

## The PHP Date() Function - Syntax

The PHP date() function formats a timestamp to a more readable date and time.

```
date(format, timestamp)
```

Parameter	Description
format	Required. Specifies the format of the timestamp
timestamp	Optional. Specifies a timestamp. Default is the current date and time (as a timestamp)

## What is a Timestamp?

A timestamp is the number of seconds since January 1, 1970 at 00:00:00 GMT.

This is also known as the Unix Timestamp.

## Format the Date

The first parameter in the `date()` function specifies how to format the date/time. It uses letters to represent date and time formats. Here are some of the letters that can be used:

- \* `d` - The day of the month (01-31)
- \* `m` - The current month, as a number (01-12)
- \* `Y` - The current year in four digits

An overview of all the letters that can be used in the format parameter, can be found in the [W3C PHP Date reference](#).

Other characters, like `"/`, `".`, or `"-` can also be inserted between the letters to add additional formatting:

## Format the Date

```
<?php  
echo date("Y/m/d");  
echo "<br />";  
echo date("Y.m.d");  
echo "<br />";  
echo date("Y-m-d");  
?>
```

The output of the code above could be something like this:

```
2006/07/11  
2006.07.11  
2006-07-11
```

## Adding a Timestamp

The second parameter in the `date()` function specifies a timestamp. This parameter is optional. If you do not supply a timestamp, the current time will be used.

In our next example we will use the `time()` function to create a timestamp for tomorrow.

The `time()` function returns the Unix timestamp for NOW.

....but we can manipulate this.

```
<?php
$nextWeek = time() + (7 * 24 * 60 * 60);
                // 7 days; 24 hours; 60 mins; 60secs
echo 'Now:      '. date('Y-m-d') ."\n";
echo 'Next Week: '. date('Y-m-d', $nextWeek) ."\n";
// or using strtotime():
echo 'Next Week: '. date('Y-m-d', strtotime('+1 week')) ."\n";
?>
```

## Other Date Functions

We used `time()` to generate out timestamp, but there are a number of other useful time/date functions we can use such as `strftime()` and `mktime()`

For the full list check the [W3C Date/Time Functions List](#)