



Paper-Based Systems

The system of storing and maintaining records will determine how the records are arranged and grouped and how files are built. Paper-based systems are traditional systems that have been used to maintain records before electronic or hybrid records were created.

Arranging and Grouping

When arranging paper records, the groupings can be taken down to the sublevels, or the sublevels can be arranged together based on ease of management and retrieval. Typical arrangements include subject, chronological, numerical.

When records are arranged by subject, alphabetical groupings are typically used. There are two standard methods for alphabetical arrangements:

- Dictionary-style - There are file folders for each subject, arranged alphabetically.
- Encyclopedic style - Each folder is alphabetized behind the headings, based on subgroups.

Some files are arranged chronologically, based on the date of creation. These can be difficult to retrieve.

Numerical files have two different styles:

- Serial method - Used when records are given numbers on the day they are created. It is useful for invoices and purchase orders.
- Digit method - The numbers are identifiers, such as patient numbers. This method can be effective for large



Arranging and Grouping

Alphabetical Arrangements:

- Dictionary-style
- Encyclopedic style

Numerical Arrangements:

- Serial method
- Digit method

Alphanumeric files use alphabetical or numerical codes to replace subjects, but require an index to understand the code. An example is the diagram tool in module six.

Building Files

When individual files are created, the needs of the user must be considered. The individual file requirements must consider the following topics:

- The size of the files
- What items need to remain together
- Methods of grouping the files
- How the files will be retrieved

Different subjects or groupings may be filed together if they are small, while larger files may need continuations. It all depends on the documentation that is necessary. For example, a client file may be labeled by name and contain all the pertinent information about individuals, including purchase history. Other companies may organize a client file in groups.



One popular method of file building is implementing a color-coding system to help identify the groups in which different files belong.

Elementary & Intermediate

The intermediate levels of information can be represented in the file folder by creating subdivisions in the file folder. Files are limited because of space, so items classified might not have physical subdivisions of their own.

Elementary processes are the basic actions created by processes of the series, such as certifications or signed applications. Elementary processes are not typically designated as part of the routine process; only the most critical elementary actions are included in file modeling. It is important to determine if any elementary actions are governed by external legal factors. If they are part of the routine process, the actions must be clear.

Example:

Signed lease Verify all signatures are complete File in appropriate series. File on left side

Elementary & Intermediate

Create Subdivisions

Basic actions

Legal factors