

Backward in Time - xkcd

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Based on <http://xkcd.com/1017/>

April 7, 2014

When I have a boring task to get through - a three-hour lecture, a giant file download, or a long-term point goal in Fitocracy - I use this formula to convert the percentage completed (p) into a date:

$$T = (\text{Current Date}) - \left(e^{20.3444 p^3 + 3} - e^3 \right) \text{ Years}$$

When the task is 0% done, it gives today's date, and as I make progress, I move further and further back in time.

$$p = \sqrt{\frac{\ln(T + e^3) - 3}{20.3444}}$$

0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Now	9/11	2008	1997	1958	1776	405AD	-22k	-671k	-55m	-13.8b

It moves slowly through the past few years, then steadily accelerates. I tuned the formula so the time spent in each part of the past is loosely proportional to how well I know it. This means I hit familiar landmarks with each bit of progress, giving me a satisfying sense of movement.

7.308%	December 18, 2011
Around this time: Kim Jong-Il dies. US leaves Iraq.	

31.12%	February 1995
Around this time: Windows 95 debuts. OJ found not guilty.	

47.91%	1844
Around this time: Rubber vulcanized, bicycle invented, wrench patented.	

70.33%	24,000 years ago
Around this time: Caves painted, ceramic art made. Neanderthals extinct.	

90.42%	68 million years ago
Around this time: First flowering plants. Chicxulub impact kills off most dinosaurs.	

100%	13.76 billion years ago
Around this time: Universe begins. First stars ignite.	
Download Complete	

Swoosh! Watching all that time blur past is such a rush!
So... you've tried to make an extreme sport out of... *waiting*.

Swoosh!