

Sorting one or more data bases:

You may load one data base file or a series of data base files (to be combined into a single mailing) for Postage \$aver to sort. The data base files can be in any of the following data formats:

tab-separated text

comma-separated text

merge (comma-separated text with a header record)

dbf (used by dBase and some other data bases)

sylk (used by many spreadsheet programs)

If your data base does not store its files in one of these formats, there is still a good chance that you can prepare files for Postage \$aver by using the data base's "export" command. If you have the choice of formats to use, tab-separated text will usually be the fastest. If you do not want to mail to all of the names in your data base, be sure to select only those names you will be mailing to before exporting the file.

Your file may include as many fields as you choose (such as name, address, etc.), but Postage \$aver will only look at the zip code, city and state. To identify the zip code, Postage \$aver will look for text in one of three formats: #####, #####, or #####-####, where # represents a digit. Postage \$aver will mark the first field it finds that is in this format as the zip code field. (If this not the field that contains your zip codes, you will have the opportunity to confirm and change this selection before the file is sorted.)

To identify the state field, Postage \$aver will look for a field containing only two letters. Postage \$aver will mark the first field it finds that is in this format as the state field. Similarly, it will look for a string of at least three letters to identify the city field.

You can also provide city and state information combined into a single field, in the format "city, st". Postage \$aver will identify a field like this as a "city & state" field, and will separate the state from the city when it loads the file.

You do not need to provide city and state information if do not want Postage \$aver to check these to make sure they match your zip codes.

To sort a single file, choose that option from Postage \$aver's Run menu. Postage \$aver will ask you to choose the file to be sorted. When you have made your selection, Postage \$aver will identify the format of the file, compute the total number of records in the file, and read the first record. If possible, Postage \$aver will automatically determine which field in the file contains the zip code, and, if you have included them, the state abbreviation and city name. It will show you this information for the first record. (Note that the number of addresses indicated for dbf files may include addresses that have been deleted from your data base. Postage \$aver will ignore these

addresses when it loads the file.)

If the information displayed is correct, press OK. If it is incorrect, press Not OK. If you press Not OK, you will be shown an explanation screen, and then you will have the opportunity to tell Postage \$aver where each item of information is located in each record. Enter your record layout in the spaces provided.

For example: if your records are formatted as: zip code; state; city, then enter "1" for "zip code", "2" for "state", "3" for "city", and "0" for "city & state". Then click "Try Again" to let Postage \$aver try to read the file using the layout you have specified. (Always be sure to enter "0" for any fields that are not included in the file you have asked Postage \$aver to read.)

Once you confirm that Postage \$aver has read the file properly, it will sort the file. If you have selected "Create Output File" on the Preferences window (on the Settings menu), Postage \$aver will create output files as explained in the help information for that screen.

Next, Postage \$aver will prepare the Bulk Mail Sort Report, and display your printer's print dialog so that you can print or view the report.

To sort more than one file at the same time, choose that option from the Run menu. The process is almost the same as that for sorting a single file, except that after loading each file, Postage \$aver will ask whether you want to load another file or begin sorting. (You can also cancel the job at this point.) Once you begin sorting, the process is identical, except that if you are creating output files, there will be a separate output file created for each file you have loaded.

To verify one or more files without sorting, choose the appropriate option from the Run menu. This process is identical to that described above, except that the files will not be sorted. The report produced will only include a listing of rejected and questionable zip codes, and no output files will be created. This selection is particularly useful for cleaning up your data base files before actually sorting for bulk mailing.