

COMMON DATE FORMATS WORLDWIDE

DD/MM/YYYY vs MM/DD/YYYY vs YYYY-MM-DD

Worldwide Date Format Reference, Country Examples & ISO 8601 Guide

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Dates can be written in different orders depending on the country, region, language, organization and application.

For example:

05/07/2026

could mean:

- **5 July 2026** in a DD/MM/YYYY system
- **May 7, 2026** in a MM/DD/YYYY system

This difference can cause confusion when people communicate internationally or work with documents, websites, spreadsheets, databases, travel bookings and official records.

This PDF explains the most common **date formats used worldwide**, including **DD/MM/YYYY**, **MM/DD/YYYY**, **YYYY-MM-DD**, ISO 8601 and other common representations.

Quick Answer: What Is the International Date Format?

There is no single everyday date format used by every country.

However, the internationally recognized **ISO 8601** date representation uses:

YYYY-MM-DD

Example:

2026-07-05

This format puts the year first, followed by the month and day.

It is particularly useful for computers, databases, APIs, filenames, international communication and other situations where an unambiguous date representation is important.

Main Date Formats

Date Format	Meaning	Example
DD/MM/YYYY	Day / Month / Year	05/07/2026
MM/DD/YYYY	Month / Day / Year	07/05/2026
YYYY-MM-DD	Year / Month / Day	2026-07-05
DD-MM-YYYY	Day-Month-Year	05-07-2026
MM-DD-YYYY	Month-Day-Year	07-05-2026
YYYY/MM/DD	Year/Month/Day	2026/07/05
D/M/YYYY	Day/Month/Year	5/7/2026
M/D/YYYY	Month/Day/Year	7/5/2026

Important: A numeric date such as **05/07/2026** can be ambiguous without knowing the convention being used.

DD/MM/YYYY Date Format

The **DD/MM/YYYY** format places:

1. Day first
2. Month second
3. Year last

Example

05/07/2026

means:

5 July 2026

This format is common in many countries, including India and many countries in Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania.

MM/DD/YYYY Date Format

The **MM/DD/YYYY** format places:

1. Month first
2. Day second
3. Year last

Example

07/05/2026

means:

July 5, 2026

This format is strongly associated with the **United States** in everyday usage.

YYYY-MM-DD Date Format

The **YYYY-MM-DD** format places:

1. Year first
2. Month second
3. Day last

Example

2026-07-05

means:

5 July 2026

This format is particularly useful because the order is unambiguous and dates can be sorted chronologically as text.

ISO 8601 Date Format

ISO 8601 is an international standard for representing dates and times.

A common calendar-date representation is:

YYYY-MM-DD

For example:

2026-07-05

The year is written with four digits, followed by the two-digit month and two-digit day.

ISO date example

2026-07-05

= 5 July 2026

Why YYYY-MM-DD Is Useful

The ISO-style format is useful because it avoids the ambiguity between:

DD/MM/YYYY

and:

MM/DD/YYYY

For example:

05/07/2026

is ambiguous internationally.

But:

2026-07-05

clearly identifies the date as **5 July 2026**.

DD/MM/YYYY vs MM/DD/YYYY

Feature	DD/MM/YYYY	MM/DD/YYYY
First component	Day	Month

Feature	DD/MM/YYYY	MM/DD/YYYY
Second component	Month	Day
Common association	India, UK and many countries	United States
Example	05/07/2026	07/05/2026
Meaning	5 July 2026	July 5, 2026

Important

The same numeric date can represent two completely different calendar dates.

For example:

03/04/2026

could mean:

3 April 2026 under DD/MM/YYYY

or:

March 4, 2026 under MM/DD/YYYY.

Worldwide Date Format Chart

The following chart provides a practical reference to commonly used date-order conventions. Country practices can vary by language, institution, software and context, so the chart should be treated as a general guide rather than a legal formatting standard.

Country / Region	Common Numeric Format	Example
India	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
United Kingdom	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
Ireland	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
Australia	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
New Zealand	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
South Africa	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026

Country / Region	Common Numeric Format	Example
United States	MM/DD/YYYY	07/05/2026
Canada	Mixed; YYYY-MM-DD often preferred in formal contexts	2026-07-05
Japan	YYYY/MM/DD	2026/07/05
China	YYYY/MM/DD	2026/07/05
South Korea	YYYY-MM-DD / YYYY.MM.DD	2026-07-05
Germany	DD.MM.YYYY	05.07.2026
France	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
Italy	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
Spain	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
Portugal	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
Netherlands	DD-MM-YYYY	05-07-2026
Belgium	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
Switzerland	DD.MM.YYYY	05.07.2026
Austria	DD.MM.YYYY	05.07.2026
Sweden	YYYY-MM-DD	2026-07-05
Norway	DD.MM.YYYY	05.07.2026
Denmark	DD.MM.YYYY	05.07.2026
Finland	DD.MM.YYYY	05.07.2026
Iceland	DD.MM.YYYY	05.07.2026
Russia	DD.MM.YYYY	05.07.2026
Brazil	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
Mexico	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
Argentina	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
Chile	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026

Country / Region	Common Numeric Format	Example
Colombia	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
Peru	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
UAE	DD/MM/YYYY commonly encountered	05/07/2026
Saudi Arabia	DD/MM/YYYY commonly encountered	05/07/2026
Israel	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
Singapore	DD/MM/YYYY commonly encountered	05/07/2026
Malaysia	DD/MM/YYYY commonly encountered	05/07/2026
Philippines	MM/DD/YYYY commonly encountered	07/05/2026

Note: Date conventions can vary within a country depending on language, government department, business practice, software locale and whether the date is written numerically or in words.

Date Format in India

India commonly uses:

DD/MM/YYYY

Example

05/07/2026

means:

5 July 2026

Other representations can also appear depending on the application or document.

For international systems, using an unambiguous format such as:

2026-07-05

can reduce confusion.

Date Format in the United States

The United States commonly uses:

MM/DD/YYYY

Example

07/05/2026

means:

July 5, 2026

This differs from the DD/MM/YYYY convention used in many other countries.

Date Format in the United Kingdom

The United Kingdom commonly uses:

DD/MM/YYYY

Example

05/07/2026

means:

5 July 2026

Date Format in Australia

Australia commonly uses:

DD/MM/YYYY

Example:

05/07/2026

= 5 July 2026

Date Format in Canada

Canadian date usage can vary depending on context and language.

In formal, technical and government-related contexts, **YYYY-MM-DD** is often useful because it removes ambiguity.

Other formats may also be encountered in everyday Canadian usage.

For international data exchange, an unambiguous ISO-style date is generally preferable.

Date Format in Japan

Japan commonly uses a year-first convention.

A common representation is:

YYYY/MM/DD

Example:

2026/07/05

= 5 July 2026

The year-first arrangement helps reduce ambiguity.

Date Format in China

China commonly uses a year-first ordering.

Example:

2026/07/05

means:

5 July 2026

Chinese-language dates may also use Chinese characters for year, month and day.

Date Format in Germany

Germany commonly uses:

DD.MM.YYYY

Example:

05.07.2026

means:

5 July 2026

The period/full stop is commonly used as the separator.

Date Format in France

France commonly uses:

DD/MM/YYYY

Example:

05/07/2026

means:

5 July 2026

Date Format in Brazil

Brazil commonly uses:

DD/MM/YYYY

Example:

05/07/2026

means:

5 July 2026

Date Format in Sweden

Sweden commonly uses a year-first format in many contexts:

YYYY-MM-DD

Example:

2026-07-05

means:

5 July 2026

Date Format by Region

Countries commonly associated with DD/MM/YYYY

Examples include:

- India
 - United Kingdom
 - Ireland
 - Australia
 - New Zealand
 - France
 - Spain
 - Italy
 - Brazil
 - South Africa
 - Many countries in Asia, Africa and Europe
-

Countries commonly associated with MM/DD/YYYY

The most prominent example is:

- United States

Some other countries and regional systems may also use month-first formats in particular contexts.

Countries commonly associated with YYYY-MM-DD

Examples include:

- Sweden
- Japan in year-first representations
- China in year-first representations
- South Korea in ISO-style representations

The exact display can vary by language, software and context.

Why Date Formats Cause Confusion

Consider:

04/05/2026

Under DD/MM/YYYY:

4 May 2026

Under MM/DD/YYYY:

April 5, 2026

Both interpretations are valid depending on the convention.

This is why international organizations often prefer unambiguous formats.

How to Write Dates Without Confusion

When communicating internationally, consider writing the month as a word.

Instead of:

05/07/2026

write:

5 July 2026

or:

July 5, 2026

This makes the intended date immediately clear.

For technical systems, use:

2026-07-05

Date Format Examples

Numeric Date	Possible Interpretation
01/02/2026	1 February or January 2
03/04/2026	3 April or March 4
05/06/2026	5 June or May 6
07/08/2026	7 August or July 8
09/10/2026	9 October or September 10
11/12/2026	11 December or November 12

These examples demonstrate why numeric dates can become ambiguous when shared internationally.

Unambiguous Date Examples

Instead of:

05/07/2026

use:

2026-07-05

or:

5 July 2026

or:

July 5, 2026

The best choice depends on the audience and context.

Date Separators

Different systems use different separators.

Slash

05/07/2026

Hyphen

05-07-2026

Period

05.07.2026

No separator

20260705

ISO-style

2026-07-05

The separator does not necessarily determine the date order. The order of day, month and year must also be considered.

Common Date Format Patterns

DD/MM/YYYY

05/07/2026

Day → Month → Year

MM/DD/YYYY

07/05/2026

Month → Day → Year

YYYY/MM/DD

2026/07/05

Year → Month → Day

DD-MM-YYYY

05-07-2026

Day → Month → Year

DD.MM.YYYY

05.07.2026

Day → Month → Year

YYYY-MM-DD

2026-07-05

Year → Month → Day

Short Date vs Long Date

Short Numeric Date

05/07/2026

Compact but potentially ambiguous.

Long Date

5 July 2026

Clearer for international readers.

American Long Date

July 5, 2026

Common in US English.

ISO Date

2026-07-05

Compact, standardized and machine-friendly.

Date Formats for Computers and Databases

For databases and software systems, a year-first format is often preferred because it can be sorted naturally.

For example:

2026-01-15

2026-02-10

2026-07-05

2026-12-31

When written in YYYY-MM-DD order, chronological dates also sort correctly as text when the components are zero-padded.

Date Formats in File Names

Using an ISO-style date can also be useful for filenames.

Recommended

sales-report-2026-07-05.pdf

Less suitable for international sharing

sales-report-05-07-2026.pdf

The first filename clearly communicates the year, month and day.

Date Formats in Spreadsheets

Spreadsheets can automatically interpret dates according to the computer's regional settings.

This can create problems when a spreadsheet is shared between countries.

For example:

03/04/2026

may be interpreted differently depending on the locale.

[Best practice](#)

For international data exchange, consider using:

YYYY-MM-DD

or storing dates as proper date values rather than ambiguous text strings.

Date Format for Websites and Forms

A website serving users from multiple countries should clearly indicate the expected date format.

Instead of simply showing:

DD/MM/YYYY

or:

MM/DD/YYYY

the form can use:

Day / Month / Year

or:

Month / Day / Year

Alternatively, a date picker can allow users to select the date directly.

Date Format for International Business

International businesses should avoid ambiguous numeric dates when communicating across borders.

Better

15 September 2026

Also suitable for technical data

2026-09-15

Potentially ambiguous

15/09/2026

This last example is unambiguous to some audiences because 15 cannot be a month, but dates where both day and month are 1–12 can cause confusion.

Date Format for Travel

Travel documents, airline systems, hotel bookings and international forms can use different date conventions.

Always check the label or instructions on the document.

For example:

04/05/2026

could mean:

- 4 May 2026
- April 5, 2026

When a date is important for travel, visas, reservations or deadlines, use a written month or confirm the intended format.

Date Format for Official Documents

Official documents should follow the format specified by the issuing organization.

Do not assume that every government agency or organization uses the same date format.

When no format is specified and the document is intended for international readers, a written month or an unambiguous year-first format can help reduce confusion.

Date Format Conversion Examples

DD/MM/YYYY → MM/DD/YYYY

05/07/2026

DD/MM/YYYY:

5 July 2026

MM/DD/YYYY representation:

07/05/2026

MM/DD/YYYY → DD/MM/YYYY

12/25/2026

MM/DD/YYYY:

December 25, 2026

DD/MM/YYYY:

25/12/2026

DD/MM/YYYY → YYYY-MM-DD

05/07/2026

becomes:

2026-07-05

MM/DD/YYYY → YYYY-MM-DD

07/05/2026

means July 5, 2026 under MM/DD/YYYY.

ISO-style representation:

2026-07-05

Common Date Format Mistakes

Mistake 1: Assuming everyone uses DD/MM/YYYY

Not all countries use day-first formatting.

Mistake 2: Assuming everyone uses MM/DD/YYYY

Month-first formatting is particularly associated with the United States but is not universal.

Mistake 3: Using ambiguous dates internationally

Dates such as:

01/02/2026

can have two interpretations.

Mistake 4: Forgetting leading zeros

For machine-readable dates, zero-padding is useful:

2026-07-05

rather than:

2026-7-5

Mistake 5: Confusing date and time formats

A date identifies a calendar day, while a time identifies a time of day.

Date Format Cheat Sheet

Format	Order	Example
DD/MM/YYYY	Day-Month-Year	05/07/2026
MM/DD/YYYY	Month-Day-Year	07/05/2026
YYYY-MM-DD	Year-Month-Day	2026-07-05
DD-MM-YYYY	Day-Month-Year	05-07-2026
MM-DD-YYYY	Month-Day-Year	07-05-2026
DD.MM.YYYY	Day.Month.Year	05.07.2026
YYYY/MM/DD	Year/Month/Day	2026/07/05
Most Common Date Formats at a Glance		
IN India		
DD/MM/YYYY		
US United States		
MM/DD/YYYY		
GB United Kingdom		
DD/MM/YYYY		
AU Australia		
DD/MM/YYYY		
JP Japan		
YYYY/MM/DD		
CN China		
YYYY/MM/DD		
DE Germany		
DD.MM.YYYY		

FR France

DD/MM/YYYY

BR Brazil

DD/MM/YYYY

 ISO 8601

YYYY-MM-DD

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the most common date format in the world?

There is no single date format used by every country. Day-first formats such as DD/MM/YYYY are widely used internationally, while MM/DD/YYYY is strongly associated with the United States. Year-first formats are also common in several countries and technical systems.

What is DD/MM/YYYY?

DD/MM/YYYY means **Day/Month/Year**.

Example:

05/07/2026 = 5 July 2026

What is MM/DD/YYYY?

MM/DD/YYYY means **Month/Day/Year**.

Example:

07/05/2026 = July 5, 2026

What date format does the USA use?

The United States commonly uses **MM/DD/YYYY** for numeric dates.

What date format does India use?

India commonly uses **DD/MM/YYYY**.

What date format does the UK use?

The United Kingdom commonly uses **DD/MM/YYYY**.

What is ISO date format?

A common ISO 8601 calendar-date representation is **YYYY-MM-DD**.

Example:

2026-07-05

Why is YYYY-MM-DD better for computers?

YYYY-MM-DD is unambiguous and, when consistently zero-padded, allows dates to sort chronologically as text.

Is 05/07/2026 July 5 or May 7?

It depends on the date convention. Under **DD/MM/YYYY**, it means **5 July 2026**. Under **MM/DD/YYYY**, it means **May 7, 2026**.

How can I write a date so everyone understands it?

Use the month name:

5 July 2026

or:

July 5, 2026

For technical and international data, use:

2026-07-05

International Date Format Quick Reference

Day First

DD/MM/YYYY

Example:

05/07/2026

Meaning:

5 July 2026

Month First

MM/DD/YYYY

Example:

07/05/2026

Meaning:

July 5, 2026

Year First

YYYY-MM-DD

Example:

2026-07-05

Meaning:

5 July 2026

Printable Date Format Chart

Purpose	Recommended Format	Example
India	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
US everyday use	MM/DD/YYYY	07/05/2026
UK	DD/MM/YYYY	05/07/2026
International technical data	YYYY-MM-DD	2026-07-05
Database-friendly date	YYYY-MM-DD	2026-07-05
International business	5 July 2026	5 July 2026
US business writing	July 5, 2026	July 5, 2026

Purpose	Recommended Format	Example
Filename	YYYY-MM-DD	2026-07-05

Final Date Format Guide

The three date formats you should remember are:

DD/MM/YYYY = Day / Month / Year

MM/DD/YYYY = Month / Day / Year

YYYY-MM-DD = Year / Month / Day

For example, the date **5 July 2026** can be represented as:

DD/MM/YYYY:
05/07/2026

MM/DD/YYYY:
07/05/2026

YYYY-MM-DD:
2026-07-05

When communicating internationally, avoid ambiguous numeric dates whenever possible. Writing the month in words or using an unambiguous year-first representation can make the intended date much clearer.

Download the Free Date Format PDF

Common Date Formats Worldwide – Complete Reference Chart

Download this free **Worldwide Date Formats PDF** to quickly check **DD/MM/YYYY, MM/DD/YYYY, YYYY-MM-DD, ISO date format and country-wise date conventions.**

This PDF includes:

- DD/MM/YYYY explained
- MM/DD/YYYY explained
- YYYY-MM-DD explained
- ISO 8601 date format
- Date format by country
- Worldwide date format chart
- India date format

- US date format
- UK date format
- European date formats
- Asian date formats
- Date conversion examples
- Date separators
- International date writing tips
- Spreadsheet date-format tips
- Database date-format tips
- International business date formats
- Date format cheat sheet
- Frequently asked questions

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Disclaimer

Date-format conventions can vary by country, language, region, government organization, business, software locale and individual context. The country examples in this guide are intended as a general reference and should not be treated as a universal legal or regulatory requirement.

For official forms, applications, contracts and government documents, always follow the date format specified by the relevant organization.

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