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PHP: Formatting the day number suffix in php with date()

Asked 8 years, 11 months ago Active 29 days ago Viewed 9k times



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I feel a bit silly for this one, but is there a *more elegant way to format the day number suffix* (st, th) other than by having to call the date() 3 times?

What I am trying to output in html:

```
<p>January, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011</p>
```

What I am doing now (feels very heavy) in php:

```
//I am omitting the <p> tags:
echo date('M j',$timestamp)
. '<sup>' . date('S', $timestamp) . '</sup>'
. date(' Y', $timestamp);
```

Anyone knows a better way?

php

date

formatting

edited May 10 '12 at 22:48



[Daniel Fischer](#)

168k 15 278 409

asked Mar 9 '11 at 14:58



[Regis Zaleman](#)

2,555 4 25 26

3 Answers



15



You just have to escape characters that are interpreted by the date function.

```
echo date('M j<\sup>S</\sup> Y'); // < PHP 5.2.2
echo date('M j<\s\up>S</\s\up> Y'); // >= PHP 5.2.2
```

At [PHP date documentation](#) you have a list with all characters replaced by their special meaning.

edited Jan 21 at 10:11

answered Mar 9 '11 at 15:05



[acm](#)

5,590 2 30 44



13



```
echo date('M j<\s\u\p>S<\/\s\u\p> Y', $timestamp);
```

answered Mar 9 '11 at 15:01

**Trevor****36.2k** 2 13 12

+1. I had written 80% when I saw a someone answering the question. – [johankj](#) Mar 9 '11 at 15:03

you can add any text you like into the php Date() function as part of the string, just ensure you escape reserved characters with a \, as shown in Trevor's answer. – [Gavin Coates](#) Mar 9 '11 at 15:08



1



I believe the `date` function allows you to put in any string that you want, provided that you escape all format characters.

```
echo date('M j<\s\up>S<\/\s\up> Y', $timestamp);
```

edited Nov 4 '16 at 16:49

**Nisse Engström****4,386** 9 22 37

answered Mar 9 '11 at 15:02

**Blair McMillan****5,169** 2 22 44

1 You had the "S" for the English ordinal suffix escaped, which is wrong. I have corrected that for you. – [Michael Yaeger](#) Nov 4 '16 at 15:31

