

18. PHP Date() Function

The PHP date() function is used to format a time and/or date.

18.1. The PHP Date() Function

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

💡 A timestamp is a sequence of characters, denoting the date and/or time at which a certain event occurred.

Syntax

```
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

18.2. PHP Date() - Format the Date

The required *format* parameter in the date() function specifies how to format the date/time.

Here are some characters that can be used:

- d - Represents the day of the month (01 to 31)
- m - Represents a month (01 to 12)
- Y - Represents a year (in four digits)

A list of all the characters that can be used in the *format* parameter, can be found in our PHP Date reference, date() function.

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

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

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

```
2009/05/11  
2009.05.11  
2009-05-11
```

18.3. PHP Date() - Adding a Timestamp

The optional *timestamp* parameter in the `date()` function specifies a timestamp. If you do not specify a timestamp, the current date and time will be used.

The `mktime()` function returns the Unix timestamp for a date.

The Unix timestamp contains the number of seconds between the Unix Epoch (January 1 1970 00:00:00 GMT) and the time specified.

Syntax for `mktime()`

```
mktime(hour,minute,second,month,day,year,is_dst)
```

To go one day in the future we simply add one to the day argument of `mktime()`:

```
<?php  
$tomorrow = mktime(0,0,0,date("m"),date("d")+1,date("Y"));  
echo "Tomorrow is ".date("Y/m/d", $tomorrow);  
?>
```

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

```
Tomorrow is 2009/05/12
```

18.3. Complete PHP Date Reference

For a complete reference of all date functions, go to our complete PHP Date Reference.

The reference contains a brief description, and examples of use, for each function!