

# Poor Mans Indexing System

## Introduction

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There is an indexing program by the name of Sky. Last known, it was available for about \$350. Sky is good and it is a complete indexing package that leaves little for the user to do but enter names and pages and, when complete, call for a print of the index.

However, setting up an indexing process is not a difficult task. A simple database, even a spreadsheet, can be easily set up to accept names and pages. Combining like names with the appropriate pages takes a effort, but the process, again, is quite easy. Generally databases or spreadsheets have trouble setting up a suitable format, say 3-column for example that look professional enough for discerning users to accept. However, full capability word programs can do a final printout that is as professional as one would want.

This guide not only goes through the step by step process to get from first input of names to final printout, but it provides pre-formatted database entry file so that a user can open the file and start entry and it allows for the passing of the database file to a pre-formatted Microsoft Word file for a final printout. It is called a "poor man's indexing system" simply because the cost can be little, even nothing, to complete an index. The catch is, that there is manual labor needed for the process. The main intensive labor process, other than inputting of the names and page numbers, is the combining of the records such that one unique name is matched up with all of the pages associated with the name. Then, after the combining process is complete for a name, eliminating all of the other instances of the name. Once done in a database (in this case MSWorks) or a spreadsheet, this file is then passed on to a full-blown word processor with merge capabilities (in this case MSWord) where the final labor intensive process is done. In MSWord, a process of eliminating duplicate surnames takes place.

So, some substitution of simple, non-technical labor is done, replacing a big expenditure. Known success stories include some of my own, namely a 3-volume set of books titled *Colorado Cemetery Index* consisting of over 84,400 records (names). This index is actually what I call a super index in that it indexed about 130 publications (on cemeteries) and included more than the usual name and page number. Added to the index was birth and death dates (when known) and the cemetery of record, along with book and page number. Try that in Sky! Another index was done of *Our Heritage, People of Douglas County, Colorado*. In this case, the compiler used MSWorks to enter the names and pages and Word Perfect to complete the printout. She also did a "category" index of non-personal names and places (businesses, place names, schools, etc.). Both of these indexes can be viewed on the Columbine Genealogical & Historical Society WebSite, which is: <http://www.columbinegenealogy.com> .[It should be noted that WebSite documents cannot do 3-column presentations, so this can only be view in single column format.] The author has also done an index of *Turner County (South Dakota) Pioneer History*. Other known indexes done by the Poor Man's Indexing System were *History of the Fosdick Family* and another unknown title by its author, both members of Columbine. Underway, but not completed, are of the four early Littleton, Colorado, churches, (115,000 records), *Colorado Territory, Civil War Volunteer Records* (6900 plus records) and Columbine Newsletters (from 1995 to present). So, does the Poor Man's Indexing System work? Yes it does!

In separate .PDF files, is Section I, MSWorks Database Guide and Section II, MSWord Merge Guide. These guides, first provide instructions for use of the pre-formatted files. Secondly, for the more adventuresome is to provide step-by-step instructions to set up the files necessary to do the indexing and print-merge operations. Part 2 of this guide will likely be of more use to persons not intending to use MSWorks or MSWord.

For anyone picking up this indexing introduction and the guides from the Internet or Columbine's WebSite can obtain the pre-formatted, ready to use files by emailing the author at: [CoResPubs1@comcast.net](mailto:CoResPubs1@comcast.net). They're free. The pre-formatted files are:

<b>MSWorks PMIS Master.wdb</b>	The MSWorks database file (entry of names and pages)
<b>MSWord PMIS Master.doc</b>	The MSWord merge file (final formatting for printout)
MSWord PMIS Master 2 Col.doc	Optional 2-Column format for final printout
<b>Text PMIS Master.csv</b>	A text & comma file (for loading into other databases)

The Guides should also be downloaded. They are:

Poor Man's Indexing System, Section I, MSWorks Database Guide

Poor Man's Indexing System, Section II, MSWord Merge Guide

The WebSite location is: <http://www.columbinegenealogy.com/meetings> . Go to the bottom of the page.

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