

CONFIRMED
MARCH 1991

Recommendations for

Alphabetical arrangement and the filing order of numbers and symbols

UDC 025.329

NO COPYING WITHOUT BSI PERMISSION EXCEPT AS PERMITTED BY COPYRIGHT LAW

BSI
Documents

AVA

Document Sharing Hub

Committees responsible for this British Standard

This British Standard was entrusted by the Documentation Standards Committee (DOS/-) to Technical Committee DOS/2 upon which the following bodies were represented:

- Aslib
- British Telecommunications
- Her Majesty's Stationery Office
- Inspec
- Institute of Information Scientists
- Library Association
- Publishers Association
- Society of Indexers
- Standing Conference of National and University Libraries

This British Standard, having been prepared under the direction of the Documentation Standards Committee, was published under the authority of the Board of BSI and comes into effect on 28 February 1985

© BSI 02-1999
First published May 1951
First revision July 1969
Second revision February 1985

The following BSI references relate to the work on this standard:
Committee reference DOS/2
Draft for comment 83/61965 DC

ISBN 0 580 14022 9

Amendments issued since publication

Amd. No.	Date of issue	Comments

Contents

	Page
Committees responsible	Inside back cover
Foreword	ii
1 Scope	1
2 Definitions	1
3 Introductory note	2
4 General arrangement	2
4.1 Basic order of filing characters	2
4.2 Numbers	2
4.3 Symbols	4
5 Order of words and groups of words	5
5.1 Groups of words	5
5.2 Articles and prepositions	6
5.3 Abbreviations and single letters	7
6 Arrangement of entries of the same type with common first elements	9
6.1 Personal names	9
6.2 Corporate and geographic name headings	10
6.3 Subject entries	11
6.4 Titles of works	11
7 Arrangement of entries of different types with common first elements	13
8 Sub-arrangement of entries of different types with identical headings	15
Appendix A Demonstration filing sequence	16
Appendix B Modified, additional and combined Roman alphabet letters	23
Publications referred to	Inside back cover

Foreword

This revision of this British Standard has been prepared under the direction of the Documentation Standards Committee. It supersedes BS 1749:1969 published under the title “Alphabetical arrangement and the filing order of numerals and symbols” which is withdrawn.

This revision was prepared to take account of modern methods of producing lists of all kinds, including the automatic generation of lists by computer. It takes into account the recommendations given in BS 6478 and the British Library publication “BLAISE filing rules” from which, by kind permission, some of the examples have been taken. “Library of Congress filing rules” and “ALA filing rules” have also been consulted.

In addition to extensive rearrangement of the text and the inclusion of additional recommendations and examples, the principal differences between this revision and the 1969 edition are as follows:

- a) some alternative arrangements are recognized, e.g. for numbers and symbols;
- b) more detailed recommendations are made, e.g. for numbers and complex entries;
- c) abbreviated words are filed as given, rather than as if spelt in full, with the optional exception of “Mc”.

For amplification of the recommendations, Appendix A collates in one sequence illustrative examples using word-by-word alphabetization.

A British Standard does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users of British Standards are responsible for their correct application.

Compliance with a British Standard does not of itself confer immunity from legal obligations.

Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i and ii, pages 1 to 24, an inside back cover and a back cover.

This standard has been updated (see copyright date) and may have had amendments incorporated. This will be indicated in the amendment table on the inside front cover.

1 Scope

This British Standard gives recommendations for the alphabetical arrangement of entries in lists of all kinds, e.g. bibliographies, catalogues, directories and indexes. It also covers the arrangement of numbers and symbols. It does not include rules for the form of entries.

Examples in this standard are specifically chosen to exemplify certain filing problems and do not necessarily conform with cataloguing rules, indexers' codes, etc. Guidance on the preparation of indexes can be found in BS 3700. This standard does not include detailed rules for arranging words in non-Roman alphabets.

NOTE The titles of the publications referred to in this standard are listed on the inside back cover.

2 Definitions

For the purposes of this standard the following definitions apply.

2.1

character

the smallest separable entity in filing, e.g. a letter, a number, a punctuation mark or a space

2.2

corporate name

the name identifying a group of persons acting as an entity, e.g. an association, a government or an institution

2.3

element

a specific part of an entry

2.4

entry

an item in a file

2.5

file

all entries arranged in a sequence

2.6

heading

the leading term in an entry

2.7

number

one or more digits or letters that represent a numerical value

2.8

personal name

name by which a person is known, whether given name(s), forename(s) and surname or surname alone, title, nickname or pseudonym

2.9

proper name

a term that represents an individual person, corporate body, geographic location or feature, or a unique artifact

2.10

qualifier

a term that is added to a name to assist its identification. Conventional qualifiers added to personal names show dates of birth and death, office or occupation, connection with a certain place, etc.; to names of corporate bodies, date and/or place of operation; to geographic names the specific feature, such as cape, river, and/or inclusive geographic area; to titles of works, language, version, date, etc.; to names of artifacts, the class of things to which they belong

2.11**subheading**

an element of an entry indicating a division of the entry by a term representing a subordinate body, subject, etc.

2.12**term**

a single character or word, or group of characters or words, representing a concept in a specified context

2.13**word**

a letter, or a group of letters, preceded and followed by a space or its equivalent [see 4.1a)]

3 Introductory note

A file, or list, should be preceded by an explanation of the arrangement.

4 General arrangement**4.1 Basic order of filing characters**

The basic order of filing characters should be as follows.

a) Spaces, dashes, hyphens, diagonal slashes, all of which have equal filing value. Where more than one of these characters occur in sequence, the sequence should be treated as a single character having the filing value of a space. Such characters should be ignored in filing when occurring at the beginning of an entry.

Other punctuation marks have no filing value but some have a function in filing in that they may delimit or distinguish different filing elements, e.g. comma, full stop, colon and parentheses (see the examples in clause 6).

The apostrophe and other symbols, except for the minus sign, normally have no filing value, but in certain specialized listings, a conventional order may be drawn up (see 4.3).

b) Ampersands, unless it is considered more useful to file as spelt out in the appropriate language.

c) Arabic numbers and Roman numbers should be arranged in a numerical order and interfiled unless it is considered more useful to file numbers as if spelt out in the appropriate language.

d) Roman alphabet letters should be arranged according to the English alphabet.

Modified, additional and combined Roman alphabet letters should be filed as the nearest equivalents of the English alphabet. A list of the more commonly used characters is given in Appendix B.

e) Letters from other alphabets arranged in their commonly accepted order within each alphabet.

Diacritical marks should be ignored for the purposes of arrangement.

No distinction should be made between capital and lower case letters. Differences in typefaces and underscoring, whether as a substitute for italic type or for any other purpose, should be ignored.

4.2 Numbers

4.2.1 Numbers should normally be arranged according to the numerical significance of each separate digit (negative numbers and fractions are included in this condition, but a negative function attached to a number, e.g. 13–12, is not so included). Each such number should then be treated as a separate character.

Example

– 2	filed as number – 2
– 1	filed as number – 1
0.1	filed as number 0.1
$\frac{2}{9}$ of the iceberg	filed as number $\frac{2}{9}$, space, group of letters
$\frac{1}{4}$	filed as number $\frac{1}{4}$
.38	filed as number (decimal) 0.38
0,4	filed as number, i.e. the equivalent of 0.4

0.5	filed as number 0.5
$\frac{9}{10}$	filed as number $\frac{9}{10}$
1	filed as number 1
\$1	filed as number 1, the symbol for dollar being ignored [see 4.1 a)]
1 corinthians	filed as number 1, space, group of letters
1a	filed as number 1, letter a
1.5	filed as number 1.5
2	filed as number 2
3	filed as number 3
£3 per diam	filed as number 3, space, group of letters, symbol for pound being ignored
3rd	filed as number 3, group of letters
4	filed as number 4
5	filed as number 5
VI	Roman number, filed as equivalent to Arabic number 6
7	filed as number 7
14½ lb budgie	filed as number 14½, space, group of letters
16 – 19: full-time education	filed as number 16, dash, number 19, space, group of letters
17 – 15=2	filed as number 17, minus (equivalent to space), number 15, equal sign being ignored, number 2
35 mm camera	filed as number 35, group of letters
1941: Armageddon	filed as number one thousand nine hundred and forty one, space, group of letters
2000 series	filed as number 2000, space, group of letters

4.2.2 In certain situations, particularly for computer filing in a general verbal context, it may be necessary to treat each part of a number separately, separating the component parts by the punctuation marks, fractional or decimal signs, or implicit spaces, e.g. fractions are treated as a sequence of separate characters.

Example

0.1	filed as number 0, stop, number 1
0,4	filed as number 0, comma, number 4
0.5	filed as number 0, stop, number 5
1	} interfiled as number 1
– 1	
\$1	
$\frac{1}{4}$	filed as number 1, stroke (equivalent to space), number 4
1 Corinthians	filed as number 1, space, group of letters
1.5	filed as number 1, stop, number 5
1a	filed as number 1, letter a
– 2	} filed as number 2
2	
$\frac{2}{9}$ of the iceberg	filed as number 2, stroke (equivalent to space), number 9, space, group of letters

3	filed as number 3
£3 per diem	filed as number 3, space, group of letters
3rd	filed as number 3, group of letters
4	filed as number 4
5	filed as number 5
VI	filed as equivalent Arabic number 6
7	filed as number 7
⁹ / ₁₀	filed as number 9, stroke (equivalent to space), number 10
14½ lb budgie	filed as number 14, (space), number 1, stroke (equivalent to space), number 2, space, group of letters
16 – 19: full-time education	filed as number 16, dash (equivalent to space), number 19, space, group of letters
17 – 15=2	filed as number 17, minus (equivalent to space), number 15, equal sign, number 2
35 mm camera	filed as number 35, group of letters
.38	filed as number 38
1941: Armageddon	filed as number one thousand nine hundred and forty one, space, group of letters
2000 series	filed as number 2000, space, group of letters

4.2.3 In some situations it may prove more convenient to arrange numbers as if they were spelt out in the language of the context.

4.2.4 Punctuation or spaces used to increase the readability of a number (e.g. 1,500,000 or 1 500 000) should be ignored.

Example

1001 nights
1812 overture
10 000 people
10000 soldiers
10,000 troops
10 000 women

4.3 Symbols

In certain specialized listings a conventional order may be drawn up for symbols and for letters used as symbols, e.g. lists of chemical compounds. The order chosen will depend on the symbols involved and their significance in the file.

Although in many cases it will be desirable to arrange chemical formulae in accordance with special rules, an alpha-numerical order should be followed for general filing purposes.

Example

C₃H₈
CaCO₃
cadmium
CO
CO₂
CS₂

However, prefixes to the names of chemicals (e.g. *N*, *di*, DL) and to the names of other materials, as in “α-brass”, “β-brass” etc. may be ignored in filing.

Example

dialuminium
 β -brass
 C_3H_8
 $CaCO_3$
cadmium
4-chlorophenol
CO

5 Order of words and groups of words

5.1 Groups of words

The nature, purpose or tradition of a list may predetermine the choice of the filing method. Therefore, both the word-by-word and letter-by-letter systems are illustrated in the example that follows.

In word-by-word alphabetization, when two words begin with the same sequence of letters, the shorter word precedes the longer. Entries that begin with the same word are arranged among themselves according to the sequence of characters that follows the word, i.e. a space precedes a letter, as in 4.1. In letter-by-letter alphabetization, spaces and other characters listed in 4.1 a) are ignored and the arrangement is strictly alphabetical. When no overriding consideration to the contrary applies, the word-by-word arrangement is recommended.

Example

<i>Word-by-word</i>	<i>Letter-by-letter</i>
&	&
Ægean sea	Ægean sea
Aer Lingus	Aerated Bread Company
Aerated Bread Company	Aer Lingus
Aerolineas Argentinas	Aerolineas Argentinas
'And did those feet ...	'And did those feet ...
... and so to bed	André Gide
André Gide	... and so to bed
Anglo-Saxon attitudes	Anglomania
Anglo-Saxon period	Anglo-Saxon attitudes
Anglomania	Anglo-Saxon period
Ångstrom unit	Ångstrom unit
Ann Veronica	Anna of the five towns
Anna of the five towns	année-lumière
année-lumière	Ann Veronica
pea	pea
pea soup	peace
peace	peace conferences
peace conferences	Peaceful uses of atomic
Peace of Amiens	energy
Peace of Paris	Peacehaven