

# How to say the date in English

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Ask for the date in English:

Look at these examples:

- What's today's date ? / What's the date today ?
- It's May 5. / It's the 5th of May.
  
- What day is it today ? / What day is it ? / What's today ?
- Today's Thursday, May 5th (May fifth).

Be careful of the difference between 'day' and 'date'.

- Day: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday...
- Date: July 14th, December 2nd, January 3rd...

**Note:** remember to capitalize the months! = January, not january

Why put "th", "nd" or "rd" after the number?

These are ordinal numbers! Indeed, to say the date in English you should not use normal numbers but ordinal numbers:

Ex: Today is the seventh of August (NOT: Today is the seven of August )

How to read ordinal numbers from 1 to 31:

Days of the Month	
1st	first
2nd	second
3rd	third
4th	fourth
5th	fifth
6th	sixth
7th	seventh
8th	eighth
9th	ninth

10th	tenth
11th	eleventh
12th	twelfth
13th	thirteenth
14th	fourteenth
15th	fifteenth
16th	sixteenth
17th	seventeenth
18th	eighteenth
19th	nineteenth

20th	twentieth
21st	twenty-first
22nd	twenty-second
23rd	twenty-third
24th	twenty-fourth
25th	twenty-fifth

26th	twenty-sixth
27th	twenty-seventh
28th	twenty-eighth
29th	twenty-ninth
30th	thirtieth
31st	thirty-first

How to read the date? A few examples:

1st May → the first of May  
 2nd April → the second of April  
 3rd December → the third of December  
 4th May → the fourth of May  
 5th March → the fifth of March  
 6th June → the sixth of June  
 7th October → the seventh of October  
 8th August → the eighth of August  
 9th May → the ninth May  
 10th July → the tenth of July  
 16th March → the sixteenth of March  
 23rd November → the twenty-third of November  
 26th May → the twenty-sixth of May  
 30th May → the thirtieth of May

May 1 → May the first  
 May 2 → May the second  
 May 23 → May the twenty-third  
 May 30 → May the thirtieth

Ordinals are also used to talk about centuries:

- The 16th century
- The 12th century
- The 20th century

How to say the date in British English and American English:

The English and Americans have a different way of saying the date. If in doubt, it is better to use the British way which seems the most obvious:

- British (day/month/year) → the seventeenth of July
- American (month/day/year) → July the seventeenth

The year:

It is not necessary to say the year if you are asked for a current date. On the other hand, if you are talking about a date in the past or the future, it is worth saying the year. Don't forget to put a comma beforehand:

- 15/04/2001 → The fifteenth of April two thousand and one (orally) / The fifteenth of April, 2001 (in writing).
- When were you born ? → 1st May, 1983.
- When did you arrive in New York ? → In 2011.
- When is the next World Cup ? → In July of 2017.

Talk about the beginning, middle and end of the month:

Look at these examples:

- at the beginning of August
- in mid-October
- at the end of May
- by the end of November