

# Index Files

To speed up operation, MacPattern uses index files that contain pointers into the actual pattern or block database files as well as specific information about the individual patterns and blocks.

Note: If you want to use a new database for the first time or if you made any changes to a database file, you have to index the database first!

Index files carry the extension .inx and must be stored in the same folder as the database files. Index files are identified by the following icons:

attern index file

lock index file

(Technical information: The creator signature of index files is 'MCpt', the file type of pattern index files is 'MCPX', and the file type of block index files is 'MCPB')

Indexing is performed by selecting New Index from the File menu. A standard directory dialog box will appear and ask you to select the database data file, that is a .dat file, for example prosite.dat or blocks.dat.

If you are indexing a pattern database, MacPattern looks for the existence of a corresponding .doc file in the same folder and uses the information contained in there, if available. Block databases do not require a .doc file.

At the end of indexing it will ask you whether you want to sort the database alphabetically or not. If you want to do so, click the Sort button. Otherwise the order of entries will be preserved as given in the database .dat file.

You can move around the .dat, .doc and .inx files on your disk, but make sure you always keep them together in one folder.

Note: MacPattern uses file names to identify files which belong together. Therefore, if you want to rename your database files, always rename all of them and preserve the extensions .dat, .doc, and .inx.

## System 7

Under System 7, you can use aliases for the index file or the data files, so you may move the database files and the index file to a file server, for instance. In this case you only need the alias for the index file in your local directory and not the database files, but, again, always keep the original .inx, .dat, and .doc files together in one directory.

A possible setup could therefore be:

- One directory with the PROSITE database and index files.
- Another directory with the BLOCKS database and index file.
- A third directory with the MacPattern application and aliases pointing to the PROSITE and BLOCKS index files.

An alternative approach which has the advantage that you one make changes to the index files is to keep the original index file plus aliases to the database files in one directory on the local hard disk, the aliases pointing to database files on a file server.