

Sort File

Every time you create an index, display a directory, or execute a SORT or SORTD command, XyWrite arranges the file in a predefined way. If you wish, you can customize the sorting order to match your needs. XyWrite has an internal set of sorting rules that automatically arranges directory listings, index entries and sorted files in alphabetical order and makes other prioritizing decisions. For example, in multi-word entries, XyWrite alphabetizes the first word only, unless more than one entry has the same first word. The result is a list of entries that looks like this:

wild alphanumeric, 6-56

wild letter, 6-57

wild number, 6-50

wildcard, 6-55

You can change any of the default sorting order by creating a new sort file that lists the XyWrite characters in the order you want them sorted. (XyWrite characters include letters, numerals and other symbols. The complete list is in [Appendix E](#).) You can also tell XyWrite that you want a character evaluated as a character string (for example, treat ü as “ue” for sorting purposes).

Creating The Sort File

The sort file contains a list of characters in the order in which you want them sorted. The first line of the file contains the identifying label (;SO;) that tells XyWrite that it is a sort file. The next line contains the character or characters that you want to have sorted first in your list (e.g., aA). The third line contains those characters that you want have sorted second, and so on.

Any characters that you omit from the sort file are ignored when you create an index.

Let's create a sort file that builds alphabetical indexes, but ignores spaces between words in multi-word entries. It would sort the example above like this:

wild alphanumeric, 6-56

wildcard, 6-55

wild letter, 6-57

wild number, 6-50

1. Create a new file in which to store the sorting information.

Type: [F5] new nospace.srt [↵]

2. On the first line, enter the label that identifies the file as a sort file.

Type: ;SO;

3. On the next line, enter the characters to be sorted first. In this example, we leave the space out of the file altogether (normally, it would be the first character in the file).

Type: aA

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4. Continue entering all characters that you want to have included in your sort. Be sure to enter them in the correct order; those characters at the top of the sort file will be sorted first. For example:

```
bB
cC
dD
.
.
zZ
```

5. Include all characters that you want the sort character to use. In this example, omit the blank space from the list.

6. Store the sort file and then load it using the procedure “[Loading a Sort File](#)”.

```
Type: [F5] st [-]
```

Sorting To A Sequence Of Letters

To sort a single character as a sequence of characters, you enter the following definition in the sort file:

```
c=string
```

Where *c* is a single character and *string* is the group of characters that defines the sort order for *c*. For example, if you want “ü” to be treated as the string “ue” when you sort, make the following entry in the sort file.

```
ü=ue
```

You can put this entry anywhere in the sort file, but we recommend putting it at the beginning of the file, right after the line that defines the file label (;SO;).

Loading A Sort File

To load a sort file into memory, use the LOAD command, along with the name of the sort file you want to load. For example, if you have created a file called NOSPAC.SRT:

```
Type: load nospace.srt [-]
```

Result: The sort file NOSPAC.SRT is now in effect.

NOTE #1 – Startup In order to use a sort file you have created, you must first load it into memory. You can have your sort file automatically loaded at startup by adding a line to your STARTUP.INT file. For example, the following entry loads a sort file named TABLE.SRT.

```
BC load table.srt←
```

Refer to “[Startup File](#)” for more information on modifying STARTUP.INT.

NOTE #2 – Sort Key When XyWrite arranges (or sorts) an index, it uses the first 80 characters in each entry to determine where the entry belongs in the list. This number is called the sort key. You can reduce the amount of memory required to arrange the index by reducing the size of the sort key. To change the size of the sort key, use the DEFAULT command to enter the SK (Sort Key) setting (see “[Default Settings](#)” for more information).

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NOTE #3 - SO (Sort) Setting *In addition to the order established by the sort file, the SORTD command uses the values established by the SO default setting. Refer to [“Default Settings”](#) for more information about SO (the SO setting has no impact on the order of indexes, directory listings, or lists sorted with the SORT command).*

NOTE #4 - Directory Listings *The DSORT command also gives you some options for changing the order in which directory listings are displayed. For example, DSORT allows you to sort files in reverse alphabetical order. For information on the DSORT command, refer to [Chapter 2 of the Command Reference Guide](#) (the DSORT command has no impact on the order of indexes or lists sorted with the SORTD or SORT command)*
