



Center for Clinical Trials

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Department of Epidemiology  
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Department of Medicine  
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Monday, 21 November 2005

Memorandum

To: Center for Clinical Trials Students, Staff, and Faculty

Fr: Curtis L. Meinert, PhD

Re: Tables 101: Indexing

Indexing has a variety of uses. Even if one does not intend to include an index in the finished product, it is a useful tool. It can be used to track outstanding queries and edits during development of reports or manuscripts and is a tool to locate spelling inconsistencies by use of index concordance files.

A concordance file is a list of terms or abbreviations to be indexed. The indexing is automatic, ie, occurs without having to mark listed terms for indexing in the document being indexed. Subject matter indexing has to be accomplished the old-fashioned way – by someone analyzing text and marking text for indexing.

Consider the index in the back of my Dictionary and the entries:

**check digit *n*** - A **digit** that is affixed to a numeric identifier, eg, an **identification number**, typically the last digit of the identifier, that is used to identify recording or keying errors; done by comparing the value of the check digit, as computed for the identifier as issued, with the one computed for the identifier as recorded or keyed [Anderson et al, 1974;<sup>3</sup> Fellegi and Sunter, 1969;<sup>67</sup> Smythe, 1968;<sup>213</sup> Selmer, 1967<sup>207</sup>]. syn: self-checking digit

**randomization breakdown *n*** - A **breakdown** (defn 2) in **randomization** (defn 1) because of failure to follow the **treatment assignment schedule** as determined by a given **random process**, eg, as a result of using assignments in an order other than the one indicated.

**Usage note:** A randomization process should not be characterized as having broken down without evidence of departures from the assignment schedule. It is a mistake to equate a small **p-value**, as obtained from a **randomness test**, as proof of a breakdown. Large departures (hence, small p-values) can occur by chance alone with random processes. See also **randomness test**.

The subject matter index term is **digit** for **Check digit** and **randomization** and **usage note** for **randomization breakdown**. The indexing produced (as excerpted from the Dictionary index):

<b>digit</b>	
binary digit .....	25
check digit .....	39
digit bias .....	73
....	

**randomization**

....

quasirandomization .....	217
randomization .....	220
randomization breakdown .....	220
randomization examination .....	221

....

**usage note**

....

randomization .....	220
randomization breakdown .....	220
randomize, randomized, randomizing, randomizes .....	221

....

The Dictionary index is a combined subject and author index. The associated author indexing produced the following for references supporting the entry "check digit":

Anderson LK .....	46
Fellegi IP .....	46
Hendershot RA .....	46
Schoolmaker RC .....	46
Selmer ES .....	46
Sunter A .....	46
Smythe M .....	46

Note that there are seven author entries but only five names mentioned in **check digit**. The extra names are from the Anderson et al citation:

3	<b>Anderson LK, Hendershot RA, Schoolmaker RC: Self-checking digit concepts. <u>J Systems Management</u> 25:36-42, 1974.</b>	
	(Anderson et al, 1974) .....	78, 79, 83

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