Date Values

Dates are represented as the number of days since 1970-01-01, with negative values for earlier dates.

# use as.Date( ) to convert strings to dates   
mydates <- as.Date(c("2007-06-22", "2004-02-13"))  
# number of days between 6/22/07 and 2/13/04   
days <- mydates[1] - mydates[2]

**Sys.Date( )**returns today's date.   
**date()**returns the current date and time.

The following symbols can be used with the **format( )** function to print dates.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Symbol** | **Meaning** | **Example** |
| **%d** | day as a number (0-31) | 01-31 |
| **%a %A** | abbreviated weekday  unabbreviated weekday | Mon Monday |
| **%m** | month (00-12) | 00-12 |
| **%b %B** | abbreviated month unabbreviated month | Jan January |
| **%y %Y** | 2-digit year  4-digit year | 07 2007 |

Here is an example.

# print today's date  
today <- Sys.Date()  
format(today, format="%B %d %Y")  
"June 20 2007"

Date Conversion

Character to Date

You can use the **as.Date()** function to convert character data to dates. The format is **as.Date(***x***,** *"format"***)**, where *x* is the character data and *format* gives the appropriate format.

# convert date info in format 'mm/dd/yyyy'  
strDates <- c("01/05/1965", "08/16/1975")  
dates <- as.Date(strDates, "%m/%d/%Y")

The default format is **yyyy-mm-dd**

mydates <- as.Date(c("2007-06-22", "2004-02-13"))

Date to Character

You can convert dates to character data using the **as.Character( )**function.

# convert dates to character data  
strDates <- as.character(dates)