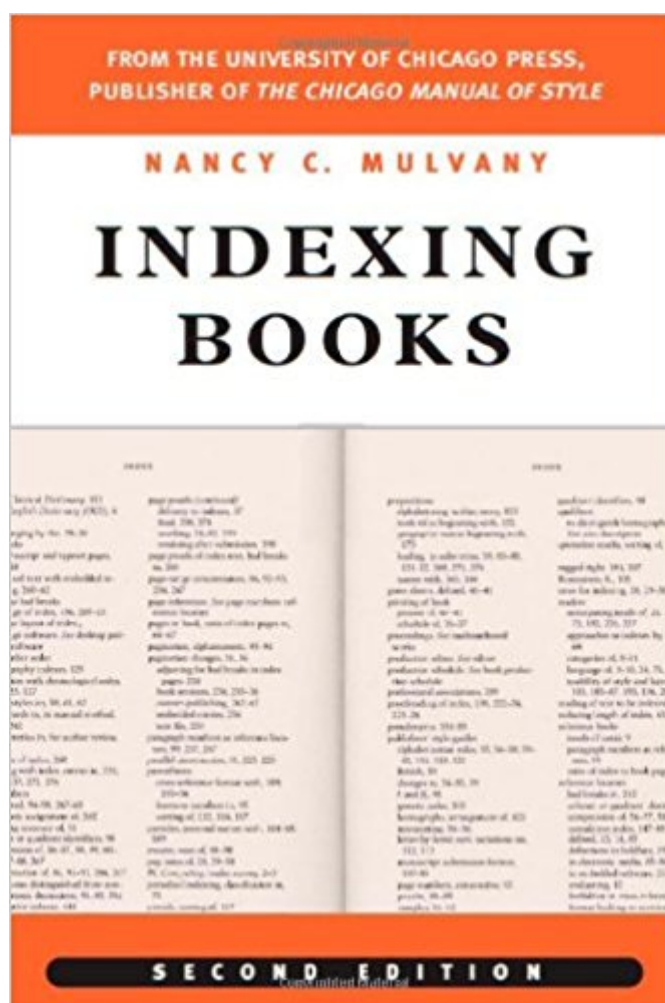


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# Indexing Books, Second Edition (Chicago Guides To Writing, Editing, And Publishing)



## Synopsis

Since 1994, Nancy Mulvany's *Indexing Books* has been the gold standard for thousands of professional indexers, editors, and authors. This long-awaited second edition, expanded and completely updated, will be equally revered. Like its predecessor, this edition of *Indexing Books* offers comprehensive, reliable treatment of indexing principles and practices relevant to authors and indexers alike. In addition to practical advice, the book presents a big-picture perspective on the nature and purpose of indexes and their role in published works. New to this edition are discussions of "information overload" and the role of the index, open-system versus closed-system indexing, electronic submission and display of indexes, and trends in software development, among other topics. Mulvany is equally comfortable focusing on the nuts and bolts of indexing—how to determine what is indexable, how to decide the depth of an index, and how to work with publisher instructions—and broadly surveying important sources of indexing guidelines such as *The Chicago Manual of Style*, Sun Microsystems, Oxford University Press, NISO TR03, and ISO 999. Authors will appreciate Mulvany's in-depth consideration of the costs and benefits of preparing one's own index versus hiring a professional, while professional indexers will value Mulvany's insights into computer-aided indexing. Helpful appendixes include resources for indexers, a worksheet for general index specifications, and a bibliography of sources to consult for further information on a range of topics. *Indexing Books* is both a practical guide and a manifesto about the vital role of the human-crafted index in the Information Age. As the standard indexing reference, it belongs on the shelves of everyone involved in writing and publishing nonfiction books.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Give a hearty welcome to this much-needed and highly understandable handbook covering the mechanics of book index preparation. Written by a professional indexer, this thorough how-to guide covers such topics as the book production process, assigning headings and subentries, laying out and editing an index, rules for proper names and alphabetizing, cross references, indexing standards, and methods and tools for indexing, including a list of available indexing software. While it does not cover a broad theoretical base and is limited to "back-of-the book indexing," Mulvaney's extensive work will be an excellent supplement to Donald and Ana Cleveland's *Introduction to Indexing and Abstracting* (Libraries Unlimited, 1990 . 2d ed.) and Hans Wellisch's *Indexing from A to Z* (H.W. Wilson, 1991). Of value as a reference source and as a textbook, *Indexing Books* will be of immediate use to indexers, teachers, authors, editors, technical writers, and library school students. Highly recommended for academic and public library professional collections.- Angela Washington-Blair, Texas Woman's Univ. SLIS, Denton Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an alternate Hardcover edition.

"Mulvaney's book is widely used as a textbook in North America, and the release of a revised second edition will quite likely ensure its continued popularity. . . . I have utmost respect for anyone with enough patience to write, let alone revise, a thorough textbook that covers all aspects of indexing. Mulvaney's pertinent . . . discussions of important issues facing our profession gives this volume an importance beyond the realm of mere instruction." (Ruth Pincoe *The Indexer*) "[*Indexing Books*] should be on every aspiring indexer's reading list." (C&RL News) "When you are an acknowledged leader in your field, and you have literally 'written the book' on indexing, what do you do for an encore? If you are Nancy Mulvaney, professional indexer and author of the industry standard *Indexing Books*, you write a second edition that reflects the concerns of indexers in the 21st century." (Dick Evans *Technical Communication*) "I am a huge fan of this book. It is engagingly written in jargon-free English with a well-designed format. I highly recommend it for all faculty of information studies libraries and those libraries that may have among their users would-be indexers or authors that are interested in knowing about the methods of indexing their books. . . . This second edition should replace the first edition on library shelves." (Jean Weihs *Technicalities*)

Before buying this book, I created a cookbook in Microsoft Word for my family as a Christmas gift. I ran into some unexpected issues that I never did resolve. I found time consuming work-arounds. This book was recommended to me by an experienced book indexer as her "Bible." This person explained to me how I could learn indexing professionally, and do it from home. I have read most of the book, and have already applied some of the concepts in my job as an annotator. Indexing is not as straightforward as it seems. Most interestingly, editing software programs that claim to have indexing functions like Word does, fail miserably, as I learned making my cookbook. Computers are unable to apply syntax, and fixing and editing an index without editing every computer-generated component of it quickly ends up in a mess. It explains in detail why search engines such as Google use very different logic processes than a book indexer needs to use. I have not read anything else on the market, but this book truly makes me feel as though I do not need to. It has already solved some of the issues I've run into, so it gets 5 stars.

As an editor at times I had to index a book. Let me state for the record - I Hate Indexing. There are professional indexers out there who do an amazing job and I for one am more than happy to build their fee into a book's budget. BUT sometimes you just gotta do it yourself. For those times, this is the guide you need. I referenced it multiple times every time I had to index and shared it with others in the office. We all found it helpful.

THE book on indexing theory for anyone wanting to study book indexing. Mary C. Mulvany is mentioned in most other books on indexing. She teaches courses and wrote this as an accompaniment to one of her courses. It is an excellent textbook but it isn't a self-help manual - you won't find out how to index your own books, but you will find out the theory on indexing.

Just to be clear, the book does not tell you how to index books using software. It is more what I would call a style manual with lots of examples. So why do you need a style manual? Because you can't set your indexing formats without knowing industry standards. It is as though someone took the indexing section out of the Chicago Manual of Style and fleshed it out. I gave it four stars because it is easy to use, but I don't love it.

I've so far only had the need to write an index once. It is not a task I have found to be enjoyable at all, but as a complete novice I found this book to be extremely helpful and a one stop shop for what I

need. Definitely recommended if you need this sort of help as well.

Like writing, indexing is an art form. Some people can do it, and some people can't. If you want to attempt your own index, buy Mulvany's book. She's an instructor of index courses and she knows her stuff-- it shows. Notice how this book has ZERO negative reviews. The only complaint that I had was the price, but you really get what you pay for, so how can you complain when you buy the best? She should trademark the definition of the "Ideal Index

I am about 2/3 of my way through this book. I know, I know, its about indexing books, how exciting can it really be? Well, although this topic is not exciting, this book is just fabulous. Her writing style and explanations are clear, concise, and well throughout. If you are wanting to learn how to index a book, this is an excellent book with a solid reputations for a reason. You will not be disappointed.

I just recently finished co-authoring my first full-length book. It is an extremely technical medical manual, and my co-author and I decided that we needed to do the indexing ourselves, both to aid in document debugging and because, as the authors, we understand the material in a way that even a medical indexer would not. I bought this book, read it twice and underlined it, took a deep breath, and then plunged ahead. We made a couple of newbie errors early on, but Mulvany helped keep us on the true path. And the index turned out very well.

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