

Dates

Introduction



It's Wednesday 7th July, 2014.

Definition

'Date' usually refers to the number on a calendar but it can also mean the day, date, month and year together.

Construction

We use **ordinal numbers** to express the date:

1st	11th	21st
2nd	12th	22nd
3rd	13th	23rd
4th	14th	24th
5th	15th	25th
6th	16th	26th
7th	17th	27th
8th	18th	28th
9th	19th	29th
10th	20th	30th
		31st

The full date = day + date + month + year
Monday 22nd August, 2012

Note that we use:

1. Capital letters for days and months.
2. A comma between the month and the year:

(Monday) 22nd August, 2012

But in a sentence it is not always necessary:

The next meeting is in January 2013.

March 2000 was an important month for the company.

Abbreviated forms

1. We can also write the date as:

British	American
2/7/2012	7/2/2012
or	or
2/7/12	7/2/12

In British English, we say this in the same way as the full form - "the second of July, 2012"

In American English, we give the month, day, year. "July second, 2012".

In British English, we usually place the date before the month in the full form and always in the abbreviated form but in American English, this is always the opposite.

Friday 6th July [British]

Friday, July 6th [American]

The date can be unclear in the abbreviated form:

9/2/12 = 9th February [British]

= September 2nd [American]

2. In formal written English, including business letters, the full form is preferred but informally, months and days can be abbreviated to:

Jan	Mon
Feb	Tue
Mar	Wed
Apr	Thu
May	Fri
Jun	Sat
Jul	Sun
Aug	
Sep	
Oct	
Nov	
Dec	

Years

This is how to say the years when you speak:

1066	ten sixty-six
1789	seventeen eighty-nine
1801	eighteen 'o' one
1907	nineteen 'o' seven
1963	nineteen sixty-three
2000	two thousand
2004	two thousand and four <u>or</u> twenty 'o' four
2011	two thousand and eleven <u>or</u> twenty eleven
2012	twenty twelve <u>or</u> two thousand and twelve
2013	twenty thirteen <u>or</u> two thousand and thirteen

Note that for the years before 2010, it is more usual to say 'two thousand and...' but most people in both the UK and the US are now saying 'twenty ten' and this will probably continue with 'twenty thirteen' etc.

Decades

	We write	We say
1990 - 1999	the 1990s the '90s	the nineteen nineties the nineties
2000 - 2009	the 2000s	the two thousands
		Note that British and American people do not have an agreed standard name for this decade or the next one.
2010 - 2019	2010s	the twenty tens the two thousand and tens

Centuries

1801 - 1900 = the 19th century [or the eighteen hundreds]

1901 - 2000 = the 20th century [or the nineteen hundreds]

2001 - 2100 = the 21st century

Prepositions

We use the **preposition** 'on' with days and dates:

My birthday is on (Monday) 26th September.

My birthday is on Monday.

We use 'in' with months.

My birthday is in September.

Spoken English

When we speak, we add words to the date that we don't write:

It's Tuesday the 3rd of July.

You may also hear a variety of other forms including:

July 3rd and July the 3rd.

Examples



Christmas is celebrated on **25th December**.



"This invoice is American. It is **the eighth of July**, not **the seventh of August**."



"When is the next meeting?" "**The third of next month**."



This letter is dated **4th November**.



He was born in the 1950s but he likes music from **the '80s** and **'90s**.



This is a car from **the 19th century**.



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