing F4.

If an entry is found that is not correctly constructed, a screen like this will appear

Insert ON 31

Loading D:\mx8temp\cows!.MBK into index D:\mx8temp\cows

Can't use entry number 21

Edit entry then press <ENTER>

{Ludwig Van }Beethoven, \44.66\

Can't use \vv.pp\ for volume/page numbers: use \vv\.\pp\

The offending entry is displayed ready for editing and the error message at the bottom indicates what the problem is. If the error is one that would stop MACREX working properly (such as mismatched {}) you must correct the entry and press <ENTER> before the reading will continue. If the error is one of style (for example mismatched ") you can simply press <ENTER> to accept the entry.

If you decide to abandon reading the backup file into MACREX, press F1 or <CTRL>Q. You will be prompted with a message **Are you sure you want to stop (Y or N)?** If you press Y (for Yes) you will be further prompted with a message **Keep the entries loaded so far (Y or N)?** and you can choose either to keep them in you current index, or not. In the latter case your index will be unchanged from before you started loading the backup file. In either case you will be returned to the Main Menu.

Once all the errors have been handled, or if there are none, you will be returned to the Main Menu.

Making index files using other software

It is possible to use a file of an index made with a text editor or word processor and read it into MACREX. It is also possible to read and index which is available into electronic format so that it can be updated using MACREX or used as a template for a new index. We can also advise on reading files made with the indexing modules of various word processors.

Entries can also be made using a different computer (not necessarily with MACREX installed) and fed into MACREX later.

When reading files made with other software, always use the R - Read and Correct a backup file or Import a file option from the MACREX Utilities menu (to get there use Utilities->Utilities Menu from the Main Menu). This will ensure that the entries are checked for being compatible with MACREX syntax as they are imported and will give you the opportunity to change them if they are not.

We are finding that more and more MACREX users are being called upon either to redo existing indexes for a new edition, or to combine several existing single indexes into one large cumulation. The advantages of making a MACREX file of an already existing index include the possibility of making a page number order file to facilitate checking, ease of cumulation, or extraction of entries for a separate index. If the index has been made with MACREX and a backup file identical to the printed index has been kept you can simply load this backup file into an empty index, or add the backup file to an already created index if a cumulation is required. It is always advisable to retain your backup files for as long as you possibly can - for ever if possible. If, however, you no longer have the backup file, or if the original index has been edited either by you or by a publisher's editor, you will have to convert the index back into MACREX format. It is also quite feasible to take indexes made on any word processor - or scanned from printed text - and convert these to MACREX format. Ease of conversion varies considerably depending on the kind of word processor file in which the index has been written. We have had considerable experience of doing this kind of work, we offer users the option of sending us their files for conversion (for a charge). If you would rather do the conversion yourself, here are some hints:

Conversion of an existing index to MACREX format

Introduction and general hints

Every file conversion has its own unique problems. It can usually be done with a word processor but a text editor with a good macro feature (such as Textpad, available as shareware) can also be very useful. You will need to preserve a copy of the original index which is to be converted to check entries as you are going through the conversion process, and it is a good idea to save the file you are working on sequentially with a different name as you work through the process. This means that if you make an irretrievable mistake on the file you are working with, you don't have to start again from scratch. In addition, have a piece of paper and pencil handy to make notes as you go through; there are almost bound to be unexpected things like leading numerals, page numbers with text between - tables, figures, "continued" statements, symbols, etc. to be dealt with which you may well notice in the middle of a global change when you can do nothing about it. It is also a good idea to make detailed notes of all the changes you are doing, in case something goes wrong and you have to start again. The following alterations ("global changes" or "search and replace" functions - the terminology will vary according to which word processor you use) can be made to speed up the process, but you may well have to go through the resulting file carefully one line at a time to ensure that each entry has been correctly converted. Since the final file will be subject to the MACREX Automatic punctuation corrections when it is read, you worry about checking for inconsistencies in spacing (for example double spaces, or no spaces after commas will not matter).

Line length

Before launching into global changes you must ensure that each entry occupies only one

line, since wrapped lines will be read as two separate entries. You may need to set the page width on your software to the maximum. Using landscape can help. You can also use a very small font size and zoom the document so you can still see it. If the word processor you are using cannot manage a line width as long as the longest entry you may need to make a note of the entries which are too long for the screen and load them into MACREX separately.

Commas

If commas have been used within headings, it will be necessary to convert these commas to {,} (but NOT the commas between page references, and NOT those which indicate the boundary between a heading and subheading). This may be quite straightforward in a completely indented index with only one reference to each heading or subheading, or it may be quite horrendous to contemplate, for instance if there are long strings of page numbers, or if the comma has been used to separate headings from subheadings. After you have sorted out the commas you need to deal with the indents and turnover lines.

Left Margin

First you will have to need to remove any spaces - or tabs or indents - at the left margin. Typically you would do a global change replacing a new line character followed by however many spaces (or tabs or indents) were used to make the margin with a single new line character.

Turnover lines

First of all you will have to deal with the turnover lines. Depending on the consistency of the layout these may have to be dealt with one line at a time, although you might be able to use a global change by replacing the number of spaces from the left margin and replacing a new line character followed by this number of spaces by one space.

Subheadings

Subheadings are repeated for each entry in MACREX, but of course are not in the formatted index. These can be converted for loading back into MACREX by converting each level of subheading in the file to _, (underline, comma). Always convert the deepest level first. If the file has sub-subheadings you will need to convert the codes for these indentions to __, (underline comma underline comma) BEFORE converting the indentions for subheadings to _, (underline comma). Similarly, if there are further levels of subheading, these will have to be dealt with in the same way (always convert the deepest level first). If the index is in a set-out format such as

```
cows 32
  as farmyard animals 3
  milk products 2
    cheese 3
    cream 4
```

the conversion is fairly straightforward. To be compatible with MACREX the heading has to be repeated for each subheading. If you use a global change you convert the code you have used to make the indentation (in this case three spaces, but it might be tab character) to __, (underline key followed by a comma - a space following the comma is not needed, because it will be added automatically later when the file is read by MACREX) so that the entries

above read

```
cows 32
_, as farmyard animals 3
_, milk products 2
_, _, cheese 3
_, _, cream 4
```

When loaded by MACREX the underline-comma sequence will be automatically converted to

```
cows 32
cows, as farmyard animals 3
cows, milk products 2
cows, milk products, cheese 3
cows, milk products, cream 4
```

The solution is more complicated if the existing index uses punctuation other than a comma to indicate subheadings, for example:

```
cows: as farmyard animals 3
```

If this is the case you will have to do a global change of colon <space> to comma <space>. If your current index is run-on yet more global changes will need to be done, and your word processor cannot include a newline character in the search and replace string you may need to sort the entries out one by one. For example, if your index reads:

```
cows: as farmyard animals 3; milk products 2
```

you will need first of all to do the global change indicated above (colon <space> to comma <space>) and then convert semicolon <space> to <new line> underline comma <space>.

Blank lines, header letter and margins

You will also need to remove the blank lines separating different letter batches, and also the header letters. You can replace <new line> with nothing for the blank lines and replace, for example, A <new line> by nothing for the header letters.

Bold and underlined text and accented characters

If the index includes bold or underlined text these will have to be converted to the MACREX codes (backslashes and up-arrows) before loading into MACREX. Similarly, accented characters may not load directly into MACREX and should be noted with an asterisk so that they can be converted to the correct character after the index has been loaded into MACREX. (Note: It is planned (June 2008) to convert MACREX to using the ANSI / Unicode character set which should reduce problems with character conversion)

Volume and Page Numbers

If the index contains volume and page numbers in, for example, the form 12/3,4; 13/4,5 each entry will have to be checked individually (if anyone has a good idea about a better way to do this, please let us know!). The format acceptable to MACREX for the above references is: 12.3, 12.4, 13.4, 13.5 so that not only will the forward slash have to be converted to a point and the semicolon to a comma, but also extra volume numbers will need to be

inserted so that the entries will sort properly.

File type for loading into MACREX

When all the above manipulations have been completed, the converted file must always be saved as an ASCII file or text file or DOS Text file (the wording will vary depending on which word processor you are using). The ASCII file is then loaded into MACREX using the R - Read and Correct a backup file or Import a file option.

Worked example of loading a wordprocessor file into MACREX

Here is an example of the notes made while converting a fairly straightforward index using WordPerfect (still our favourite wordprocessor).

1. Convert italics to ^^
2. Save as text file
3. Load ASCII file into WordPerfect
4. decrease margins to minimum, set page to landscape and load smallest font
5. check all commas and replace relevant ones by {,}
6. global change of 4 spaces to _, (underline comma)
7. global change of [Hrt] 3 spaces to one space
8. global change of [Hrt]^ to ^[Hrt]
9. global change of [Hrt]_, (hard return, underline, comma <space> to <space>).
10. check all [Hrt] space and adjust accordingly
11. (search for all hyphens and adjust)
12. replace [Hrt][Hrt] by [Hrt] as many times as is necessary
13. get rid of all header letters
14. change E1 to 5.1 etc.
15. Save as ASCII file
16. Load corrected file into MACREX using R - Read and Correct a backup file or Import a file option
17. Sort, merge, print.

Examples of MACREX Backup files

i) a fairly straightforward backup file showing up-arrows for underlining, back slashes for bold and curly brackets – taken from an index to an earlier MACREX manual

```

abandoning ^see^ interrupting
abbreviations ^see^ keywords
accented letters 1.5, 13, 13.2, 13.3
acute accents, letters with, in PTRC.DAT file 13.2
adding entries \1\
adding text to existing entry 2.2
alphabetical order, rough order in batches 1
alphabetical order, sorting into ^see^ sorting
alphabetical order, for subheadings 5.1
alphabetical section of index, printing 5.7{(A and B)}
alphabetization ^see^ sorting
alphabets, non-Roman, designing characters in 13, 13.3
alternative typeface, defining word processor codes for
5.9{(D)}
alternative typeface, installing 5.9{(A)}, 5.9{(D)}

```

ii) showing tildes

```

Fotheri ngaye{, } Archi e, servi ce i n Royal Navy, ~a~as
Li eutenant 83-4
Fotheri ngaye{, } Archi e, servi ce i n Royal Navy, ~b~as
Commander 94-6
Fotheri ngaye{, } Archi e, servi ce i n Royal Navy, ~c~as
Captai n 33-6
Fotheri ngaye{, } Archi e, servi ce i n Royal Navy, ~d~as
Admi ral 44-6

```

iii) a more idiosyncratic backup file showing the use of "sort forces"

```

Swi ft{, } Jonathan, 11, 17, 296
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ~aa~and Arnol d, 394
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ~aa~and Conrad, 314, 430
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ~aa~and {Bruce }Dawe, 579
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ~aa~and ^{The }Gentl eman' s Magazi ne^,
302
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ~aa~and {Charl otte Perki ns }Gi l man, 512
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ~aa~and Herrick, 247
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ~aa~bi ography, 312
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ~aa~li bel s, 304
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ~aa~prose, 312-4
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ~aa~satire, 314
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ~aa~scatol ogical poems, 303
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ^{A }Beauti ful Young Nymph^, 303
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ^Cadenus and Vanessa^, 306
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ^{The }Ci ty Shower^, 304
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ^{The }Drapier' s Letters^, 312-3
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ^Epi stle to a Lady^, 304
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ^Gull i ver' s Travel s^, 37, 162-3, 313-4,
512
Swi ft{, } Jonathan, ^{The }Lady' s Dressi ng Room^, 303

```

(Out of interest, in you can see two very different ways of having the backup file above printed when loaded into MACREX and then into the Printing subprogram. [Click here.](#))

Last updated 17 July 2008, [Macrex Help Contents](#)